CARICATURIZING REPRESENTATIONS OF
THE UNITED STATES DURING THE
BARACK OBAMA AND DONALD TRUMP
ADMINISTRATIONS IN TURKISH HUMOR
MAGAZINES

A Master's Thesis

by

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Ankara
March 2023

To my Mom, Dad, and Cats

CARICATURIZING REPRESENTATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES DURING
THE BARACK OBAMA AND DONALD TRUMP ADMINISTRATIONS IN
TURKISH HUMOR MAGAZINES

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN MEDIA AND VISUAL STUDIES

THE DEPARTMENT OF
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İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY
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By İla Çetintaş

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope
and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts (in Media and Visual
Studies).

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ABSTRACT

CARICATURIZING REPRESENTATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES DURING THE BARACK OBAMA AND DONALD TRUMP ADMINISTRATIONS IN TURKISH HUMOR MAGAZINES

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March 2023

Political caricatures use humor and satire with visual and textual depictions to cast remarks on political figures or situations through exaggerations, disfigurations, or constructed situations. These depictions illustrate or imply the prevailing opinions or consensus on political events or issues. This thesis focuses on Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. from 2008 to 2021 in the caricatures on the cover pages of weekly Turkish humor magazines *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz*. The interactions between the U.S. presidents, Barack Obama and Donald Trump, and the Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan evolve and change in these exaggerated visual parodies. American symbols and images are used in conjunction with Turkish ones with the aim of providing familiarity and clarifying the meaning in the depicted situations. Absurdity and subversion of events merged with benign familiarity creates political humor and satire. These caricatures claim to present alternative images to understand the covert nuances behind particular political dealings, which classifies them as anti-establishment discourses. The cover pages are analyzed with Greenberg's (2002) framework and tools to explore the content, method, and messages of caricatures. Affective states of caricaturized subjects and

language elements in speech bubbles are included as separate categories. The caricatures and their elements are coded and the results are given in tables and charts to clarify the frequency of appearances. This study utilizes descriptive analysis to characterize various aspects of cover pages and to draw corresponding interpretations by considering the incongruity theory of humor.

ÖZET

BARACK OBAMA VE DONALD TRUMP DÖNEMİNDE AMERİKA
BİRLEŞİK DEVLETLERİ'NİN TÜRK MİZAH DERGİLERİNDE
KARİKATÜR TEMSİLLERİ

Çetintaş, Sıla

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Tez Danışmanı: Asst. Prof. Dr. Ayşenur Dal Tokdemir

Mart 2023

Politikacılarla ilgili görüş bildiren politik karikatürler, çizgi ve yazı
aracılığıyla, karakterleri veya durumları abartarak, fiziksel özelliklerini bozarak veya
yeniden yapılandırarak mizah ve yergi oluşturur. Bu tasvirler, politik bir olay veya
konuyla ilgili varolan yargıları veya ortak kanıları görselleştirir. Bu tez, 2008–2021
yılları arasında Türkiye ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ilişkilerini ve Amerika
betimlemelerini haftalık mizah dergileri *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, ve *Uykusuz*'un
kapak sayfalarında ele almaktadır. Bu abartılı görsel parodilerde Amerika Birleşik
Devletleri başkanları Barack Obama ve Donald Trump ile Türkiye Cumhuriyeti
başbakanı ve cumhurbaşkanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan arasında betimlenen ilişki
zamanla gelişir ve değişir. Tanımlanan durumla aşinalık kurarak verilmek istenen
mesajları açıklamak için Amerikan ve Türk sembolleriyle imgeleri birlikte kullanılır.
Olayların saçma yönleri ve değiştirilerek verilmesi aşinalık duygusuyla birleştiğinde
politik mizah ve yergi ortaya çıkar. Bu karikatürler, politik ilişkilerin gizli
ayrıntılarını göstermek için alternatif görseller oluşturduklarını öne sürer ve baskın
söylemlerin dışında bir duruş sergiler. Karikatürlerin içerik, metod ve mesajları
araştırılırken dergilerin kapak sayfaları Greenberg'in (2002) oluşturduğu çerçeve ve

tanımladığı araçlarla incelenir. Karikatür öznelerinin duygusal durumları ve konuşma balonları içindeki dil öğeleri ayrı kategoriler olarak eklenmiştir. Karikatürler ve nitelikleri gruplandırılıp kodlanmış, belirlenen sınıflandırmaların ne sıklıkta ortaya çıktığını göstermek için sonuçlar tablo ve grafik olarak verilmiştir. Bu çalışmada kapak sayfalarının çeşitli yönlerini tanımlamak için betimsel analiz kullanılır ve mizahın uyumsuzluk teorisi bağlamında yorumlar oluşturulur.

Anahtar sözcükler: Türk mizah dergileri, uyumsuzluk teorisi, politik mizah, Türkiye–ABD ilişkileri, Barack Obama, Donald Trump

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

The Pen is Funnier than the Sword

Khalil Bendib

Turkish humor magazines are ceasing their publications one after another in the recent decade; *Gırgır* and *Penguen* in 2017 and the recent last issue of *Uykusuz* on January 25, 2023 attest to this flow. Currently, *Leman* group publications continue to exist but the company has publicly announced that they are weighing their options on how to move forward on online platforms rather than printed circulations. *Uykusuz* caricaturists remark on the necessity to evolve and to recognize social and technological developments in the circulation of humor such as television programs, social media, live streaming platforms, podcasts, artificial intelligence sites, television talk shows, stand-up comedians, and web-based humor exemplified by memes. The counterparts in the publication community of Turkish humor magazines highlight three different aspects related to the unsustainability of the printing press. These are related to economic unpredictability affecting the ability to purchase without a second thought, the increasing control of Turkish government on distribution networks, and the cost of imported paper (Çalışkan, 2023; Suat, 2023). Weekly dissemination of printed humor magazines is increasingly becoming hard to maintain due to the cost of publication, controlling government restrictions, religious intolerance voiced by conservative groups, and even self-censorship arising from concerns of surveillance. Political humor associated with political issues, situations, and figures can be employed in any kind of narrative form. Yet, the caricaturists' attempt to keep up with social media platforms has its own challenges and has not

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entirely bestowed an alternative thriving stage for the humor magazines up to date.

This thesis concentrates on Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. from 2008 to 2021 on the cover pages of weekly Turkish humor magazines *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz*. From a total of 2419 publications, 128 cover page caricatures were used. Although 132 cover pages were unreachable due to a variety of factors, the collected data was sufficient to arrive at conclusions. The study context consists of humorous presentations of Turkish and American geopolitical visions linked with criticism and oppositions towards the international dealings of both countries in the mentioned historical period. The caricatures display the function of humor by familiarizing, reframing, and parodying renewed political alliances as well as satirizing those in power over long standing and current disputes. National context of humor is mostly incarnated through the politicians of the period. The time period starts with Barack Obama's election campaigns in 2008 and ends with Donald Trump's last day in the office on January 20, 2021. The duration of Obama's presidential candidacy is also included since Trump's candidacy was during Obama's administration and relevant caricatures were also produced during the mentioned span of time. Obama's first and second terms cover a longer time period than Trump's one-term in office. This situation has caused a difference between the number of Obama related caricatures and Trump related caricatures in favor of the former. Moreover, Trump's first year of presidency in 2017, corresponds to the year *Gırgır* and *Penguen* ceased their publications. The reduced number of published magazines also affects the interpretation of coverages in terms of frequency.

Turkey–U.S. relations are divided into two sections corresponding to the U.S. presidential terms, the Obama administrations and the Trump administration. The representations in the caricatures are also viewed as signifiers for differing U.S. policies of both presidents and are debated through existing or offered perspectives of the Turkish government or through the prime minister Erdoğan who later became the president. During the mentioned time period, Erdoğan remains the constant Turkish politician in power, thus, the international relations with domestic ramifications are exposed through his depiction in the caricatures. The representations of the two U.S. presidents vary in regard to their foreign policies,

rhetorical style, and communication strategies. The prominent political subject matters are related to the Syrian civil war, the fight against ISIS, activities for counterterrorism, the positions of Israel and Russia, increasing authoritarianism in Turkey, and imposed sanctions and bans. Depictions of Turkey–U.S. relations during the Obama and Trump administrations are contradictory at times in terms of prioritizing long-term strategic goals and values as opposed to short-term interests. To display public skepticism on the political issues of the time, Obama and Trump's figures are connected to Erdoğan's figure as performative appearances in the caricatures. The portrayals of these leaders provide processes of their socializations with an existing schema of heroes and villains to allow the emergence of value judgements.

In political caricatures cartoonists are concerned with framing historical and political events within a viewpoint as well as establishing, influencing, and creating opinions. Depicted visuals on cover pages present ideological messages through complementary clues or shortcuts such as headlines and slogans, symbols, stereotypes, and emotionally resonant attitudes. Shortcuts are sometimes portrayed as inaccurate to imply other information or affirmations about a political context (Lilleker, 2019, p. 45). Thus, examining the cover pages is also valuable in terms of understanding the political stance of these publications and their target audience. Political humor, especially political satire, is used as a tool in the hands of disenfranchised and marginalized groups, and common citizens who have been silenced by authoritarian practices. Humor is accessible and consumed by a wide range of audiences, mainly because it is enjoyable but it can also function as a tool for conscious raising and desiring change. Political satire aims at provoking critical thought, resistance, generating solidarity, and supporting communities that are experiencing hardships. The processes of political humor involve both laughter and unlaughter in terms of negotiating various boundaries and acceptability of the intended message (Doods & Kirby, 2013, pp. 53-55). As a backlash, objections from depicted political subjects or institutions can increase forms of censorship or limitations in countries with insufficient democratic practices. Caricaturists are aware of these influential outside factors but they often employ creative methods to overcome restrictions. The caricatures in this study employ a critical and

oppositional outlook with inventive tactics and are characterized as representing the anti-establishment.

Dagnes (2012) talks about how recent media has distorted fact and opinion to the level of purposeless while fake news, soft news, and info-tainment have risen in news broadcasts. Since the quality of information is questioned, political humor becomes a tool to fill in the gap (p. 3). The caricatures on the cover pages are condensed critical portrayals of the treated subject matters which offer immediate summaries with an outlook. Political satire reminds the actual event in the news flow of mainstream media and encourages the reader to understand the news by connecting and comparing the actual and the depicted portrayals. News satire is done through editing historical contexts and tracking the development of news since mainstream news narratives generally describe momentary political events (Basu, 2018, p. 247). After all, as McCloud (1994) explains, cartooning activates comprehension because the caricaturists often use a technique called "amplification through simplification," which is basically "stripping down an image to its essential 'meaning'" to "amplify" the meaning (McCloud, 1994, p. 30). Thus, the viewer is able to recognize and relate to the familiar and common aspects in cartooning.

Humor theories are classified according to perceptions towards the subject matter and are generally categorized under three main groups: feeling hostile or superior to depicted subjects (politicians or events in this case), releasing energy or venting, and realizing the incongruity between what is known and what actually occurs. Thus, reaction to humorous depictions can be the result of how the viewer feels comparatively better, wants to release feelings of anxiety, and how one comprehends the difference between how the event is portrayed and what it should be. These outcomes may exist separately or in combination besides additional factors such as simply appreciating humor or inflicting a kind of gentle assault on the subject of attention (Raskin, 2014, pp. 367-368). Parody, irony, metaphor, sarcasm, and satire, are supplementary elements in the creation of humor. Political humor just pokes general fun but political satire embodies criticism and asks for justice while using humor to ridicule the subject matter. Political humor is widespread and may be used in a variety of situations such as showing one's pleasant nature whereas political satire becomes a tool to cast judgements of right and wrong. (Dagnes, 2012, p. 13).

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Political humor is aimed toward making others laugh through personality traits or physical characteristics, whereas laughter in political satire is directed towards itself and something else, thus compelling the audience to understand the mistakes or misconducts (Dagnes, 2012, p. 21). Yet, since humor and satire also exist together in political depictions of the cover magazines, and cannot always be distinguished, the terms will be used interchangeably in this study.

Caricaturists portray a certain subject matter from an ideological perspective with their own drawing style and perspective while deciding what to include or exclude. The humorous and satirical components in political caricatures also affect the final interpretation. Political humor is almost always related to presenting the issues from a certain ideological framework and the elements and components used in the caricatures are combined for a persuasive end. Political humor is considered as the connecting feature of the caricatures. The caricatures may employ the aspect of "undisturbed accuracy," which is related to depicting constant familiarity and self-expressions of the subjects under a structured oppositional commentary. Symbols or icons can be recaptured with particular intents to shed light on the political event (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 195). Behavioral responses of political subjects can be depicted through concrete sentiments regarding circumstantial reality (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 125). These are discussed through explanatory headlines and the interaction between political characters. Hence, this thesis seeks to address following research questions:

Research Question 1) How does humor operate in the caricatures involving Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. on the cover pages of weekly humor magazines?

Research Question 2) What are the explanatory headlines, caricaturized elements, emotional states, and expressions in humorous narratives on cover pages related to Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S.?

Research Question 3) How are opinions and interpretations of Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. reflected in comical narratives on cover pages?

The literature review section in Chapter II focuses on relevant literature on the development of political humor, political humor in relation to political communication, and mediation of political representations. First, the background of political humor and the development of humorous publications are briefly examined with a few explanatory examples. The advancement of printing press became a critical juncture since publication and distribution of humor magazines were accelerated through this medium. The dissemination of images through publications also facilitated the development of visual satire and parody through caricatures. Second, published political humor in the Turkish scene is sketched. Political humor magazines and caricatures in the late Ottoman Empire and the early Turkish Republic are exemplified to reveal the connections between early satirical magazines and recent weekly humor magazines of this study. As descendants of their predecessor, *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz* sometimes face backlashes for their published contents and deal with legal suits although these incidents prove the power of political humor in terms of its reception. Lastly, this section also concentrates on relevant humor theories and forms of political humor including political satire and its tools: irony, sarcasm, or parody.

Chapter III of this thesis focuses on clarifications and foundations of mixed content analysis methodology, after touching upon the political context of the thesis. Since understanding Turkey–U.S. relations is necessary in the interpretation, classification and coding of the caricatures, selected historical context is scanned to understand the social atmosphere and political content of the caricatures as products of a certain time frame. Turkey–U.S. relations are explained with a focus on hard power approaches in the region, diplomatic tensions, and foreign policy concerns. The selections of cover pages are examined under Greenberg's (2002) framework. Five categories— "condensation," "combination," "opposition," "domestication," and "normative transference"—of the mentioned framework are used in relation to how the caricatures can be interpreted. "Comics acting" and speech bubbles are also added to the above listed categories. Additionally, the foundation of the groupings and intentions behind adopting emotional descriptors from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Expanded Form (The PANAS-X) is explained. The gathered data is categorized, coded, and tables and charts are formed to clarify the outcome according to the aforementioned framework.

The implementation of these codes is instrumental in addressing the research questions. This study relies more on an inductive approach, which utilizes how portrayals on cover pages serve the incongruity theory and indicates unexpected, juxtaposed, atypical, and irregular elements in the text or caricatures. Coding categories reveal the elements of humor through recognizing conflicting or alternatively suggested political behaviors, actions, and material content. Yet, recognizing incongruity is not enough to explain how humor operates on cover pages. Greenberg's tools are helpful in resolving the details of humorous content because the results yield the repetitive themes or elements necessary for interpretation. These details eventually reveal public appraisals of representations from a number of caricatures (Warren & McGraw, 2015, pp. 3-5). Headlines, captions, and speech bubbles are also among the major components of caricatures since they add to the meaning and complement the humorous message in cartooning the situations or figures. The use of language and rhetoric in speech bubbles contribute to the humor. For example, a political figure can be depicted as talking like a child, or colloquialisms may be used in the dialogs to achieve a certain effect. Moreover, the humor magazines use headlines from the news media or excerpts from presidential declarations to frame the situation in the caricature. The humor may arise from realizing the discrepancy between the headlines and the content of speech bubbles. Interpreting portrayals of political figures is carried out with the aim of revealing differences of representations in Obama and Trump administrations as well as understanding the allusions to American symbolisms or products of popular culture.

Chapter IV is divided in three main sections to assess final findings and discussions of the selected political caricatures. The first section corresponds to the content and form of the political caricatures and how humor magazines make use of different components of cover pages. Tables, bar and pie charts, and diagrams are formed through notable groupings of the elements on cover pages. In the first subsection, the ratios of two categories of narrative pointers (e.g., headlines and caricatures) of each Turkish humor magazine is presented through tables. This subsection aims to display what kind of political events are chosen in the explanatory headlines and how frequently domestic, foreign, or transnational incidents occur as subjects matters on

the cover pages, as well as what kinds of elements contribute to narrative structures and what these specific selections suggest. The findings unveil how political figures and their dealings are exaggerated and subverted for the sake of satire. Second and third subsections focus upon how caricatures poke fun at politicians' intentions through exaggerating their mood states and expressions. Attributed emotional states are synchronized with power dynamics in created situations and the utterances in speech bubbles amplify the reactions of figures. Fourth subsection focuses on political opinions in the satirical commentary. Turkish humor magazines are effective in revealing an oppositional stance towards foreign and domestic political events. The problematic issues in Turkey –U.S. relations, mostly caused by the interests of nations and politicians or Erdoğan's power seeking performances are portrayed with an implied ethical stance on how things should be conducted. Overall, cover pages converse about various types of power dynamics and their effect in the political scene.

Humor magazines choose to refer to reality through portrayals of well-known figures and familiar symbols. In Chapter IV, second and third sections focus on specific caricatures during the Obama and Trump administrations. The former data is exemplified in these selected examples. Throughout the chosen time frame of this thesis, certain patterns in relation to the political interactions and issues occur and the examples display this change. Initially, cover pages mock Erdoğan's fascination of Obama's power and his submissiveness towards him while presenting an efficient Obama figure who is capable of shaping Turkish domestic and foreign politics. These qualities evolve in line with geopolitical concerns of the U.S. and of Turkey as well as Obama's other alliances or interests in the region and Erdoğan's growing desire for power. Portrayals of Trump's personality and body are shaped in accordance with how he is presented in other popular media platforms. The difference between Obama and Trump depictions are related to their policies and political communication methods. The third and last section focuses on the familiar symbols for analyzing the depicted characters and how symbols are used in demonstrating domestic or international events.

As popular culture products, the caricatures were intended for consumption during the time period they were published and circulated. Naturally, the events in that

specific time period are reflected in these portrayals. The historical and cultural atmosphere in which these caricatures were portrayed also represents the political and ideological currents of the era. The publications even faced restrictions for lampooning at times. For example, some Erdoğan portrayals were not tolerated by him or his supporters and the caricaturists were sued for representing him through unacceptable metaphors (Sabah, 2005; Cumhuriyet, 2014). It could be argued that these accusations are subjective and the line between lampooning and condescending the depicted subject is not easily distinguishable. Although these portrayals are not within the scope of this study, the controversial caricatures were mostly published in the humor magazines examined in this study. Thus, delving into the communicative aspects of political humor in the chosen caricatures will also present the continuing dissenting voices, oppositional viewpoints, interpretations, and criticisms of domestic and foreign Turkish policies of the time. These caricatures "carry their own peculiar kinds of visual resistance, recalcitrance, argument, particularity, banality, strangeness or pleasure" as any image (Rose, 2016, p. 22), but they also present alternative visual depictions to unearth covert meanings behind specific political dealing and thus, aim to create awareness on the examined issue. Berger (1983) in his seminal book *Ways of Seeing* remarks, "we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves" and "Every image embodies a way of seeing" (pp. 9-10). Whether visual renderings in caricatures are acts of defiance or carry expository messages or simple depictions of the era, they are products of political humor and are analyzed accordingly.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Visual Political Humor: Definitions and Development

Political humor transpires through humorous texts that deal with political events, parties, policies, institutions, individuals, and processes (Young, 2017; Bippus, 2014). The most known genres of political humor are conveyed through editorial cartoons, caricatures, comic strips, satirical magazines, fake newspapers, animated sitcoms, variety shows, and other creative forms. Humorous narratives are formed through juxtaposition of prior understanding of the political event(s) and implication of an opinion (Lutrell, 2020, 11:30). Political humor can be related to undermining, as well as ridiculing the political figures and political processes; emphasizing the conflict between politicians' promises and their ulterior motives; and highlighting the suppression of personal and political freedoms (Bippus, 2014, p. 585). Political caricatures add visual dimensions to political humor. Consequently, political humor in caricature and cartoons are communicated through framing chosen visual aspects and providing a visual commentary attributed to the subject matter and the political culture. For example, the appearance and gestures of political figures may be used to convey the humorous content. Political figures and happenings can be presented through humorous forms such as political satire, political jokes, political irony, and political parody that are also interrelated with political humor. Hence, political humor is an umbrella term for the above-mentioned narrative tropes in comical texts, visuals, and performances. I concentrate on visual communication of humor in the political caricatures published on the cover pages of the Turkish humor magazines.

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The drawing style of the caricatures and the language attributed to the subjects, objects, and symbols change in accordance with political agendas or social predicaments. These splash pages illustrate various forms of humor. I will be considering and referring to visual linguistic devices used by caricaturists as necessary tools for presenting political satire.

Visual political humor has been used in a variety of situations and have evolved or prioritized differently over time. Ancient visual political humor was based on stereotyping and aimed at presenting the essence behind social life. For example, Aristophanes (*c.* 448-380 BC), the humorous playwright, describes statesmen, philosophers, the gods, and rival playwrights that are "charlatans and pompous frauds" who attempt to dominate public arguments (Kishlansky et al., 2008, p. 81). For ancient Greeks, the function of political satire revolved around the incongruousness, entertainment, and questioning of the political system. In Greece, theater was not the only medium for presenting political satire. Multiple objects were also employed in materializing comical and satirical perceptions. Masks, costumes, and stage decors acted as material visual cues for understanding and predicting the comical plot and climatic conclusions (Clarke, 2007, p. 35).

Similar to Greeks, Romans also valued visual political humor. A graffiti found in Pompeii city presents how bodily imperfections were viewed humorously. Clarke (2007) tries to unravel visual imagery in ancient Romans, aiming to understand what they laugh at. According to him, Roman humor acts as a bridge between oppositions, such as the one between the power holder and the transgressor (pp. 229-233). He touches upon other functions of early burlesque graffiti in Pompeii, that are frequently "portraits of bald patted men with odd profiles," hybridized animal-human depictions, people performing sexual activities, or words/phrases in various letterforms merged with illustrated human parts. In a broad sense, these ancient portrayals can be perceived as early forms of political caricatures since they parody certain stereotypes and bodily distortions. For example, an ancient engraving in Villa dei Misteri/Pompeii was drawn in reference to Caesar's baldness. This ancient engraving, shown in Figure 1, is called *Rufus est.* ("This is Rufus") and portrays the self-consciousness of an elite man, possibly Caesar. Physical features signifying Caesar include the use of laurel wreath to cover up his baldness and the swollen

thumb shape nose and chin that is considered unappealing as opposed to small, straight, and upward curved nose (Clarke, 2007, pp. 45-47). Although ideological and political intent cannot be directly inferred from this particular visual illustration, the laughter directed towards malformed individuals could be considered humorous since favoring ideal facial features presupposes a disparaging position towards unaesthetic stereotypes. Therefore, these humorous ancient drawings function as commentaries for daily interactions and clarify acceptable forms of features and body proportions.

Figure 1: Rufus est., ancient Roman graffiti, in Pompeii

Development of the printing press starting from the middle of fifteenth century affected the reception and understanding of political caricatures because they could be disseminated to larger audiences through various publications. With the standardization and widespread distribution of images, cartoonists flourished and satirical magazines started to emerge. William Hogarth (1697-1764) was one of the prominent painters and engravers who portrayed "modern moral subjects." He is known as one of the initial disseminators of visual satire. His printed engravings were much less expensive than his paintings, which also contributed to his success in sales. By the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries windows of print shops began

to display various political caricatures. Other developments such as steam powered printing press, paper quality, and lithography continued to work in favor of distributing the printed materials. Production became cheaper and was done on a much larger scale including a variety of books and periodicals as well as satirical magazines (Gilmore, 2018, pp. 161-165). *La Charivari* (1832-1937), founded by the journalist and the artist Charles Philipon, can be given as an example of these satirical magazines.
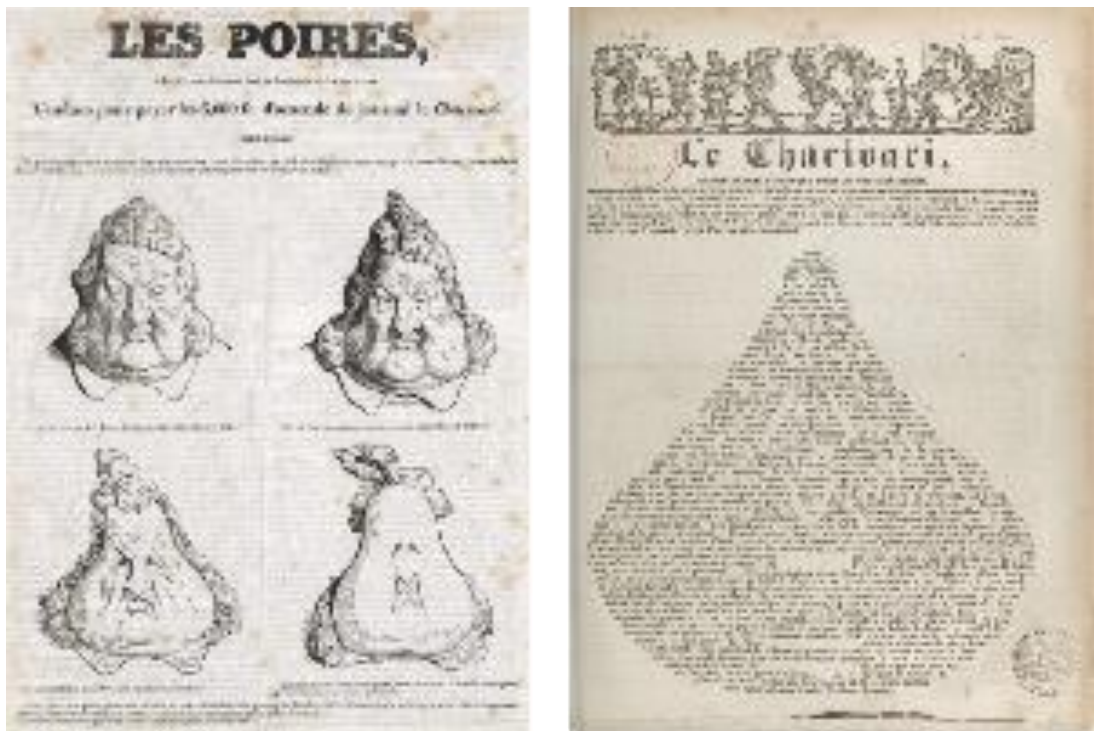
Figure 2: Metaphor of a pear applied on Louis-Philippe's face

The magazine focused on increasing censorship through symbols. Louis-Philippe (1830-1848), the king of France was illustrated as having a rotting pear-shaped head. Pear, *poire* in French, means fool or gullible in French slang (McQuiston, 2019). First illustration in Figure 2 shows Louis-Philippe's head in four stages of metamorphosis as it slowly mutates into a rotting pear. Second illustration in Figure 2 also illustrates the pear-shaped design of several words, which was featured on one of the cover pages of *La Charivari*. This example does not necessarily evoke laughter, yet its impact may arise from its witticism or opposition towards the political subject. Political satire can aim to indicate the failures of political subjects rather than foregrounding humor. The legacy of using exaggerated or distorted facial

features and/or body proportions in political criticism and humor continued in contemporary examples of political caricatures.

Since ancient times political subjects have had specific public affiliations connected to their physical as well as performative characteristics. Visual representation through cartooning or caricaturizing media personalities in a range of political contexts revolve around the observation of political communicators. Humor becomes part of descriptions and determines the appearances of these figures in images. On one hand, the ancient Roman drawing is an example of social and political experience of otherness based on idealized notions of beauty at the time. There is a certain degree of iconoclasm, which is based on attacking and rejecting beliefs through the distortion of the subject's facial features. On the other hand, *La Charivari* pages portray a political stereotype by diminishing the king's human features and turning them into a pear to indicate a "lower life-form" (Mitchell, 2005, pp. 19-20). Hence, these disfigurations in caricatures shift and evolve through established attitudes towards the physical features of political subjects.

As Navasky (2013) portrays and exemplifies, cartoonists from different areas of the world, starting from the nineteenth century to the contemporary period, understand the produced agency of the image (p. 18). He indicates that illustrations portray the distortions of the original and usually reveal perceived deficiencies of their subject matter through images and words with a specific kind of discourse. In delivering visual humor, changes in figure size, body type, or facial expression can reveal metaphor and metonymy that refer to certain aspects of political entities. Transitioned images of political subjects may draw upon and explore cultural beliefs and values. Humor is almost always inseparable in the portrayal of political subjects since these images are framed to persuade through humor.

Visual political humor appeals to emotions besides referring to authority and common values. In accordance with Richards' (2004) discussion, political humor is a "sophisticated discourse of emotionality" in political discourse and the treatment of political figures. Images are reflexive since they address and contain narratives of political conflicts, anxieties, doubts, and dilemmas. Additionally, these emotionalized narratives are assembled around the personality, persuasiveness, and

presidential or governmental agencies of the political figures (pp. 345-346). In humorous alterations the emotional engagement of the viewers is further complicated by the political figures' emotional experience as well as the presence of national emotionality in relation to the political figures' political endeavors (Richards, 2004, pp. 348-349).

The political figures' facial competence, physical attractiveness, and gender typically provide the social inferences (Carpinella & Johnson, 2016, p. 282). Visually mediated facial characteristics are mostly combined with cues about ideal (or submissive) masculinity, which encompasses the degree of physical strength, self-control, and power (Andersen & Wendt, 2015, p. 15). Notions of hegemonic masculinity have relationships with the idea of nationhood. The idea of masculinity is connected to power and the ability to exert dominance in the culture's understanding. Gendered facial cues are used to stereotype leadership traits and appearances are associated with recalling, learning, and seeking political information (Carpinella & Johnson, 2016, p. 292).

Humorous and satirical visual texts can be cartoons, political (editorial) cartoons, caricatures, or comic strips in printed humorous and satirical magazines, fake newspapers, or comic books etc. Satire is displayed through juxtaposing the chosen actual political agenda with the depicted illustrations in the caricaturized political cartoons. The specific drawing styles of cartoonists/caricaturists play a crucial role in establishing a meaning. Some graphic artists prefer a simple drawing style while others focus on details. The range of styles are multiple and specific to the artist. According to Selçuk (1998), the prominent Turkish caricaturist in the 1950s, the notion of humor and style of cartoonists originated in France. The cartoonists are called "Dessin humoristique," meaning to convey humor through simple lines (Selçuk, 1998, p. 11). Thus, the humorous and satirical message in caricatures also relies upon caricaturists' authentic lines.

Although used interchangeably, cartoons and caricatures have differences in terms of the aesthetics and the manner of how the political humor is delivered. Cartoon is used as an umbrella term for caricatures. Cartoons are usually defined as a picture making process, aiming to represent an idea through organizing words and pictures

into a single frame (McCloud, 1994, p. 20). A more current definition for a cartoon is "graphic simplification of figurative shapes for purposes of communication, humor, and so on in comic strip, and comic book rendering (as well as, of course, in gag cartoons, animation, and other visual media)." Recreating a cartoon under comic art does not depreciate the significance of the cartoon because the style of the cartoon constitutes a certain understanding in the reader's mind through "comics acting" and "emanata." Comics acting refers to the notion that each panel of a comic strip represents a variety of expressions through a cartoon face. Emanata denotes visual cues and symbols that contribute to symbolic signs that create a narrative structure such as movement, emotion, and sound effects (Molotiu, 2020, pp. 153-167). Both political cartoons and caricatures incorporate comics acting as an artistic tool and by including the utterance of political subjects, which adds to the iconic recognition of that political figure. Comics acting and emanata exist as parts of visual parody since attitudes, emotions, and intentions of political subjects are displayed.

Caricature could be defined as an art form in which cartoonists exaggerate certain physical characteristics of figures. Caricatures use graphical art that captures and emphasizes the unique features of a subject or an object rather than portraying it accurately. Political caricatures represent less accurate forms of political subjects than cartoons since they intend to make a comment on the individual rather than displaying the surface appearance (Ross, 1974, p. 291; Rhodes, 1996, p. 12). When the caricatures include commentary on political and social issues in depicting politicians, public figures, or political institutions, they are called editorial cartoons. Caricatures display appreciation, ridicule, dissenting voices, and sensitivity towards the social and political surroundings but they can also act as textual discourses that construct, repeat, or mock certain ideological discourses.

Caricaturized political subjects often possess a universal quality. Universality can develop from stereotypical attributions that arise from a person's appearance rather than an intense character analysis (Rhodes, 1996, p. 12). Stereotypical attributions are evolved from domestic or daily life spheres that signify ongoing antagonism between political subjects, caricaturists, and members of the community. Additionally, caricaturized political subjects are usually depicted in repeating a set pattern of behavior (Stott, 2005, p. 58). Therefore, stereotyping is used as a function

to categorize or to represent individuals who personify similar opinions, moral beliefs and attitudes. Exaggeration in caricatures can be related to stereotyping as well.

The material content of caricatures in this study provides information about the political actors' behavior and actions in the context of Turkey–U.S. relations and representation of the U.S. presidents, Obama and Trump. This information appears in emotionalized and caricaturized narratives through differences in their personality, persuasiveness, and presidential agencies. The dynamics between leaders on the cover pages are different from non-humorous political visuals because they are often carnivalesque, polysemic, and evocative with an affective humorous message.

Moreover, linguistic devices (catch phrases, metaphors, depictions, symbolic devices, words, code switching, etc.) are also used by cartoonists to include satire in their drawings, which complements the exaggeration or distortion of characters' physical features (Greenberg, 2002, p. 183). Eisner (1985) views the text in cartoons as an integral unit of the visual renderings and treats them as equal to the drawings. Lettering, fonts and sizes are additional extensions of caricatures and effect the interpretation of the image. For example, the size of the letters, their style, or placement in the frame or on the page can imply a sound, emotion, movement, or a moment (p. 24). These linguistic and rhetorical devices construct an "literary/cultural allusion" which refers to "any fictive or historical character, any narrative form whether drawn from legend, folklore, literature, or the mass media that are used to frame a political event or issue" (DeSousa & Medhurst, 1982, p. 86). Overall, political caricatures can be defined as visual texts that make use of comics acting, emanata, linguistic devices, and stereotyped attributions with the aim of creating humorous/satirical meanings. Political caricatures tend to use devices that are suitable and familiar with their viewers' observable domestic/everyday life sphere or political/social issues.

2.2. Printed Political Humor in Turkey: Influences and Challenges

Political caricatures in Turkey have evolved due to the dynamic political environment. In the Ottoman Empire, although humorous or satirical treatments of

subjects were sometimes present in the newspapers, the first printed satirical magazines appeared in the late nineteenth century. The publication and circulation of political satire also marked the beginning of the imposed restrictions on caricatures as forms of expression. Humor magazines in Turkey and their everlasting struggle with censorship, together with the systematic decline of freedom of expression, has affected the production and dissemination of political humor.

2.2.1. Political Humor Magazines in the Ottoman Empire

Since the late Ottoman Empire, political humor has been subjected to censorship and various threats from government agencies. An underlying reason behind this situation is that initial presses in Turkey relied on supporting governmental decisions rather than securing the public's expression (Koloğlu, 2020, p. 26). The first private sector newspaper *Tercüman-ı Ahval* positioned itself as the advocate of native people's perspectives and voices compared to governmentally supported newspapers or other minority newspapers, such as Rum, Armenian, Jewish, and Balkan ones (Koloğlu, 2020, p. 44). Ottoman newspapers and satirical periodicals shared the same fate of government control of the press.

The first political satirical gazette, *Diyojen* (1870), was the supplement of a newspaper named *Ibret*. Political satire magazines evolved with the newspapers. These gazettes and magazines circulated in Ottoman coffee houses, which made them easily accessible aside from their affordability (Swanick, 2018, p. 18). Compared to the beginning of the printing press in Europe, satirical magazines were affordable in the late Ottoman Empire because the first printing house was established four hundred years after Europe (Koloğlu, 2020, pp. 16-18). Information and knowledge kept circulating orally, which affected how public opinion was shaped. Political cartoons acted as a part of politics rather than merely representing them and becoming a tool for temporarily shaping the public opinion at the time. State controlled suppression raised by the Ottoman Printing Law ensured second-hand control through the Council of Education and the Ministry of Police (Aviv, 2013, pp. 222-223). Overall, this prompted the circulation of knowledge to be censored, and caused the consequences of imprisonment, closing down the publication, and even exiling the owner or the publisher.

During the Tanzimat era (1839-1876), political cartoonist and editor Teodor Kasap, published a succession of satirical journals, *Diyojen*, *Çıngıraklı Tatar*, *Hayal*, and *İstikbal*. All of these publications ceased in time and caused Kasap's eventual exile. His exile became a subject matter in other journals (Aviv, 2013, p. 223). Figure 3 shows a caricature from *Hayal* magazine that caused Kasap's imprisonment. The illustration depicts the jurisdiction office as a restrictive force through a Hacivat-Karagöz dialogue. Hacivat asks about the reason behind Karagöz's tied hands and feet, upon which he receives the answer that this situation was costless in the government agency. However, cartoonists continued to employ creative coping strategies despite frequent measures taken to silence their expressions after the Young Turk Revolution (1908).

Figure 3: Hacivat-Karagöz dialogue, in *Hayal* (1877) magazine (Çeviker, 1986)

Shortly after the Young Turk Revolution, the emergence of satirical and cartoon newspapers flourished. One of the popular magazines of the period was *Kalem* (1908-1911). The main cartoonist, Cemil Cem, synthesized cartooning techniques from Europe and merged it with textual humor based on orally transmitted jokes (Aviv, 2013, p. 225). Drawing styles evolved from the cartoons of the Tanzimat era

because characters were depicted in a more photographic manner with some deformities rather employing two-dimensional miniature style.

Censorship of the press gained momentum shortly after the flourishing period since the cartoonists started treating the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Some cartoonists voiced controversial opinions about the ruling class by using anti-heroic folk characters such as Hacivat-Karagöz, Nasreddin Hodja, Keloğlan, Kavuklu-Pişekar, and Meddah (Aviv, 2013, p. 225). These characters were used for subtle critiques of intolerance towards humor. The Balkan Wars caused ethnic communities in the Ottoman Empire to gain sovereignty and territorial losses affected the represented national identity. Former government officials in these territories were exiled or arrested and the sultanate was eventually abolished after the War of Independence (1919-1922). Ottoman Empire cartoonists perceived their fragile political and social environment in the light of rising European power. Most satire was based on referencing Hacivat-Karagöz type dialogues. Karagöz, who is "the bemused observer and radical skeptic" became a mascot and a spokesperson for the ills of the empire (Brummett, 1995, p. 436). The empire was depicted as a beggar suffering under oppression and subordination and dogs were used as metaphors. Images of women and plague of cholera dominated the depictions during the Young Turk Revolution. Women were narrated as interested in fashion which was a remark on the identity crisis of the subjects, caught between traditional values and new European styles. For example, in Figure 4 titled "Straight from Paris to Anatolia," a woman is depicted as partially dressed in 1900s Parisian fashion and partially in Ottoman attire, shalwar. Such a combination indicated submission to consumerism despite growing financial limitations of the empire (Brummett, 1995, pp. 441-445). If dogs and women represented metaphors for stereotypes or the changing status quo, cholera signified the decline of the system.

"Combination - modèle Pérote de l'avenir.

بارسدن آناطولیه دوغرو .

FIGURE 4. Straight from Paris to Anatolia.

Figure 4: Woman dressed partially in European style

In Figure 5, a woman wearing European style clothes is curled up with pain and men around her believe that she is infected with the plague. Thus, they use disinfectant spray on her. The background shows the coffin of someone who has probably died from cholera and others in the background running around in terror. In the second frame, the same woman viewed in a hospital bed, just given birth to a baby, with the same men around her in happy faces. Thus, when the woman is associated with motherhood, she is freed from symbolizing European lifestyle (Brummett, 1995, pp. 448-454). However, there is not enough information on whether this contrasting portrayal of the woman is an ideological remark on women's position in the society. Traditional values of motherhood are celebrated but whether the woman is condemned earlier for wearing western style clothes is not clear.
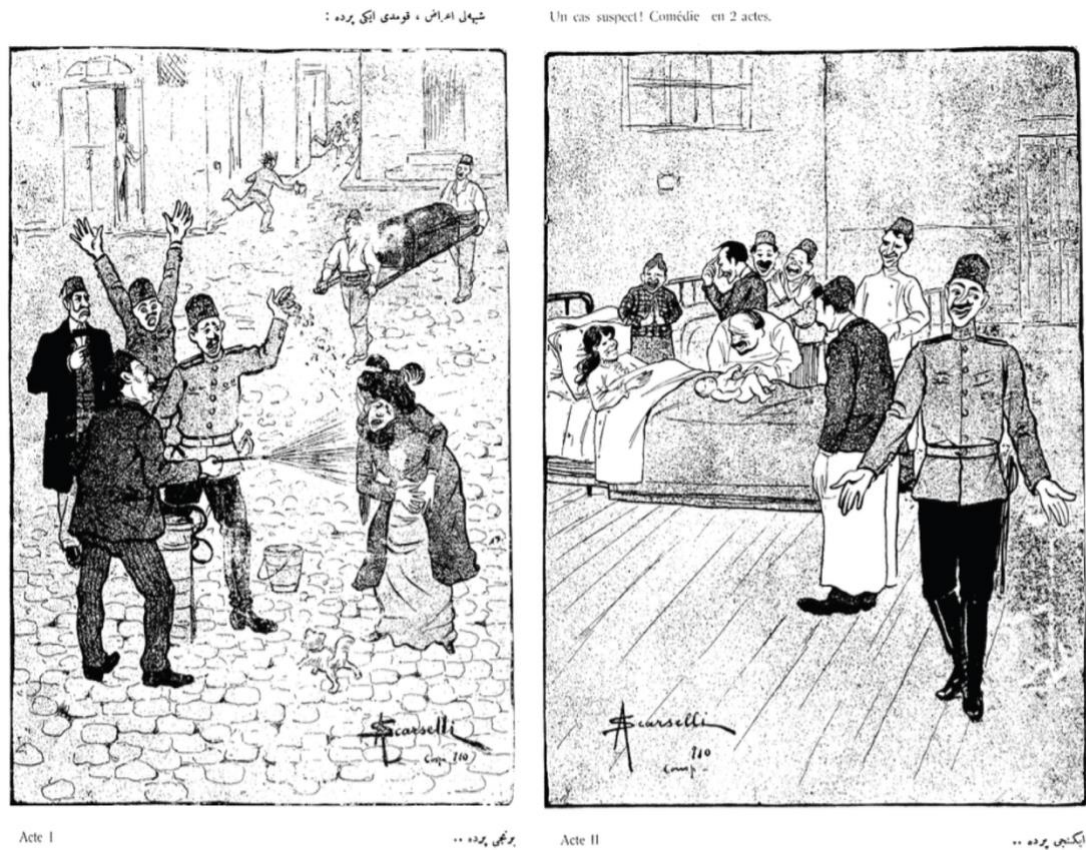
Figure 5: Pregnant woman during the plague

These frames also give clues about daily life in the late Ottoman Empire. For example, the condition of the houses, streets paved with cobblestones, the street dog near the people, and the attire of officials in the streets present the atmosphere of the time. Social interactions at the time of plague are revealed and shaped by these cartoons.

2.2.2. Political Humor Magazines in Turkey

Dynamic political changes during the establishment and development of democracy in the Turkish Republic created various domineering characteristics in editorial cartooning and caricaturizing. A major critical juncture that affected the progression of satire magazines was the approval of Latin alphabet in lieu of Arabic letters in government offices. Since it was mandatory to use the Latin alphabet in printing presses, cartoons helped readers to understand the content of the publications (Aviv, 2013, p. 226). The weekly political satirical magazine *Akbaba* (1922-1977), still holding the record for the longest publication, aided in popularizing the Latin

alphabet and, thus, making its content accessible to larger audiences (Tosun Durmuş, 2020, p. 171).

Akbaba included literary writers in its team and voiced the grievances of the common citizens which positioned it among the agenda setters during the early republic. The founder of *Akbaba*, Yusuf Ziya Ortaç, defines the sociopolitical inclination of the magazine as the supporter of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk since other political parties did not exist during the early republic (Tosun Durmuş, 2020, p. 171). On one hand, this stance is associated with the ideals or principles of a new nation since *Akbaba* originated in a political context in which Atatürk's vision was embraced fully and creating a modern nation state was viewed as paramount. Modern nation states required a transformation through democratization, secularism, and embracing science and educational reforms (Ahmad, 1993, p. 53). Therefore, the magazine is discursively associated and constructed in line with western style of thought, since it embraced secularism unlike the rest of Islamic world (Ahmad, 1993, p. 78). Aside from how a reified image of modernism started to appear in Turkey, *Akbaba* portrays perspectives on how Turkey regarded its neighbors. Additionally, the manner in which other Islamic countries in the region are portrayed may be viewed as prejudiced in the present Turkish political outlook. Representations in *Akbaba* that portray the Arab world as different from and not always in line with Turkey's intentions towards European oriented foreign policies in the 1950s (Gratien, 2013, 8:37). Overall *Akbaba,* has been defined and contextualized mostly through its' reflection on new cultural and societal changes.

Marko Pasha was one of the first political satire magazines that did not agree with government policies. Although caricatures were in line with the ideals of multi-party democracy, *Marko Pasha* tried to survive various shut downs by re-emerging with different names until 1950 (Koloğlu, 2005, p. 321). *Marko Pasha* provided a space where caricaturists argued on political matters for the first time, although these arguments can be viewed as strengthening the freedom of speech and establishing the artists' identity (Cantek, 2001, p. 60). The magazine was labeled as supporting communism due to defending the publication rights of the Turkish Socialist Party but the writers and artists identified themselves as having national interests, depicting populist views, and advocating against imperialism (Cantek, 2001, pp. 31-33).

Caricatures in *Marko Pasha* were drawn by Mim (Mustafa) Uykusuz, whose name was later given to the humor magazine, *Uykusuz*. Early republic cartoonists Cemal Nadir and Ramiz Gökçe were also known as the two masters of editorial cartooning for the 1950s generation. During the 1950s captions were rarely used and messages were given through graphic representations compared to early republic cartooning (Tunç, 2002, pp. 53-54). Didactic and moral language of the magazines were more common after the transition to multiparty regime in 1950 (Dağtaş, 2016, p. 16). Cartoonists generally employed a leftist agenda starting from the 1960 military coup and continuing to the 1971 and 1980 military coups.

American tastes and imported goods as well as a wish for an affluent western lifestyle were affecting Turkish cultural life in the second half of twentieth century. In the media, what is called "American jokes" with anticlimactic punchlines and elements of unlaughter were becoming noticeable. Unlaughter refers to expected or demanded laughter that does not happen. Gürel (2019) views political implications of "American jokes" in two Turkish newspapers, *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*. She argues that "American jokes" were important tools of criticism and were one of the impacts of American culture in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s. These jokes merged mockery with fascination and rejection with adaptation. She presents an example of a dialogue titled "Amerikan Yardımı" (American Aid) in the *Akşam* column from 1967, where the U.S. aid is criticized in a cynical manner in the borrowed cold joke format. This joke is as follows: "One man asks another: Have you ever seen an elephant hide behind a banana? The other one says: No, I haven't. Of course, you couldn't. It was probably hiding really well." The joke is subtly designated in pointing out covert intentions behind the U.S aid and the motives behind how the U.S. uses NATO alliances (Gürel, 2019, pp. 61-70). The joke operates as an adaptation of the certain joke format and rejects the terms of American interests in a cynical manner. Cartoons between 1960s and 1970s dealt with Turkey–U.S. in terms of the U.S. officials' involvement in internal affairs, criticized the U.S. for appearing to convey international peace messages, and made use of English language in daily life situations, which is associated with a form of cultural imperialism through language (Usluata, 1999, p. 99).

After the 1960 military coup the ideological spectrum was established through binary frameworks such as left-right, Islamism-secularism, and Turkish nationalism-Kurdish identity (Öztürk, 2022, p.3). Cartooning artists had the opportunity to unite under the Turkish Cartoonists Association and a cartoon museum was opened in İstanbul (Aviv, 2013, p. 228). However, the 1980 military coup halted this unionization process which reconvened after eight years (Tunç, 2002, p. 54). Oğuz Aral's *Gırgır* magazine was a prominent publication starting with 1972 and it reached the highest circulation numbers. Aral even became the pioneer for 1990s and 2000s satirical magazines such as *Leman, Penguen, and Uykusuz*. He even took on the role of advising and giving clues for budding caricaturists in the *Gırgır* column. The caricatures in the 1970s started to include expressive speech bubbles, dynamic and livelier subjects rather than just subtitles (Demirci, 2017, p. 25). According to Marcella (2021) during military rule, the continuing flow of amateur and semi-amateur cartoons was important for three reasons: First, it preserved the exchange between the people that the system was trying to suppress. Second, it helped to circulate different points of view among the members of the community, during communication restrictions. Third, the amateur and semi-amateur satire covered the same themes of professional cartoons and provided a space for freedom of expression, especially for those who were incarcerated (pp. 340-341). Overall, *Gırgır* provided a creative space for political satire and acted as a mediator between political pressures and other journalists.

Gırgır was also affected by the limitations imposed on the magazine after the coup but after a short intermission, the issues started to portray critical caricatures about political figures except the generals involved in the coup. This did not mean that the caricaturists were not able to criticize the generals. On the contrary, caricatures targeted military supported civil offices and officers, and thus satirized the military in an indirect manner (Marcella, 2021, pp. 335-336). The elected Prime Minister Turgut Özal was tolerant toward his caricaturized portrayals in *Gırgır* and even used these to demand financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). A caricature in *Gırgır* distorted his arms to lengthen the right one and shorten the left arm, and the caption indicated "one hand gives, the other takes!.." (Marcella, 2021, p. 336). However, Özal was not as tolerant as he had publicly manifested since he sued caricaturists from *Limon*—previous version of *Leman* which was established by

caricaturists who quitted *Gırgır*—on account that he was insulted in the cartoon series titled "I won't shut up!" (Tunç, 2002, p. 55).

The humor magazines in the late Ottoman Empire had associated folkloric figures, sense of fashion, and plague with political and public subjects in portraying repressed circumstances, ridiculed situations, and abnormality of political endeavors. These metaphors were directed at the empire's inability to protect sovereignty as well as people's self-determination to preserve or discard their cultural identity, traditions, and values. The early humor magazines of the Turkish Republic were often concerned with building a modern nation state. Later, with the transition to multi-party regime, they had to cope with preserving the freedom of speech as well as their publication rights. *Gırgır*, a prominent humor magazine in the 1970s, became the mediator between political pressures and the journalists by circulating different points of view during sanctions to the press. After the 1980s, depictions of political figures became more pronounced compared to the portrayal of everyday life or ideological frameworks.

The political landscape of Turkey in the 1990s can be defined through coalition governments, increasing identity politics mainly with Islamic synthesis, the assassinations of prominent journalists, such as Çetin Emeç (assassinated on March 7, 1990) and Uğur Mumcu (assassinated on January 24, 1993), and Ahmet Taner Kışlalı (assassinated on September 21, 1999), as well as Kurdish political unrests. Rise of neoliberalism after the 1980 military coup caused collective ideological fragmentation and individual identities were embraced more (Öztürk, 2022, p. 7). Western consumerist lifestyle and perspectives were accepted by educated and urban groups. Starting from 1975, cartoons represented identity divisions in an oppositional relationship based on ethnicity, religion, gender, etc. The dynamic commonsensical binary views of identity were equally satirized through emphasizing them as a façade. *Leman* makes use of these ideological or cultural positions as a reference point to display "antagonistic struggles" between tradition and modernity, which is also referred as "East-ness" and "West-ness" (Apaydın, 2005, pp. 113-116). In *Leman*, masculinity becomes one of the common dimensions in revealing the sentiment behind binary and imagined cultural identity sorting (Ertuğrul Apaydın, 2005, p. 134).

Political humor in Turkey multiplied to embrace other media forms in various television programs in the 1990s. Popular programs constructed around political humor were *Olacak O Kadar* (That Much Will Happen) sketches (1988-2005 and 2009-2010) on effects of government policies on daily life and *Plastip Show* (1990-1994 and 1995-1996), in which plastic puppets talking in metaphorical environments mocked Turkish prime ministers and prominent political figures. Yet, this relative tolerance towards performative political humor changed gradually after the Justice and Development Party won the elections on November 3, 2002. Throughout the years, as Erdoğan strengthened his position in the government, democratic ideals and support of plurality started to disappear, authoritarianism rose, Islamic rhetoric increased, favoritism, cronyism, and nepotism prevailed. The decrease in tolerance was exemplified with Erdoğan's suit against caricaturist Musa Kart's depiction of him as a cat playing with a ball of wool in the newspaper (*Cumhuriyet*, 2014). This event is known as the starting point for a number of other limitations for caricaturists and the humor magazines, including the number of filing suits, partial or fully censoring the issues, and taking steps to ban the freedom of expression (Dinç, 2012, p. 324). The event had a ripple effect when *Penguen* decided to support Musa Kart and portrayed Erdoğan as various animals on its cover page under the title *Tayyipler Alemi* (The World of Tayyips), which also caused the magazine to be sued (Sevinç, 2005). These examples depict how humor magazines suffered from limitations of expression and censorship throughout different time periods in Turkish history.

The constant conflicts between Erdoğan and caricaturists continued and was carried on an international level when *Charlie Hebdo*'s cover page depicted an image of Erdoğan in 2020. The image portrayed Erdoğan on an armchair, drinking beer in his underwear while ogling the naked bottom of a woman in hijab and saying, "Ohh, prophet!" The explanatory headline read "Erdoğan is quite funny in his private life." This cartoon came out after Erdoğan questioned French president Macron's sanity for his remarks on Islam and called to boycott French products. Macron had defended the rights of the humor magazine which was notorious in publishing prophet Muhammed's caricatures earlier and he had condemned the assault and murder of a school teacher for sharing these in class (Euractiv, 2020). This presents

the effect of political humor and exemplifies international tensions caused by caricatures.

The publication numbers of humor magazines within the timeline of this study (2008-2021), will give ideas on the scope of these magazines in the Turkish publication scene. *Gırgır* magazine did not have its earlier affiliations in the 1970s because the artists and circumstances had changed in time. The magazine had changed ownership and even its name several times and was even distributed as a supplement to the newspaper, *Sözcü*. In 2015, once again, it started to be distributed as an independent weekly magazine. In 2015, its distribution numbers were about 40.000 a week with sales around 4,900. *Leman* was the continuation of *Limon*, which was a spinoff from *Gırgır*. When *Limon* closed down in 1991, *Leman* took over. In 2010, it published its 1000th issue. In 2015, its distribution numbers were about 37.500 a week with sales around 10,000. *Penguen* was established in 2002 by Metin Üstündağ, Selçuk Erdem, and Erdil Yaşaroğlu who parted their ways with *Leman*. With its emblem of a penguin who was trying to fly, the weekly magazine became a place for emerging artists. In 2015, its distribution numbers were about 56.650 a month with sales around 29.000. *Uykusuz* was established by Umut Sarıkaya, Yiğit Özgür, and Ersin Karabulut in 2007 who were former *Penguen* caricaturists. In 2015, its distribution numbers were about 72.235 a week with sales around 35.500. All magazines established Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages. Among the four, *Gırgır* has the longest publication followed by *Leman*. On the other hand, the distribution numbers of *Uykusuz* were the highest among all (Demir, 2016, pp. 11-13).

Gırgır and *Penguen* discontinued in 2017. *Uykusuz* closed down in January 2023. *Leman* is the only continuing magazine to date. After its İstanbul office was transformed into a cultural center with cafes that eventually spread to other cities, *Leman* became known as more than the magazine. The publication group continues to issue other magazines alongside *Leman*. Although there were rumors that the magazine would discontinue due to printing costs in 2022, the publication has not ceased yet. Since the caricaturists in all these publications were affiliated with each other through publications, their ideological stances were more or less similar. *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* have positioned themselves in opposition to

the policies of the Justice and Development Party, and specifically Erdoğan. It could be argued that their ideological opposition caused the caricaturists to constantly struggle with a known adversary and therefore, the established humor is solidified unintentionally. Demir (2016) says that political humor keeps reproducing established cliches as a kind of cultural strike to overthrow or simply ridicule politicians and governments symbolically (p. 13). In other words, humor or satire symbolically works as a soft tool for voicing political wrongs and desiring a change.

2.2.3. Impact and Reception of Turkish Political Humor

Molotiu's (2020) definition of cartoons includes how the caricatures make use of subjects' facial expressions, movement, emotion, and sound effects. The political caricatures on the cover pages of weekly humor magazines also make use of these tools although elements of caricaturizing is an optional artistic tool in political cartoons. As far as the structure of narration is concerned, political caricatures on the cover pages of Turkish humor magazines are generally single panels or splash pages because they summarize and exaggerate the most spoken or polemical topics while displaying their weekly agenda (Demir, 2016, p. 9). Tzankova & Schiphorst (2012) specify that *Gırgır*, *Penguen*, *Uykusuz*, and *Leman* choose their linguistic references and locate their words and images with the aim of displaying oppositional political views against disputed government policies (p. 120). Turkish political cartoonists who hold opposing views, organize words, images, and humor by permitting the interchangeability of linguistic references. Consequently, they suggest that political cartoonists in Turkey tend to compose their cartoons or caricatures by narrating them in "vague, elusive, and polysemous semiotic systems" to keep pace with an untrustworthy political environment. Additionally, they suggest that the role of humor lessens the intensity of an already unstable oppositional political message (Tzankova & Schiphorst, 2012, pp. 120-125). This last point is debatable because caricatures can also accentuate certain messages through visual polemical stances, portrayal of unlikely situations, and humorous perspectives. Accordingly, humor does not necessarily diminish the intended contradictory messages or opinions.

Boukes (2019) states stages of agenda-setting on individuals regarding political humor and political satire. He underlines how a satiric topic affects people. Two

stages set the intention to saliency and engagement towards the topic: Unfamiliar or complicated topics attract more attention and individuals tend to be more engaged with complex topics due to humorous rhetoric. While the strength of agenda setting regarding political humor is argued in these two stages, the agenda is indirectly affected by engaging emotional states. On one hand, the humorous component is believed to be less credible and informational. This may cause interpersonal discussions about the message, consequently related to the saliency of the public coverage of the topic. On the other hand, the ability to evoke interpersonal talk, media attention, and participation indirectly affects public agenda (pp. 428-430). Although his research material is related to a Dutch satire show about the European Union–U.S. trade agreement, the article also aims to highlight the influence of political satire on agenda setting (Boukes, 2019, p. 427). Thereby, cover pages of Turkish humor magazines can also be viewed as an interpretive and indirect form of agenda setting where agenda setting is not merely a form of repetition of messages and/or stream of coverage.

Öztürk (2022) asks how Turkish humor magazines' (i.e., *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Ustura*, *Cafcaf*) pervasiveness of ideological imprints, namely the presence of particular political and social viewpoints, are evolved or influenced due to the changes in the political atmosphere from 1972 to 2015. The aim of the article is to show the persistence of imprints depending upon the type of political ideology as well as the salience of ideological views over a certain time frame or within the same period (pp. 197-198). Political discourses of cartoons are operationalized in accordance with their negative or positive portrayals of in-group and out-group humorous dynamics, especially of political actors. When an incongruence with state dominated ideology became evident, Turkish humor magazines presented this divide. In humor magazines, the presence of left-wing ideological imprints influenced and caused ideological cynicism, while center-right and extreme-right imprints altered their stance to support state ideologies during the times of political change (Öztürk, 2022, pp. 213-214). Therefore, cynical left-wing Turkish humor magazines, such as *Leman*, remained more persistent in their ideologies as a response to perceived inadequacies of the existing political system. When combined with the idea that humor magazines could work as a symbolical tool for expressing injustices or even defending a position, the persistence of their stance could be viewed as an obligatory position.

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Cultural understandings behind the visual art should also be taken into account. Since Turkish symbolic properties (e.g., common political themes and issues, self-perception, and cartoonists' context) differ from the American standpoint, humorous elements are created culturally and may signify different aspects. For example, the reception of Obama's election in Turkey was viewed as a fresh start for Turkey–U.S. relations. He was viewed as a "secret Muslim," therefore he was "one of us," partially due to his very familiar middle name, Hussein, which provided relief and new expectations after the long George W. Bush administration and his actions in Iraq (Parlak & Tunc, 2012, p. 221). Obama's symbolic representation depended upon familiar religious self-perceptions and previous understandings of Turkey–U.S. relations. In humorous contexts, portrayals of familiar Turkish self-perceptions are sometimes motivated by various conceptualizations.

Yardım & Easat-Daas (2018), position Turkish humor magazine *Penguen's* use of irony as example of "auto-Orientalism," in which the graphic artists adopt and internalize stereotypical and recurring images about their own representations from Western art forms (p. 98). To prove "auto-Orientalism," they compare *Charlie Hebdo*'s and *Penguen*'s use of Islamophobic rhetoric, such as framing Islam as being backwards and differing from progressive or liberal Western values as well as portraying conservative Muslim individuals as aggressive, submissive, sexually perverse, and as a burden to the society. Both humor magazines are compared in accordance with their contextual polemical stances towards the religious lifestyle. Consequently, the article emphasizes *Penguen*'s caricaturization of Islam as problematic. *Penguen* criticizes certain aspects of Islam by assuming a superior position while overlooking the presence of Ottoman Empire in the Islamic geographical regions or regarding Muslim women's clothing (i.e., headscarf, waistcoat, cardigan, or long skirt) as old-fashioned and as a sign of oppression (Yardım & Easat-Daas, 2018, pp. 100-104). The article remarks on using established templates and patterns in humor, which are sometimes incongruent with cultural or religious practices. This claim is not entirely justified. Although the borders of Ottoman Empire included Islamic countries, after the War of Independence, the Turkish Republic had positioned itself as a secular country without dismissing its religious background. Supporting secularism did not mean casting cultural and

folkloric attire or viewing them as old fashioned. In fact, folkloric clothing and traditions were preserved and revered. Other types of Islamic clothing associated with Arabic countries were not permitted in government offices and schools. Thus, the humor magazines were not placing themselves in a superior position but portraying and exaggerating the stereotypical representations associated with the attire.

Dağtaş (2016) underlines how humor can be used as a resistance or a coping strategy to shape political messages in the context of power relations, expressions, mediation and circulation through an ethnographic engagement with the Gezi protests (pp. 27-28). Additionally, she suggests, multimedia political satire in the Gezi protests transformed the binary significations of ingroup and outgroup identifications in Turkey (e.g., secularist/Islamist, leftist/rightist, modern/backward, or urban/rural). The protestors employed humor through parodying the acts of political elites while emphasizing the absurdity of the real and constructing self-directed humor through neologisms reflected in photographs and graffiti. Some of the sexist and homophobic words used in graffiti at the time were covered with purple spray paint, the color associated with gender equality, to emphasize how humorous language could accentuate sexist remarks. The language of humor caused disagreement between the protestors which exemplified how remarks related to stratifications or cliches on gender or other binary oppositions could cause other concerns and render the outcome as being improper and politically incorrect (Dağtaş, 2016, pp. 19-25). Gezi protests proved to be a fruitful arena for humorous exchanges but forms of political humor can be viewed as offensive for some as the example above presents. The debate on cultural, political, gender correctness in presenting humor remains as a debatable issue.

The publication and content of Turkish humor magazines were affected by the military coups in 1960, 1972, and 1980. Despite the limitations and sanctions imposed upon the caricaturists during the times of change in the political arena, these disruptions and upheavals have helped to establish and even intensify the ideological frameworks of these publications. The caricaturists depicted their views in their works. Initially, *Akbaba* and *Marko Pasha*, and later *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz* developed in terms of mediatization and mediation of cartoons within a

restrictive political atmosphere. For example, *Akbaba* played a central role in influencing the adoption of the new alphabet in the early Turkish republic. *Marko Pasha* used political satire and graphic based representations with an oppositional standpoint and didactic and moral tones. The caricatures in *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz* are more interested in coping with repressive agencies without necessarily using a didactic tone and by hinting an alternative. Political humor can become a site for alternative politics as the Gezi protests presented. Protestors used humor through parodying political elites and constructing self-directed humor through neologisms.

2.3. The Role of Political Humor: Rhetoric, Theories and Tools of Humor

Humor was not distinguished from laughter, a reaction of showing emotion, until the eighteenth century (Morreall, 2009, p. 28). Humorous language is similar to making assertions or giving advice and even if an aspect of entertainment exists in the use of playful language, it has been viewed as more than evoking laughter (Morreall 2009, p. 36). Laughter is a socio-cultural act and needs to be learned and taught in relation to reacting to the paradoxical nature of language. Comprehending and distinguishing binary oppositions such as the relationship between question and answer or criticism and justification are related to the nature of humor. Laughter is included in the rhetoric of communication and the rhetorical opposite of laughter is "unlaughter." Humor cannot be defined by laughter because not everybody will laugh at the humorous depictions. Some may feel that the depictions are offensive or ridiculous, thus, the attempt and effect can be quite different. Humor cannot be defined by the emotion it elicits; it is what it is even if it fails to produce laughter (Billig, 2005, pp. 177-179). Unlaughter is more than not laughing. People do their daily chores without laughing, such as when one is waiting at the bus stop. Unlaughter means not laughing when one is expected to or hoped to have laughed. It points to a significant absence due to disappointment or seriousness and it is a socially powerful act (Billig, 2005, p. 192). Yet, unlaughter may be used intentionally by the humorist, in this case the caricaturists, or by the consumers of the joke. Whether or not some jokes are funny is not the concern of the creator or the artist (Smith, 2009, p. 151). Unlaughter refers to the role of the audience, and this study does not focus on reader reception.

The concept of unlaughter is useful in explaining the motives behind some caricatures in this study. Instead of trying to extort laughter, political caricaturists aim for other messages.

If laughter is produced as a result of humor, it could be achieved through juxtapositions, symbolic inversions, and reversals which inverts the social order and creates an alternative space. Categories are shifted and normally separate elements are brought together as in a carnival space. Bakhtin (1984) formulates his concept of "carnivalesque" in Rabelais's works. Although his formulations are developed for novels or stories, it could also be applied to visual depictions. "Carnivalesque" refers to a folk-like public space where laughter and any form of oppositional discourse thrives. Carnivals are spaces where hierarchical order is disregarded and stratification based upon rank, age, and gender disappears. The dynamic and happy atmosphere, "a second life" is constructed as "a world inside out" (p. 11). The rules and regulations that belong to outside life are not relevant in this setting because such restrictions are not applicable. For example, a clown might wear the crown of the king, or the king may behave like a clown and they may talk to each other as equals. Restricted conventions disappear and all alternatives are admissible in such a setting. This inverted universe is joyful, probably because what could not be realized outside is permissible. Having fun and expressing laughter is a natural outcome. The laughter arising in this interactive space is a "festive laughter" that belongs to everybody and it is universal. The festive laughter is also ambivalent because "it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives" and also includes the laughing people because they are a part of the same world (Bakhtin, 1984, pp. 11-12). Thus, in carnivalesque, laughter is considered as oppositional to dominant discourses of power.

Political cartoons could be evaluated as depicting carnivalesque spaces with juxtapositions, symbolic inversions in liminal spaces, in this case the cover pages of humor magazines. These political cartoons use inversions, and juxtapositions while disrupting the status quo of the political subjects and their portrayal gives rise to a carnivalesque type of humor. On one hand, at times of distress, the humorous aspects in cartoons offer relief and act as a coping strategy for the public and works as a liberating force (Cantek, 2010, p. 23). On the other hand, depicted political subjects

or those who contradict can view the caricature as hostile and degrading. According to Morreall (2009) humor can be associated with insincerity, idleness, irresponsibility, being hedonistic, diminishing self-control, hostility, fostering anarchy and being foolish but also open mindedness, creative thinking, and critical thinking (pp. 92-113). These listed virtues and vices are part of the discussions related to the reception of humor, such as the reception of prophet Muhammad cartoons published in Danish newspapers in 2006 (Smith, 2009, p. 148). When the prophet Muhammed cartoons appeared, they were viewed as sacrilege, since these depictions angered the Muslims, eventually leading to several protests and even threatening and the bombing the *Charlie Hebdo* office and related shootings later Petrikovski, 2015).

2.3.1. Rhetoric of Political Humor

Rhetorics has been traditionally defined as the study of verbal language or the act of persuasion, "to induce others to our needs and desires" (Ryan, 2010, p. 54). Yet, the idea of rhetoric has changed meanings in time; instead of using verbal trickery to make others attend to the needs of the communicator to include larger aspects of communication studies. Making sense of the world occurs through the language used in an interaction. For example, using the word "terrorist" instead of "freedom fighter" for Palestinian resisters frame the meaning and understanding of certain classifications as well as ideological outlook. The former immediately classifies the subject in the category of an unlawful criminal, while the latter places the same subject in an acceptable and even admired status (Ryan, 2010, p. 55).

Among the rhetorical theorists, Burke's (1969) contributions have expanded the field to include rhetoric in the process of identification. According to him, the subject's affiliations, such as nationality or profession, become part of one's identification. Thus, once subjects identify with abstract ideas, they become "consubstantial" with them. Consubstantiality is unavoidable because individuals need to act together in social settings and "in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes that make them consubstantial" (p. 21). For example, to be "American" is not associated with a material reality, however, once associated with that concept, consciously or unconsciously, the subject is compelled to act in a

certain manner related to that concept. Burke (1969) proposes that one can persuade others through identifying with that person's ideas and language usage. In other words, persuasion and identification work together (p. 21). Rhetorical devices of consubstantiality are widely used in political cartoons since the visual and textual message needs to be condensed on one page and grasped in a relatively short amount of time. For example, to depict the U.S. motives, the American flag or English phrases might be employed in the caricature.

Burke's (1969) studies on the significance of rhetoric in communication is noteworthy since politicians' language in their public and media appearances are associated with them and are indicators of their personality traits. Thus, the caricatures on the cover pages mimic or refer to the political figures' speech patterns or sometimes create entirely different language usages to create political humor. Language affects one's perception of others (Hart et al., 2013, p. 3). As far as the political subjects are concerned, their tone and word choices are both oral and visual and their language style is characteristic (Hart et al., 2013, p. 6). Style can be understood from a number of vantage points: "Conceptual style" traces how thought process operates within trends in discursive practices, "political style" examines how language of dominance is inserted in texts. The language of social activism is also part of this category. Finally, "cultural style" looks at performative acts in culture to arrive at conclusions (Hart et al., 2013, p. 9). These styles may work together to reveal rhetorics in caricatures. Hart (2023) also refers to differences between Obama and Trump's rhetorics in terms of eloquence. While Obama is described as eloquent, Trump is described as not interested in the power of words and thus, his tweets are in capital letters or he speaks in a direct manner without caring how others feel (p. 6). Similar use of rhetoric is true in the caricatures, since the caricatures exaggerate or subvert characteristics of political figures in a satirical portrayal.

2.3.2. Theories of Political Humor

Humor can be framed through three major classifications: hostility/disparagement theories, release theories, and incongruity theories. These theories can be used as standpoints when interpreting the humorous text. Accordingly, they serve as models for understanding aspects of humor. Critics and scholars use these theories to

understand the functions as well as the engaging aspects of the medium (Young, 2017, p. 5). The attraction and workings of humor are considered complementary and are part of almost all hybrid forms of humor, including political caricatures, the subject matter of this thesis.

Hostility/disparagement theories, which are sometimes called superiority theories, perceive humorous exchanges based on positioning oneself as disparate or negatively disposed compared to others. This positioning can be directed towards the represented subject or the participant of the humorous text (Attardo, 2020, pp. 59-65). This approach relies on the social and collective understanding of humor because it underlines the essence of how and why something or someone is ridiculed. Although this theory can be viewed as presenting a limiting perception, due to understanding the humorous expression as having power over partakers, it can actually highlight an affectionate form of engagement between wits and riddles. Recognition of the difference between how subjects are involved in the humorous text and how laughter is evoked is not necessarily interrelated. There is a lack of reflection on why laughter relies on positioning oneself as superior to the ridiculed object (Lintott, 2016, p. 355). Humor uses "symbolic aggression" while criticizing chosen political conditions (Miczo, 2019, pp. 258-259). Therefore, this theory partially distinguishes the ridiculing function of humor when underprivileged arrangement of the subject matter is constructed in the message (Meyer, 2000, pp. 314-315). Critical messages arising from the text does not necessarily mean that humor intends to be aggressive.

Relief theories propose a psychological perception on humor where individuals' reinterpretation of nervous or repressed circumstances are released. This theory is based upon Spencer's (1911) views on the effect of emotions on our muscles and Freud's (1905) psychoanalytical theories on laughter, in which individuals can conceal their sexual and aggressive impulses through humorous interactions to circumvent societal taboos (Costanzo, 2020, p. 15). However, relief theories additionally indicate the purpose of the communicator who frames the message in a humorous manner to reduce the potential uneasiness built around that particular subject (Meyer, 2000, p. 312).

Incongruity theories rely upon perceiving humor through recognizing odd, abnormal, or out of place incidents in the message that instigates amusing or funny responses. Incongruity is built upon shortcomings of superiority and relief theories with the aim of encompassing wider humorous situations (Cundall Jr., 2007, p. 206). Understanding humor is based upon recognizing, seeking, and exploring incongruent presentations of conventional expectations. Incongruity theories emphasize perceivers' role towards the humorous objects since receivers possess already established patterns for the subject matter (Meyer, 2000, p. 313). Humor is experienced when the message is re-interpreted by identifying coexisting incompatible presences in the treated subject matter (Young, 2017, p. 5). Compared to superiority and relief theories, this theory does not presuppose an emotional or psychological position or effects. However, to evoke positive effect, simultaneous consideration of benign appraisal and violation appraisal towards the presented situation needs to be present (Warren & McGraw, 2015, p. 4).

According to Lynch (2002) communication perspectives related to humorous messages establishes a link to these "motivational theories" (p. 430). For him, the communication process can be viewed under two aspects; rhetorical studies and social functions of humor. The former is concerned with the components of the text and how these components are designed while the latter focuses on specific types of humor initiating communicative roles such as teasing, release of boredom, attraction, or persuasion in social context (Lynch, 2002, pp. 430-431). The rhetorical aspect is significant in analyzing the use of humor in political caricatures when conveying the reflection of the political order. Additionally, elaborating the visual elements of these political caricatures is also grounded on rhetorical approaches. The social functions of humor are concerned with how humor constitutes laughter, prejudices, eases tension, and increases anxiety within a social context. These functions illustrate the motivations for humor and how these motivations are used in humorous messages. Although this study does not measure the impact of political humor and its results in knowledge, learning, attitudes, opinions, cynicism, and engagement, it tries to understand the patterns of thoughts on Turkey–U.S. relations. In Turkey, satirical acts in non-democratic political contexts embody aspects of collective resistance as exemplified in Gezi protests. Moreover, in repressive regimes counter political narratives are dominant in political satire with the aim of enhancing a sense of

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community and belonging to a populace (Ho et al., 2021, p. 717). Besides the manifestation and culmination of cultural political agenda, Holm (2023) argues that political satire can be better understood as a reflection and a hopeful remedy when the political significance of a community is disregarded (p. 94). This argument is based upon the idea that reformulation of satirical genres such as social media posts, memes, etc. that expose political humor do not provoke moral seriousness. On the contrary, political humor is viewed as a form of insight in recognizing shifts of social and cultural transformation (Holm, 2023, p. 88). These shifts are portrayed by echoing the rhetoric of political leaders or figures.

2.3.3. Tools of Political Humor

According to Dagnes (2012), political satire is different from political commentary because there is an attempt to employ humor through irony, sarcasm, and parody (p. 20). Political satire addresses oppositions about the political endeavor, media reaction, and public opinion while mocking or ridiculing the subject matter (Dagnes, 2012, p. 22). Hernandez (1991) argues that oppositional or alternative commentary of satirical texts center upon recognizable representative categories that are in a dialectic relationship. This situation refers to symbolization and using visual metaphors when constructing satirical portrayals. Additionally, he conceptualizes personality categories according to individuals' social identities and values (Hernandez, 1991, p. 3). The individual's representational personality is considered between a spectrum of the subject and the other, whereas social and political events are positioned between "alienation" and "harmony." In-between states, called the "Historical Axis," refers to the historical experiences or circumstances that may also appear as being satirical in political and social endeavors. Overall, he emphasizes political satire as a humorous social commentary on political power, which has the ability to initiate public discussion and reflection through the use of recognizable visual connotations.

Both Hernandez (1991) and Dagnes (2012) states that political satire includes encompassing opinions about normative paradigms that are held by hegemony. Hernandez (1991) additionally talks about the level of political satire. In other words, satire can be presented in various degrees of gentleness or harshness and the intent of

the caricature needs to be understood. "Negative" and "Positive" signify dominant social roles under meaningful considerations, which eventually have positive or negative connotations about existing procedures of society (Hernandez, 1991, p. 6). For example, sex workers or stepmothers are associated with negative connotations, whereas lovers or mothers are associated with positive connotations. Consequently, social roles can be displayed as character traits while recalling cultural norms. Intensity of a satire can be displayed through indicating these social norms in private relations. Political figures also situate themselves through familiar metaphors across time, roles, party, and settings and they associate or disassociate with certain metaphors. Thus, political satire is a type of mannerism that intends to expose and criticize existing political, social, and cultural discourses through using humorous elements such as irony, sarcasm, and parody besides recognizable dialectical values or categories. Political satire involves the utility of making a judgment since it acts as a way of criticizing existing political endeavors (Young, 2017, p. 3). Satire takes on the role in questioning and exposing foolish and immoral decisions from political life and displaying cultural anxiety through a type of humorous analysis (Stott, 2005, p. 103). Framing the description and passing judgment on political and social order may be performed through different language tools and by combining and intersecting them at times.

2.3.3.1. Irony and sarcasm

Greek etymology of irony, *eironeia*, implies "dissimulation" or "concealing" (Giora & Attardo, 2014, p. 398). Irony is a depiction of pretending to believe in an action or a situation. It can also be presented in various ways that offers an opposition between two levels through evoking contradiction, incongruity, or incompatibility. Two levels simply represent a corrective feature incorporating prior knowledge or belief on a subject matter (Muecke, 1969, pp. 20-23). Furthermore, irony is a term that cannot be fully defined because of its behavioral applicability towards political events and everyday experiences.

According to Deleuze and Guattari (as cited in Colebrook, 2004), irony works in understanding what is beyond our social self in a detached manner. Beyond social self refers to a standpoint where individuals position themselves as independent

beings from the represented situations. Sarcasm is established through presupposed features of political and social life. Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of irony and sarcasm depends upon the use of subjectivity towards social and political events. They base their argument upon subjectivity because the distance to the existing actual event and framing it in the present moment has a major role in conceptualizing the form of understanding (pp. 139-145). Being ironic is applicable towards all humanly happenings, whereas, being sarcastic can be based upon the subjective experience of social happenings. Sarcasm can take place within irony because of the awareness of subjectivity. Irony may be unintentional whereas sarcasm indicates a certain criticism in a humorous manner (Giora & Attardo, 2014, p. 398). In sarcasm, pretending to be unaware of the incompatibility between the situation and the presented message is one of the features. In addition to subjective awareness, perception of the ironic or sarcastic text is significant in considering the outcome as humorous or satiric.

2.3.3.2. Parody

Parody refers to a certain exaggeration of familiar aspects of an original text or concept as presented in caricatures and impersonations. Dentith (2000), defines parody as an exaggerated mimicry of one's utterance that can take place in both visual and textual form (p. 1). He underlines that in mimicking a certain utterance there is a certain evaluative value attributed towards the original intonation, which eventually creates a certain allusion with the copied text. He contemplates upon two intertextual forms for understanding parody: deliberate or explicit references to precursor text or a more generalized allusion to the existing codes of daily language or narratives. Lastly, parody is not necessarily polemical just because it is an imitation, yet, it can function as polemical when it acts as a tool inside the appropriated narrative (Dentith, 2000, pp. 4-18).

Mimicry within parody can shine a light on the distinctive cultural discourses of representation and possibly on historical struggles (Hariman, 2008, p. 260). Ready-made formulations of a certain culture (e.g., catch phrases, slang, jargon, and clichés), as other tools for parody, can be accented since they are subjective satirical evaluations. To sum up, parody is considered a reworking of former or common events, narratives, and daily language through various attitudes of satirists.

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The interpretation of the political humor in caricatures is perceived in an array of spectrums. Overall, rhetoric, theories, and tools of humor provide a framework to evaluate humorous political representations. Additionally, acknowledging the ideological imprints of humor magazines is crucial in interpreting the visuals. *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen,* and *Uykusuz* are liberal and left-wing compared to the policies of the existing Turkish government. Their ideological stances are aligned with the caricaturists' conveyed messages on Turkey–U.S. relations and the caricatures depict domestic politics merged with the American symbols. The depiction of political figures in caricatures becomes a representative claim to the inner workings of the dynamic and authoritarian Turkish politics. This thesis aims to be an empirical study on how messages on the cover pages of humor magazines are transpired through political and cultural relations with the U.S. Thereby, this study presents findings on political humor in relation to American political subjects, as well as domestic and foreign political happenings connected to the representations of the U.S.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Study Context: Overview of Turkey–U.S. Relations

Government decisions and political figures in the context of Turkey–U.S. relations portrayed in Turkish humor magazines often represent the imprudent nature of the political power. Decision-making processes are ideologically framed and are obviously affected from previous relationships and established nationalistic feelings. Nationalistic sentiments can be evoked through types of unifying bonds based upon "a common culture, a common history, a sense of territorial unity, a common ideology, or political ideals (as in the United States), or even a common religion" (Çınar, 2005, p. 7). Political and geostrategic reasons are the major determining factors in the relationship between countries. The representations in the political caricatures are mostly geared towards political events and their impact at the time. The representation of a country is often meant to cover the larger population but representations in caricatures are subjective and are affected by the historical relations and current political sentiments.

3.1.1. Turkey–U.S. Relations after World War II

Turkey–U.S. relations have depended on diplomacy, military and security policies, international human rights policies, and economic policies. Turkey's support in the Korean War (1950-1953) and NATO membership (since 1952) are the determining factors of this relationship. After World War II, the U.S. embraced a new representational model to cope with the influence and expansion of Soviet Power.

With the Marshall Plan (1948), the government started to give aid to European countries. Greece and Turkey received initial aid under the Truman Doctrine (1947). The U.S. not only provided military and economic aid to pro-Western governments. They were also in the process of building a national security state by ensuring the development of atomic weapons, forming military alliances and an espionage network (Central Intelligence Agency) to overthrow Soviet expansion, and seeking cultural exchange and propaganda in portraying their "benevolent supremacy" to the world. "Benevolent supremacy" refers to the ideological responsibility of the U.S. as the originator of international order with the aim of guaranteeing democracy and security liberty for all nations in the postwar world (McAlister, 2001, p. 47).

Militaristic interventions to Korea and Vietnam in the second half of the twentieth century demonstrates a sense of ideological responsibility and how the U.S. positioned itself as a major player in politics around the globe. Turkey joined the Korean War alongside the U.S., while domestically accepting the multiparty political system with the formation of the Democrat Party in 1946. The Democrat Party embraced American aid and assistance for security and economic advancement. Meanwhile, the rising leftist movements were suspicious of America's access to Turkish militaristic facilities and involvement in national affairs (Harris, 2004, p. 71). The case of Cyprus has been a weak point in Turkey–U.S. relations. Cyprus was under British protectorate between 1874-1914, under military occupation by the British between 1914 to 1925 and a crown colony from 1925 to 1960. It became an independent republic in 1960, but tensions between the Turkish and Greek communities intensified. Turkey sought a more independent approach and started military peace operations in Cyprus in 1974. As a result of the 1974 military intervention, the U.S. imposed several sanctions on Turkey: bans were placed on the cultivation of opium, the arms embargo was put into effect, and militaristic/economic assistance experienced cutbacks (Kassimeris, 2008, pp. 102-106). Currently, Turkey controls about forty percent of the island to secure the Turkish community. To date, the Northern Republic of Cyprus is not recognized as a sovereign state by other nations, including the U.S.

During the post-Cold War era, domestic and international events, power struggles and contexts changed. The U.S. still perceived Turkey as a strategically important

country and a key member of NATO because of militaristic, political, and economic interests and Turkey perceived the U.S. as having a prominent role in global affairs. In the 1980s, the militaristic relationship between Turkey and the U.S. was strengthened due to instabilities in the Gulf Region, largely caused by the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the geostrategic importance of Turkey was once again brought to the foreground. The U.S. continued to support Turkey after the 1980 military coup and Turgut Özal, the prime minister between 1983 to 1989, became the advocator of the U.S. policies related to Iraqi invasion. Additionally, this relationship provided certain benefits to Turkey, such as receiving militaristic arms upgrades and other economic benefits (Altunışık, 2004, p. 156). During and after the Iraqi invasion, Kurdish refugee flow from Northern Iraq changed the dynamics between two countries since Turkey's interests started to evolve around the Kurdistan Workers' Party's (PKK) militant political aims and actions in Turkey. Plus, PKK harbored militants frequently violated the border security and created armed conflicts. Turkey supported an integrated and stable Iraq instead of the establishment of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Turkish policies evolved around establishing an authoritative voice in the possible formulations beyond its southern borders. Thus, Turkey–U.S. relationship started to be strategically calculated (Balik, 2013, p. 62). In time, differentiated interests in the Middle East between the two countries became more pronounced.

The Clinton administration (1993-2001) seemed to acknowledge Turkey's concerns and shared intelligence in capturing the PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan. Additionally, Bill Clinton supported Turkey's European Union (EU) membership. Turkey supported military corporations through legitimized NATO operations in Bosnia, Somalia, and Kosovo (Örmeci, 2020, pp. 70-71). Bill Clinton was perceived as a charismatic and popular leader in Turkey. He visited earthquake victims in İzmit and his image of holding a baby who pinched his nose forged him as a popular president (Kinzer, 1999). Parlak & Tunc (2012) summed up Clinton's popularity by comparing how he was portrayed as a "sympathetic and charismatic leader" in the media. They also refer to the humor magazine *Leman* which ridicules the domineering public opinion about the visit of the American president (p. 217). *Leman* is coherent in terms of being satirical and conveying leftist ideas in international relations as well as criticizing the public reverence of the U.S. presidents as if they are royalties

(Öztürk, 2022, p. 13). Yet, Clinton remained popular in Turkey compared to George W. Bush according to a Turkish survey on the popularity of American presidents (Örmeci, 2020, p. 71).

President Bush's approach towards the Muslim world after 9/11, Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, his indifference to PKK terrorism, and his political support for Iraqi Kurds frustrated the Turkish media. Furthermore, Prime Minister Erdoğan and his international policy advisor Ahmet Davutoğlu altered policies by forming close relations with Middle Eastern countries, while remaining faithful to the NATO alliance (Kurtbağ, 2020, pp. 146-147). NATO's Article 5, with Bush's insistence, asserted that NATO members would be positioned against any attack towards the United States after 9/11 and Turkey was among the first to join this call for coalition. Turkey was trying to defend its national security interests, namely the increasing PKK terrorist attacks, securing Turkmens' rights in northern Iraq, concerns over the status of Kirkuk and the rising Kurdish nationalism in Iran and Syria. In July 2003, the arrest and detaining of eleven Turkish Special Forces by the U.S. troops exemplified the differences in the approaches of both countries. (Sadik, 2009, pp. 11-13). The relationship between two countries turned into mistrust towards each other during the early 2000s, despite the militaristic partnership. An Iraqi journalist's act of throwing his shoe to Bush in contempt during his visit to Baghdad six years after the Iraqi invasion became a prominent and repeated theme on the cover pages of Turkish humor magazines (Parlak & Tunc, 2012, p. 220). Following the cynicism between two countries, the Barack Obama administration promised renewed mutual interests and more compatible perspectives for interactions.

3.1.2. Turkey–U.S. Relations during the Obama Administrations

In the beginning of his administration, Obama promised multilateral peaceful diplomacy rather than pursuing unilateral military defense and policy. Turkish people seemed to accommodate his peace offerings besides feeling sympathetic to his Islamic background due to his Muslim father and familiar name, Barack Hussein Obama. His election was viewed as a hopeful start for the strained relations. During his visit to Turkey in 2009, Obama commented on the "model partnership," which meant shaping the nature of partnership in a respectful, secure, and prosperous

manner according to changing circumstances. Before becoming prime minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 2009-2014, approved of Obama's new partnership possibilities. However, it is significant to note that popularity and confidence towards Obama was different from the existing mistrust towards U.S. foreign policy. When he was elected, Turkish support for Obama was 33 percent, according to Pew Research Center. This decreased to 12 percent in 2011 before the end of his first term. This decrease was due to Turkey's diplomatic and economic engagement with Iran, conflicting interests on the Syrian crisis, deteriorating Turkish-Israeli relations, and genocide allegations by the Armenian diaspora in the U.S. (Kınacıoğlu & Aka, 2018, pp. 142-155). Therefore, the idea of model partnership between the two countries became complicated with trust and security issues.

As U.S. military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan declined, Obama's remarks about Turkey's assertive role in the Middle East were also uttered. The friendship between Obama and Erdoğan was viewed as crucial in securing political interests in the Middle East but differing concerns caused tension at times. Iranian nuclear weapon ambitions were viewed as mere speculations by Erdoğan and signing the Tehran Joint Declaration for nuclear fuel exchange triggered the United Nations Security Council to vote for severe sanctions against Iran. Turkey voted against these sanctions and Obama voiced his concerns in the June 2010 G20 summit. Hosting a NATO missile radar system in 2011 was considered as a conciliation offer, supported by Erdoğan's reiteration of "model partnership." Furthermore, Turkey was against military intervention against Libya, which was carried out with the intention of overthrowing President Muammar Gaddafi, but allowing the usage of İzmir air base as an operational center in Libyan airstrikes strengthened relations in the eyes of American officials (Kınacıoğlu & Aka, 2018, pp. 152-153). Lastly, Turkey's stance against Israeli policies towards Palestinians and the interruption of Turkish humanitarian aid to Gaza (the Mavi Marmara crisis) weakened Turkish–Israeli relations, which caused the U.S. to step in. Obama became involved in the crisis as a mediator and instigated an apology from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (Örmeci, 2020, p. 77). Turkish-Israel relations are significant through its implication on strategic partnerships in the Middle East (Aviv, 2016, p. 216). Additionally, such a relationship is deemed crucial for American interests despite Turkey's increasing

authoritarianism in domestic matters and promotion of religious lifestyle (Cohen, 2020, p. 308).

The Turkish government's foreign policies under the Justice and Development Party could be outlined as trying to merge Ottoman values—although these values are ambiguous and are often based on interpretation rather than reality—with current conservative values. Framing the Ottoman past and Islamic culture through TV series, and changing the education system to encourage a shift to religiously oriented schools could be given as examples of creating a rift between conservative and western lifestyles (Aviv, 2016, p. 214). Although Turkey's foreign policy change indicates a leaning towards Islamic values in contrast to seeking Western integration and strengthening secularism, Obama's mediation to keep Israel and Turkey on peaceful terms displays a committed viewpoint in viewing Turkey as an important regional power (Cohen, 2020, p. 313). Yet, trying to improve relations with the Arab world and Iranians caused tension in the trilateral relations between Turkey, Israel, and the U.S., as well as causing disappointments for Obama administration since the U.S. wanted Turkey to play the role of mediating peace talks between Israel and Palestine, Syria, as well as between the U.S. and Iran (Williams, 2011, p. 248). Hence, decisions and actions of Israel are definitely a political area that factors in Turkey–U.S. relations.

During Obama's second term (2013-2017), political policies towards the Syrian crisis differed although overthrowing Bashar al-Assad regime was the initial mutual agreement. The promises towards a model partnership did not work fully due to Turkish prioritization of security angle and the U.S. insistence to continue militaristic presence in the region (Kınacıoğlu & Aka, 2018, p. 161). Turkey demanded a stable approach towards Bashar al-Assad regime and ISIS because of rising terrorist attacks and refugee crisis. Nonetheless, after the Assad regime used chemical weapons in August 2012, Obama launched air strikes and accepted Putin's deal to disarm Assad. Turkey perceived this deal as an anathema that allowed the Assad regime to continue and felt excluded in the decision-making process (Weiss, 2020, pp. 272-273).

The Syrian crisis also caused an upheaval in the relations. The Obama administration supported and helped to arm Kurdish groups, People's Protection Unit (YPG) and

Democratic Union Party (PYD). These groups aimed at eliminating ISIS but their affiliation with PKK, the question of the autonomy of Syrian Kurds, and Kurdish militia groups using the U.S. supplied arms caused anxiety on the Turkish side (Örmeci, 2020, p. 78). The Obama administration did not address this concern and justified the alliance with YPG as a mutually beneficial outcome as long as ISIS was to be eliminated. Moreover, Kurdish groups worked as a counter balance in securing Israel's existence (Işıksal & Maaitah, 2020, p. 250). Consequently, the U.S. decisions related to the Syrian crisis were carried ideologically. Regional disagreements on Syria remained as a topic of interest during the Trump's administration.

Domestic developments regarding the Gezi Park protests and the July 2016 coup attempt led to further decline in Turkey–U.S. relations. Obama and American officials criticized the degree of police force towards the civilians during the Gezi Park protests and Obama declined the calls from Erdoğan (Kınacıoğlu & Aka, 2018, p. 158). Erdoğan and Justice and Development Party officials accused Western powers, namely American embassy officials, Jews, and the foreign press, for instigating the protests (Aviv, 2016, p. 223). On the other hand, a failed coup attempt in July 2016, was organized by the Gülen headed religious movement, later proclaimed as Fetullahist Terrrorist Organization (FETÖ) by the Turkish state. Several officers from the Justice and Development Party, accused the U.S. for aiding the coup attempt. Since Gülen resided in Pennsylvania, Turkey requested Gülen's extradition but the U.S. judiciary overruled (Ercoşkun, 2021, p. 258). The relationship between the Gülen Movement and Erdoğan-ruled Justice and Development Party had started with mutual advantage to "reclaim a place for religion in Turkish politics" and to diminish the power structure of Kemalist secularism and the role of military's guardianship. Both benefited from working together and achieved a certain level of success through policy changes. Yet, the Justice and Development Party started to suspect and question the motives of the Gülen movement since disagreements on Israeli relations, covert PKK dealings, and collecting state data started to surface as problems (Martin, 2020, pp. 113-117).

After the July 2016 coup attempt, domestic political endeavors were agitated by the power struggle between the Erdoğan ruled government and the Gülen movement. Many government officers were accused and incarcerated. The transition to the

Presidential system was realized while the nation was still under a state of emergency which eased the decision making and implementing processes. Yet, anti-American sentiments were on the rise due to policies in the Middle East and the unwillingness of the U.S. in extraditing Fetullah Gülen (Örmeci, 2020, p. 80). The U.S. image continued to decrease during the administration of Donald Trump.

3.1.3. Turkey–U.S. Relations during the Trump Administration

After Donald Trump took office following the 2016 elections, it first seemed, Erdoğan and Trump would get along since they shared similar political discourses. Both were identified as populist leaders who mobilized their followers for the persistence of state power against their political opponents. Trump and Erdoğan shaped their claims, diplomacy, and rhetoric by establishing oppositional structures in the society in accordance with the nation's historical turning points. Therefore, they legitimized the significance of their presidential role as a savior from possible national threats. Trump's repetitive slogan "Make America Great Again (MAGA)" suggests that America's greatness had been disregarded by past administrations but could be restored through republican views. On the other hand, Erdoğan focuses on the Ottoman past to emphasize Turkish-Islamic identity as opposed to Atatürk's insistence on secularism and modernization (Al-Ghazzi, 2021, pp. 47-57). Despite different leanings based on local developments and mobilizations, these two leaders fed off each other's rhetoric, letters, and polemics during diplomatic visits (Rothberg, 2019, p. 820). Trump and Erdoğan used similar tactics in merging their own political agenda with their national identity.

During the Trump administration the issue of supporting the PYD/YPG and Syrian Kurds remained as problems. The Trump administration continued to arm Kurdish militia while Turkey was still against supporting the PYD to counter ISIS since the weapons might be shared with PKK and used in terrorist attacks. The U.S. Army positioned forces at the Turkish-Syrian border to eliminate possible escalations. Additionally, the Trump administration changed the name of the PYD to Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a symbolic representation for the Kurdish militia. These were part of the U.S. tactical negotiations for solving ongoing regional conflicts and addressing Turkish security concerns.

Turkey supported Trump's decision of pulling out U.S. troops from Syria in 2018, and later on, Trump and Erdoğan agreed to establish a safe zone in northeastern Syria through Operation Peace Spring. Meanwhile, to remove Kurdish forces from the border, Turkey entered into an agreement with Russia. This caused Trump to send a threatening letter to Erdoğan (Örmeci, 2020, pp. 81-85). The letter was written in an undiplomatic manner and threatened Erdoğan for his unwillingness to cooperate with the YPG, with the words "Don't be a tough guy. Don't be a fool!", stating that the Turkish economy would suffer as a result (Ho, 2019). The tone of the letter presented the fragile nature of bilateral security partnerships. Consequently, Turkey regarded Russia as a more suitable partner in the Middle East Region. The Turkish decision to purchase S-400 air defense missile systems from Russia caused the removal of Turkey from the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program (Gözkaman, 2020, p. 341). NATO regarded the purchase of S-400 systems as a security risk, since Russia would be able to collect data on F-35 aircrafts (Örmeci, 2020, p. 90).

Aside from the Syrian crisis, Trump's unstable explanations and declarations on economic relations between two countries caused restlessness (Ercoşkun, 2021, p. 257). Trump and Erdoğan were active Twitter users and the succession of tweets present this instability. Both parties used social media to reveal their domestic and foreign policies, concerns, and predictions, which is often called Twitter diplomacy (Ovalı, 2020, p. 28). The topics in Trump's Twitter accounts centered around criticism and threats towards Turkey in relation to the PYD/YPG issue, Operation Peace Spring, and Turkish government's decision to purchase S-400 air and missile defense systems from Russia. The Turkish government's Twitter accounts covered the U.S. sanctions towards Iran, the U.S. refusal to extradite Fetullah Gülen, the U.S. suspension of visa applications from Turkey, and relocating the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Twitter usage accentuated the already existing issues and national security concerns during the Trump administration rather than the incorporation of negotiation techniques (Ovalı, 2020, pp. 36-40).

Other problem areas in Turkey–U.S. relationship included differing perspectives on Iran's decision to further research on nuclear weapons, security needs of Israel, and ban on visitor visas to the U.S. Trump was against Iran's nuclear deal, also known as

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), since he viewed the deal as intimidating for American allies, especially Israel. According to him, the Iranian government supported terrorist groups in the Middle East and they should not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. He asked the neighboring countries to stop purchasing oil and natural gas from Iran, and threatened to impose sanctions to those who exported iron, steel, aluminum, or copper to Iran (Özdemir, 2021, pp. 753-755). Since Turkey purchased Iranian oil, such developments affected Turkey.

Trump criticized Obama for supporting Iran since such a policy caused a geopolitical risks for Israel. He developed strong relations with Netanyahu, recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, and carried the U.S. Embassy there (Cavari, 2022, pp. 157-159). Israel also sided with the U.S. since they were worried about the expansion of Iranian military forces and bases (Özdemir, 2021, p. 748). In general, Israel and the U.S. have viewed each other as allies, and this did not change during the Trump administration. As opposed to Trump, Erdoğan criticized Israel's policies and the U.S. support on the Gaza conflict. Additionally, he viewed acts of Hamas as legitimate, whereas Israel, and the U.S., classified Hamas as a terrorist organization (Cohen, 2020, pp. 312-318). The Trump administration's support to Israel mainly underlined the already existing power plays in the region, coupled with other familiar anxieties.

A short-lived controversy occurred when Trump administration suspended nonimmigrant visa services. The Turkish government reciprocated with the same statements of the U.S. Embassy. The visa controversy started when American citizens/officials were arrested to testify in the ongoing investigations on FETÖ (Gözkaman, 2020, pp. 338-339). Another disagreement occurred when Erdoğan's bodyguards acted aggressively during a diplomatic visit. The bodyguards used force and attacked protestors carrying Kurdish PYD party flags outside of the Turkish Ambassador's residence (Örmeci, 2020, p. 88). Erdoğan tried to justify the contentious intervention of his bodyguards by stating the protestors' affiliation with the PKK. Yet, the media condemned the bodyguards' behavior since the incident was a forceful violation of freedom of speech and expression (Holpuch, 2017). While causing a strain on Turkey–U.S. relations, reactions to these incidents took place in

both Turkish and American social domains and functioned as temporary outlines of public opinion.

3.2. Case Selection

The main focus of the thesis is related to the compositional and rhetorical aspects of political humor in Turkish caricatures on the cover pages of humor magazines *Gırgır*, *Penguen*, *Leman*, and *Uykusuz*. Although some started their publications before the 2000s, these magazines were released weekly and had stable distribution numbers. Since some founders and caricaturists separated and established the other humor magazines, their frames of reference are interconnected at times. The decision to issue new periodicals was based on social and economic reasons, minor differences in attitude, varied sense of humor, and the need to diversify political humor magazines (Demir, 2016, p. 12). My primary data includes the cover pages of these humor magazines that portray Turkey–U.S. relationships, and include the election periods and administrations of Barack Obama and Donald Trump between 2008 and 2021. As the previous short historical background reveals, Turkey–U.S. relationships was not seamless and had its ups and downs in relation to national interests. I choose this period to understand how the magazines use political humor in depicting the two recent U.S. presidents, as well as to assess how the caricatures present foreign and domestic outlooks in a humorous context. The humorous portrayals of two recent U.S. presidents are different due to their background, character, and ideological outlooks and the creation of these caricatures are shaped through the political policies of the time. Nevertheless, the cover pages aim at giving messages with a perspective.

Cover pages act as general frames and present playful information and arguments about weekly happenings at that particular time period. Selçuk Erdem, who is a caricaturist and founder of *Penguen*, confirms that the magazine usually portrays a weekly topic that is related to the most prominent current news (Demir, 2016, p. 9). Also, these cover pages may appear on other independent online journals and social media sites to elucidate different perspectives on the weekly trending political topic(s). In general, these magazines embrace an oppositional stance compared to the mainstream media and become the voice of dissent while advocating for the benefit

of citizens. The political caricatures on the cover pages and throughout the magazines are critical rather than complementary to government policies and rhetoric. (Demir, 2016, pp. 8-10). The cover pages of the chosen four magazines examine and illustrate events that portray subject matters related to the U.S. and display a type of public opinion that often stands in opposition to the mainstream media. Illustrations and textual references on the selected cover pages condense complex issues in a frame and cover particular aspects of the political event in question. I adopt content analysis in relation to my thesis subject on political humor.

3.3. Content Analysis

My research relies on the methodology of content analysis. This research technique is used for interpreting mass and social cultural objects such as magazines, digital images, photographs, television, and newspapers. The technique involves selecting, coding, and quantifying the presence of meanings and relationships within a wider context. The process of content analysis aims to present and perceive what kind of knowledge is provided or prevented in a specific medium in line with different discourses, context, or purposes; what the conveyed message transpires; and what the conveyed message means to readers (Krippendorff, 2018, p. 2). Purpose of the researcher affects textual and visual categorizing. Researcher is in the role of "making systematic inferences," which is to clarify through tables or graphs for interpreting, recognizing symbols, and understanding the meaning of the messages (p. 30). Since an individual engages with the text with certain conceptualizations, texts have no objectives. Furthermore, materials do not have a single meaning and they can be interpreted from various valid perspectives. The reader does not need to be in a strict intersubjective consensus with the author's perspective and share a common ground. Materials can present unrelated locations, symbols, ideas, and can invoke different feelings. The text or visuals are generated by situations, problems, or discourses. In accordance with the mentioned foundational understandings, the researcher can explicate the chosen context through selected conceptual material (Krippendorff, 2018, pp. 28-31). Overall, perception of the object of analysis is significant to conceptualize content analysis.

Content analysis requires a continuous reexamination of the data throughout the analysis. Short (2019), clarifies this revisitation of data from various perspectives (pp. 9-15). She explains that the researchers need to consider their own positionality in relation to their research purpose while examining the meaning, agency, and focalization of the text. Reflecting upon relevant socio historical and cultural contexts depends upon being able to recognize and select background opinions to grasp the focus of the research. Cover pages in this study are selected according to their portrayal of social and historical events with relation to relevant characters and stories. Furthermore, other news platforms and commentaries of the political events are also reviewed alongside historical context. Political humor engages social commentaries from other news sources. I aim to understand "the gaze" of political humor towards social and political happenings. "The gaze" is the relevance between the depiction of the characters' position or situations and the presented invitations of the types of viewing (Johnson, 2019, p. 113). Hence, visual analysis is utilized through the mentioned connections.

Content analysis evaluates patterns and frequency in selected amounts of text or images and is concerned with selecting, categorizing, coding quantitative analysis (Rose, 2016, p. 85). When it comes to selecting sample size and categorizing the research material, content analysis has interpretive features. It is classified as a quantitative research method because of counting and adding the codes (Stokes, 2013, p. 132). This study makes use of quantitative descriptive findings to describe aspects of cover pages and to arrive at related interpretations. The qualitative data is gained from the narrative analysis of the caricatures from a thematic, structural, and performative point of view, which is also mentioned in Greenberg's (2002) framework. These three points of view consequently denote "what's being told," "how is the narrative conveyed," and "who the story is for or what is the intention behind the story." These questions are not mutually exclusive but clarify different perspectives of the humorous cover pages (Bengtsson & Anderson, 2020, pp. 266-268). Therefore, interpretive analysis requires being able to bring presented representations that contain less obvious messages into light besides the literal meaning (Swann, 2021, p. 32). Compositional aspects are important in coding the selected images. These characteristics reveal a recognizable pattern to expose correlational relationships between different features of visual images or to uncover

similarities with visuals from other domains. Also, content analysis aims to arrive at an inductive approach to observe patterns to acquire interpretive data. Pattern analysis from a certain bulk of visual images involves categorizing and coding, which requires validity and replicability (Rose, 2016, p. 87).

Categorizing is associated with the components of the images. Categories should be exhaustive, exclusive, and enlightening. Being exhaustive means that every aspect of the images must have one assigned category. Being exclusive implies that categories should be distinctive. Enlightening is related to being interesting and consistent (Rose, 2016, p. 92). Greenberg's (2002) categories are not fully mutually exclusive since all elements of caricatures contribute and are effective towards a cohesive meaning. Additionally, these categories are mutually exhaustive although I included two other categories in this study: Comics acting and speech bubbles. Both features are categorized to evaluate characters' portrayal on cover pages in a more detailed manner. To build analytical categories, images are reduced to components and they depend on "theorized connections." This connection means establishing a valid or accurate judgment through ascribing an assembly between text, context, and codes and keeping an engaging interaction with the methodology (Rose, 2016, pp. 92-96). Additionally, coding refers to index components of the visual image. In other words, codes in each category invoke relevant indicators about the cover pages and these codes are replicable. I use excel spreadsheets in coding relevant categories of the images. Coding the variables is determined. Therefore, categorizing and coding occurrences of specific social and political markers in the research material corresponds to counterparts in the cultural text or image. Categorizing is a certain model or a scheme of analysis, whereas coding is naming the number of stories, symbols, and subject appearances. Last, but not least, to present findings of the primary data, the amounts are added and organized through charts.

In this study, I code the elements of cover pages to illustrate the frequency of appearances in the cover pages of Turkish humor magazines. I use the gathered data to interpret the patterns and themes of images with the ideas mentioned in the literature review section. Categorizations are the initial step to recognize the approaches of humor magazines. During the analysis, humorous treatment of descriptive elements is formulated by exploring variations based on political and

social contexts (Graneheim et al., 2017, p. 32). In other words, conclusive findings on political humor are established through incongruity theories of humor, which focus on combining incompatible representations in consubstantial contexts. The underlying meanings in condensed categories reveal concise forms of humorous representations of political subjects within Turkey–U.S. relations.

I examine the portrayal of leaders through the embodiment of their personalities and reputations. Their reputations are situated on conflict opposition which humor magazines use as a tool for political humor. The political figures' strategic behavior and emotions (e.g., cynicism, slyness, and trickery) are influential in showing how humor magazines narrate their opinions while underlining their lack of remorse, insensitivity, impulsivity, boldness and social dominance. I highlight the differences between representations of Obama and Trump administrations' foreign policies and public opinion towards Turkey–U.S. relations. Additionally, the representations of the U.S. presidents' various other affiliations (for example, NATO alliance) and their personality markers are mentioned as part of their portrayals in the humor magazines. Intergroup dynamics in a certain culture determine how humorous communication takes place and how idiomatic expressions, routines, and norms are framed. Interpreting speech bubbles and symbols are based upon comprehending what kind of connections are made between the domestic political culture and American popular culture. Overall, satirical humor is closely connected to cultural situations and understanding.

3.4. Selection of the Cover Pages

Out of the 2419 cover pages that were published in the chosen time frame of my study, I could not locate 132 cover pages since they were not accessible. For the accuracy of the research, the missing issues are given in the appendix. I was able to gather all the other cover pages from the National Library in Ankara, various second-hand bookstores, and websites of magazines and other bookstores. After gathering, examining, and organizing these pages, I was able to locate 128 cover pages that represent some aspect related to the U.S. (e.g., international president trips, foreign policies of Obama and Trump's administrations, international opinions on Turkish domestic politics, and American imagery/symbolism/celebrities). I emailed,

messaged, and called the related publishing houses of the humor magazines to reach the physical archives. A representative of *Gırgır* stated that their magazine ceased publication in 2017. Therefore, they could not help me locate the missing issues of the magazine. *Penguen* could not provide an answer as to where I could locate the issues of the magazines. I found most cover pages of *Uykusuz* from a blog website called *tumkarikaturler.com* that was later shut down due to copyright infringements. I also researched the archives of the Turkish National Library and other university libraries to locate the cover pages through several visits. Overall, I tried to track down the physical copies of the magazines to the best of my ability.

In terms of access, cover pages of *Leman* were the hardest to locate. Even when I called *Leman* magazine publishing in İstanbul, they told me that issues are not collected in a systematic manner and they are not organized or hard bounded to date. It was particularly hard to reach all the collected data since the information I was looking for was scattered in too many different places and none of the libraries had the full archive. Cover pages of *Uykusuz* were the easiest to find, since they displayed all of the cover pages on their web site and kept updating their page every week starting from 2017. According to a report on *Gırgır*, *Penguen*, *Leman*, and *Uykusuz* by the Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), the cover pages of *Leman* were hardest to locate since they date further than *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* (Demir, 2016, pp. 9-10). During gathering my research materials, I designed my own lists to keep a record and to trace whether the issues of the respected humor magazines were missing. I conducted a web search to find the remaining missing issues and searched the specific magazine through the name, issue number, and release date. I found some images from Turkish websites that sell and advertise second-hand books. Each weekly humor magazine has around 52 issues per year. Since *Gırgır* and *Penguen* ceased their publications in 2017, that year, 7 and 20 issues were published respectively. *Leman* issued the magazine more irregularly than other magazines. Therefore, its yearly release numbers fluctuated between 50 to 53.

I chose these cover pages by scanning indicators or representations of U.S. actors or domestic and foreign actors connected to U.S. representations. The foreign actors correspond to presidents, multinational corporations, international organizations, foreign soldiers, intelligence agencies, terrorist organizations, American images, and

American celebrities. The cover pages with images of Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and other domestic or foreign political figures, and their facial expressions are analyzed to understand how the character, actions, or policies are portrayed. Presidents and related political figures are presented to display public opinion towards current historical, political and cultural issues at hand. Additionally, I scanned the cover pages for transnational political issues and foreign domestic political happenings such as continuing influences of the Bush shoe throwing incident, Arab Spring, Syrian crisis, Trump's travel ban, trilateral relations with Israel, political conferences, and meetings that affect policies, reactions, and interaction of states. As stated, the time frame of this study covers the period between 2008 and 2021, which includes the election campaigns and the administrations of Barack Obama and Donald Trump. By examining, classifying, and coding the cover pages of weekly humor magazines, I aim to interpret the contemporary reflections and perceptions of the U.S. from the framework of Turkish political humor. As stated, I used Greenberg's (2002) methodological framework with the addition of comics acting and speech bubbles while conducting my analysis.

3.5. Categorizing Cover Pages

Greenberg's (2002) framework asserts five tools—"condensation", "combination", "opposition", "domestication", and "normative transference"—that are used to establish certain representations in political cartoons. For him, cartoons express a political issue through ideological appropriation situated in an unacknowledged or unspoken social phenomena. In other words, cartoons capture a specious look on a political issue or an event rather than the tacit social reality. He underlines that the past is understood or explained in a given set of circumstances and cartoon reflections illustrate this particular outlook in a particular period of time (Greenberg, 2002, pp. 182-185). Greenberg's framework and tools are used in few studies as categories for content analysis. These studies used coded cartoons with different storylines. For instance, Wiid et al. (2011) examined reflections of public sentiments on three politicians (e.g., Eliot Spitzer, Bill Clinton, and John Edwards) who were involved in sex scandals by collecting and coding 230 cartoons (p. 141). Greenberg's criteria helped the researchers to distinguish the differences between narratives of cartoons in terms of "what the scandal was about, where it occurred and what

happened, who were in conflict with the protagonists, and who was the loser in the story" (Wiid et al., 2011, p. 142). A similar study was also conducted with 300 wine cartoons with the aim of understanding public trends about wine consumption, purchasing standpoint, and impacts on individual relationships (Matheson et al., 2019, p. 103).

The aforementioned five tools serve as categorizations for my analysis of the cover pages. Greenberg (2002) applies these rhetorical tools to cartoons in Canadian daily newspapers about perceptions on illegal immigration to illustrate how they operate (p. 187). His framework is adaptable to this thesis both in terms of subject of analysis and the manner of perceiving the cover pages. These five tools are instrumental in examining narratives and depicting subjects in textual and pictorial forms in comedic conventions. Moreover, political caricatures provide a metalanguage for political discourses (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2017, p. 38). Visual expressions of caricature figures are intentionally focused for capturing how caricatures portray the character's purpose and how other pictorial elements add to the understanding of comical narrative structures. Humorous narratives on cover pages are presented and formed through explanatory headlines, caricaturized elements, binary oppositions, and images in representations and visual depictions of Turkey–U.S. relations and other representations of the U.S.
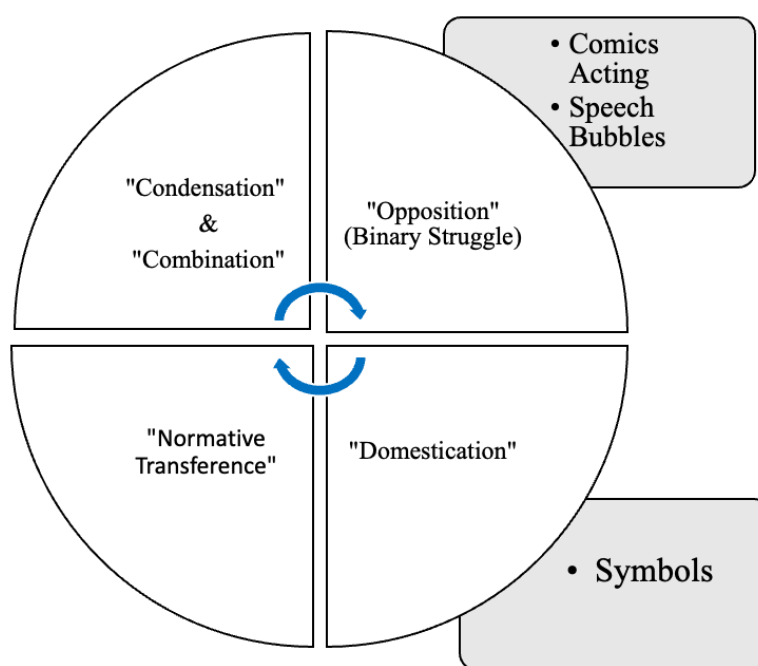

Figure 6: Components of Greenberg's (2002) Framework with "Comics Acting" and Speech Bubbles

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3.5.1. Coding "Condensation" as Political Happenings

Inspired by Greenberg's (2002) framework, categorizations in this study are presented in Figure 6. "Condensation" indicates political and social events that are mentioned in the visual (Greenberg, 2002, p. 187). This category corresponds to the political event mentioned in the headline and is about the political incident, or the putative political problem that came up in the discussion. Notably it is about demonstrating the story line of caricatures. In this category, 6 coding groups were displayed with replicable political or social issues and events. These groups are domestic politics (DP), political event (PE), political remarks (PR), Turkey's image (TI), foreign policies (FP), and other (O). DP is about the headlines that cover domestic political discussions on police force, economic crisis, education system, foreign politics mirroring domestic politics, political censorship, previous political figures, and Fetullah Gülen representations. PE signifies political and diplomatic meetings, politicians during a political event, protests regarding foreign policies, U.S. elections, and officers' actions during political events. TI indicates mentioning Turkey or Erdoğan in the U.S. press, international non-governmental organizations, the U.S. government funded research institutes or corporations. FP is the widest code category as it is about militaristic missions of the U.S, NATO, and CIA. Executive decisions by the U.S. that affect Turkey and other foreign countries such as Trump's travel ban, relocating the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem, and supporting Israel are represented under FP. This group also covers the U.S. involvement in Turkish domestic politics or Turkish foreign policies, and Turkish policies concerning the U.S, IMF, or NATO. Finally, O points to references about public and national holidays, foreign political happenings that mention the U.S. or Trump, and American writers or celebrities.

3.5.2. Coding "Combination" as Caricaturized Subjects

"Combination" refers to bringing detached or somehow connected elements together in a caricature frame. These elements may be gathered from different domains. Combination can reveal how political incidents could be merged with various pictorial elements. It exposes what kind of events, subjects, or images are combined with captions on the cover pages. This category helps to discuss the narrative structure of the cover pages and discloses the comical scheme of the main narrative

(Greenberg, 2002, pp. 187-189). There are 9 coding categories to indicate what kind of components are arranged visually on the cover pages. These are Obama's image (OI), Trump's image (DTI), Erdogan's image (EI), domestic political and well-known figures (DPF), political figures from the U.S. (UPF), foreign political figures (FPF), civilians' image (CI), foreign political events (FPE), and American images, symbolism, and celebrities (AIS).

OI, DTI, and EI categories encompass presidents' manners such as having an upper hand, being ignorant, or arrogant towards various transnational political conflicts. Their impersonations of different symbolic figures or stereotypical characters are also taken into account when coding the caricatures as representations of the president's images. Erdoğan's allegiance to Obama and mimesis of Obama are coded as EI. Furthermore, DPF is related to the caricatures of domestic politicians, policy makers, domestic protestors, or well-known figures who might also be mentioned in the speech bubbles. UPF is about G. W. Bush, Michelle Obama, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, and the U.S. soldiers. FPF is illustrations of various foreign political figures from other nations related to transnational political conflicts. When these nations are portrayed through stereotypical characters or as secondary characters, the respective caricature is still coded as FPF. Similarly, CI traces the dialogues and submissive or passive behavior of civilians in relation to the political events. The portrayed civilians are Erdoğan's supporters, Obama's bodyguards, journalists, or caricaturists of corresponding humor magazines. FPE refers to political occurrences that take place in other countries such as the Bush shoe throwing incident, 2011 Egypt protests, the U.S. soldiers in Syria, Libya, and Iraq, the Palestine situation, or the building of Trump Wall. Finally, AIS is the pointer that the caricature illuminates some kind of American imagery, symbolism, pop culture phenomena, or celebrities such as the Statue of Liberty, the U.S. flag, Uncle Sam, Rosie the Riveter, Ku Klux Klan outfits, the Rambo, cowboy figures, Star Wars, Neil Armstrong's well-known quote, a reference to *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Paul Auster, the Nike shoe brand, Nicholas Cage, Angelina Jolie, and Michael Jackson.

3.5.3. Coding "Opposition" as Binary Oppositions

Assembled caricatures represent a binary struggle through the element of "opposition" (Greenberg, 2002, p. 187). In caricatures, binary struggles can occur between two main characters that are represented either as culpable or as victimized (Matheson et al., 2019, p. 98). Caricaturized subjects are assigned to "Opposition 1" or "Opposition 2" categories. While "Opposition 1" refers to a culpable character, "Opposition 2" is assigned to a victimized social actor. However, oppositional characters are not necessarily illustrated, they can be inferred through the headline or other references in the caricature frame. Codes are established through grouping the function of the social actors but Obama, Trump, and Erdoğan are treated separately and not in a category. The U.S. is specified through the depiction of American symbols (AS) such as Uncle Sam, the U.S. Flag, U.S. Citizens, U.S Press (e.g., TIME and Wall Street Journal), The White House, The Statue of Liberty, and U.S. soldiers.

Apart from Obama, Trump, the U.S., and Erdoğan, 5 codes are established to understand the oppositional parties on the cover page. These codes are foreign political actors (FPA), domestic political actors (DPA), officers, workers, well-known figures, and civilians (OWWC), American popular culture and well-known figures (APCF), and the Middle East and other countries (MEOC). FPA refers to all foreign political subjects except Obama, Trump and Turkey. It also indicates intelligence agencies, governmental, institutional, international, non-governmental political actors, and terrorists. These are specifically IMF, NATO, CIA, MOSSAD, FSB, UN, Moody's, UNICEF, Wikileaks, Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, Bush, Michelle Obama, Angela Merkel Netanyahu, Sarkozy, Berlusconi, Comandante Chavez, Kaddafi, Osama bin Laden, Israeli Soldiers, Free Syrian Army, ISIS Leader Baghdadi, and ISIS fighters. DPA are Turkish political subjects such as Kılıçdaroğlu, Davutoğlu, Binali Yıldırım, Abdullah Gül, Emine Erdoğan, Fetullah Gülen, Bülent Arınç, Kenan Evren, Turkish Military, Erdal Eren, Gezi Protestors, Opposition Party Members, and İsmet İnönü.

Moreover, OWWC is related to Obama's bodyguards, Erdoğan's bodyguards, Erdoğan's family, Trump supporters, foreign and Turkish journalists, imams, Muslim

people, Egyptian civilians, Palestinians, Orhan Pamuk, Fazıl Say, civilian shooter in the U.S., and *Leman* caricaturists. APCF is coded into the categories of "opposition" when presidents or political actors mimic an American popular culture figure, when an object related to American popular culture is depicted, and when an American well-known figure is portrayed. These figures are usually superheroes, Nike shoes, cowboy, Rosie the Riveter, American film characters, and American celebrities or writers. Lastly, MEOC indicates Syria, Iran, Israel, Russia, and China. If there were illustrated oppositions in the perceived interaction, I coded the opposition in accordance to the narrative structure of the cover pages. I also coded oppositional parties on caricaturized characters in which the main character mimicked Obama or employed U.S. symbolisms such as the U.S. Flag or Uncle Sam. Lastly, opposition was also established through content of speech bubbles.

3.5.4. Coding "Comics Acting" as Affective States

Emanata and speech bubbles/sound effects in the caricatures are categorized to understand "comics acting." Since caricatures are capable of transferring information on political subjects' behavior, the U.S. presidents', Erdoğan's, or the U.S. related political and social figures' bodily features, expressions, and moods are coded to draw conclusions. Content of speech bubbles are also included to arrive at a more accurate perspective of the figures' moods. International policies and politics in caricatures are often presented through presidents' and other political figures' personas. The caricaturized figures present typical human emotions in an exaggerated manner and the illustrated political figures can be criticized through their reactions to events and moods. Comics acting is peculiar to social conventions of particular communities, which also indicates the mimetic capacity of the caricature (Lister & Wells, 2001, p. 76). To distinguish and code the moods of the caricaturized political subjects, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule Expanded Form (The PANAS-X) is used. The PANAS-X provided a framework for classifying facial expressions in caricatures.

The PANAS-X is an extended version of the Positive and Negative schedule (PANAS), which is a two-dimensional model for analyzing positive affect and negative affect mood states. Positive Affect (PA) refers to individuals reflecting

enthusiastic, active, and alert mood states, whereas Negative Affect (NA) is about various aversive mood states (Díaz-García et al., 2020, p. 2). There are 10 varied moods of PA and NA for deciphering the initial mood state of the individual (Watson et al., 1988, p. 1063). Moreover, PA and NA are understood according to "valence" and "content" (Watson & Clark, 1999, p. 1). "Valence" refers to emotional value or a subjective attractiveness of a stimulus, event or situation (American Psychological Association [APA], 2022). "Content" refers to themes and distinctive qualities of emotions. In other words, individual differences are apparent when expressing emotions and feelings. Although these differences do not necessarily define the dominant personality of an individual, they are related to the frequency of pleasant or unpleasant events. Nevertheless, positive affective states are moderately and strongly correlated with extraversion/positive emotionality, whereas negative affective states are correlated with neuroticism/negative emotionality (Watson & Clark, 1999, p. 21). Therefore, positive or negative emotional experiences are highly related to a person's temperament according to the PANAS-X manual.

PA and NA have a total of 7 lower affective compositions for identifying emotional states in the PANAS-X (Watson & Clark, 1999, p. 17). PA's distinctive qualities are defined by 3 affective states which are "Joviality," "Self-Assurance," and "Attentiveness" (Watson & Clark, 1999, p. 2). Other 4 NA qualities are defined by "Fear," "Sadness," "Guilt," and "Hostility." "Other Affective States," namely "Shyness," "Fatigue," "Serenity," and "Surprise," do not strongly belong to any positive or negative emotional states (Watson & Clark, 1999, p. 17).

Table 2 *Item Composition of the PANAS-X Scales*

General Dimension Scales	
Negative Affect (10)	afraid, scared, nervous, jittery, irritable, hostile, guilty, ashamed, upset, distressed
Positive Affect (10)	active, alert, attentive, determined, enthusiastic, excited, inspired, interested, proud, strong
Basic Negative Emotion Scales	
Fear (6)	afraid, scared, frightened, nervous, jittery, shaky
Hostility (6)	angry, hostile, irritable, scornful, disgusted, loathing
Guilt (6)	guilty, ashamed, blameworthy, angry at self, disgusted with self, dissatisfied with self
Sadness (5)	sad, blue, downhearted, alone, lonely
Basic Positive Emotion Scales	
Joviality (8)	happy, joyful, delighted, cheerful, excited, enthusiastic, lively, energetic
Self-Assurance (6)	proud, strong, confident, bold, daring, fearless
Attentiveness (4)	alert, attentive, concentrating, determined
Other Affective States	
Shyness (4)	shy, bashful, sheepish, timid
Fatigue (4)	sleepy, tired, sluggish, drowsy
Serenity (3)	calm, relaxed, at ease
Surprise (3)	amazed, surprised, astonished

Note. The number of terms comprising each scale is shown in parentheses.

Figure 7: Item Composition of the PANAS-X scale

This study employs the affective composition part of the PANAS-X scale to mark the characters' affects and moods. Illustrating this will reveal what kind of mood states define or represent the presidents in the selected humorous narratives. Figure 7 is used in terms of attaching descriptive labels for two "comics acting" categories. The first category of "comics acting" is related to whether caricaturized figures display positive or negative mood states. The categories are coded as Negative Affect (NA), Positive Affect (PA), or Other Affect (OA) in relation to the groups "Basic Negative Emotion Scales," "Basic Positive Emotion Scales," and "Other Affective States." Caricaturized subjects' moods are interpreted according to listed mood descriptors under the mentioned titles. The second category for "comics acting" is coded from grouped mood terms under "Basic Negative Emotion Scales," "Basic Positive Emotion Scales," and "Other Affective States." This category specifies caricaturized subjects' emotions in regard to their positive, negative, or other affective states.

3.5.5. Coding Speech Bubbles

Speech bubbles are coded in qualitative data analysis software, NVivo, according to sentence types and language elements. Sentence types have 5 codes; interrogative sentences, imperative sentences, exclamatory sentences, declarative sentences, and colloquial expressions. They are coded according to inferences made on the engaged

dialogues of characters and political events. Characters' dialogues are emphasized with language elements besides their portrayal. Inferences on interactions are based upon metonymic relations. On one hand, these relations are referential towards a noun, proposition, and illocution. On the other hand, the dialogue contains indexical functions (Panther & Thornburg, 1998, p. 758).

Language elements have 4 codes; catch phrases, slang words, interjection and exclamations, and others. Other language elements are made-up words, clichés, and idiomatic expressions since they are referenced in less than 10 cover pages. These codes are determined according to selective words that create expectations and associations for understanding humor. The results give an idea on what kind of familiar communication formats are performed. This coding provides an additional point of reference on how attitudes are embodied as humorous. Since facial expressions are meaningful in communicating, understanding language elements make sense in relation to portrayed facial expressions (Wetherell, 2013, p. 360). Speech bubbles are the verbal proof of characters' traits and they provide additional information or commentary for the narrative. They reveal political figures' specified manners in communication. Speech bubbles can parody the character's speech patterns or contain entirely different speech characteristics depending on the assumed role. They perform communicative roles in caricatures and are part of the consequential action because they clarify contrary positions in conversations. More significantly, speech bubbles include the punchline of political humor (Oring, 2016, p. 154).

3.5.6. Coding "Domestication" as Familiar Motives

In the caricatures "domestication" refers to constructing familiar everyday life experiences through illustrated events, locations, and symbols (Wiid, Pitt, & Engstrom, 2011, p. 140). "Domestication" will be examined under one group to show how familiar motives function in the caricatures. In the representation of figures, ideas and values are tied to "symbols" and that work as figures of speech through denotations or connotations. Denotation refers to recognizing images and associating them with the illustrated figures' actions or situations. The visual image is perceived through generalization and typification which reveals the signification of

stereotypes completed with specific objects, clothing, and bodily features (Leeuwen, 2001, pp. 94-95). Connotation refers to drawing secondary meanings from the represented figures, places, and events through concatenation. "Domestication" category exposes what kinds of people and events are merged with the U.S related political events and situations. The gathered information presents ideas and values that are dominant in the represented U.S related political happenings and figures.

"Symbols" will show what kinds of typification are attached to the political subjects and what do these attributes reveal about them. "Symbols" are considered under 5 groups: American cultural figures and American productions (ACFP), stereotypes (S), American symbols (AS), Turkish religious and cultural symbols/figures (TRCSF), and Anti-American sentiments (AAS). Overall, recognizable physical features and objects indicate a perspective about the actions of political subjects and political issues. Symbolic physical features and objects related to political subjects help to create an analogy between the actual person and the illustrated figures. Nonetheless, these are often constructed upon metaphor, irony, and parody.

3.5.7. Coding "Normative Transference"

Finally, "normative transference" indicates an implicit way of blaming a non-visible entity or another actor through the outrageous and bizarre actions of the cartoon character. This category is noteworthy in the methodological framework because it is more than describing visual units, it uncovers opinions, discourses, and commentaries in examined caricatures. It establishes the foundation of discussion and creates a space for interpreting political satire. This category reveals what is exposed as a folly or an immoral political situation. A judgment is made beyond the illustrated opposing depictions. This category reveals transpired overarching satirical messages that are not directly related to the figures in the caricature. While other categories function as a reference point, normative transference reveals an opinionated argument about the discursive social context (Greenberg, 2002, p. 187). Explication and analysis of this discursive point is established through the context of Turkey–U.S. relations. There are 7 subjects dedicated to this category. These are the political power of the U.S., political strategy of the U.S., political involvement of the

U.S., upper hand of the U.S., Turkey's domestic and foreign politics, Erdoğan's political power, and political development of the U.S.

3.5.8. Inferences

After attributing various codes to narrative elements on the cover pages, I formed tables by sorting out the related codes. The created charts are used to determine and examine what kinds of political events, political subjects, emotional states, expressions, symbolism, and conclusive arguments are central to Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. The implementation of these charts is crucial in addressing the research questions because they are helpful to identify how cover pages make use of certain headlines, emotions, speech bubbles, and symbols. Perceptions towards the U.S. related political endeavors are revealed through exemplifying selected cover pages. These are selected and grouped according to historical classifications, the timeline of Obama and Trump administrations, and identical political issues, figures, or symbols. To arrive at a comprehensive pattern of the political experiences depicted in caricatures, political subjects' emotional feedbacks are observed. Examining the aforementioned categories and relationships between various visual elements exposes obvious and hidden discourses in the caricatures.

Incongruity theory is considered while examining and interpreting exaggerations, dialogues, ironies, stereotypes, and links to current events on cover pages. To reiterate, incongruity refers to recognizing odd, abnormal, or out of place conducts of political leaders which embodies insights about social perceptions. The main depictions of the political figures rely on the incongruity theory of humor since the relationship between these political leaders are associated with their already accepted approaches towards international matters. The politician's performance is destabilized through allusions and humor. Disjointed pairings are examined through stereotypical depictions and abnormal pairings with other political figures. The revealed patterns affirm and reflect opinions and interpretations on Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S.

CHAPTER IV:

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1. Components of Humor Magazines

The purpose of this study relies upon understanding the operation of political humor related to Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. on the cover pages of weekly humor magazines *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz*. Collected caricatures are analyzed through Greenberg's (2002) framework. Components of the caricatures are examined through narrative elements that include the explanatory headlines and pictorial elements. The essential storylines of caricatures are revealed in the "condensation" category, which are related to the themes of political events (see Table 1) and "combination" category refers to caricaturized political subjects (see Table 2). Tables present the distribution and percentage of each subgroup within a certain category. Affective states and speech bubbles shed light on how interactions between political subjects take place. Political humor in the cover pages of these magazines is used to constitute judgments on political events by using the mentioned interactions.

4.1.1. Political Happenings and Caricaturized Subjects

Condensation	Gırgır	Leman	Penguen	Uykusuz	Total Coverage
Domestic Politics	36.67%	25%	40%	36.84%	43
Political Event	26.67%	25%	15%	23.68%	30
Turkey's Image	10%	10%	0%	7.89%	11
Political Remarks	16.67%	17.50%	50%	21.05%	30
Foreign Policies	26.67%	42.50%	35%	36.84%	46
Other	6.67%	10%	0%	10.53%	11

Table 1: Percentage of political events in political humor magazines

In Table 1, weekly political happenings in 128 cover pages are categorized and displayed according to their percentages. The pages predominantly focus on domestic politics or foreign policies. The topics related to political events and political remarks have the same amount of total coverage. Least coverage of weekly topics belongs to Turkey's image in the U.S. press and magazines, WikiLeaks, Freedom House Report about Turkish press, and Moody's Credit Note for Turkey. Other least focused topics are the political issues related to foreign domestic happenings and public/national holidays, which are grouped as the "Other." Synopsis of what is happening in the political agenda can be perceived through headlines on cover pages. Headlines related to domestic and foreign policies provide shortcuts of noteworthy aspects. These summaries frame the subject matter and establish connections with the domestic interests, which explains the reason for the lack of Turkey's image in foreign press and foreign domestic political happenings unless these have other contextual effects. Therefore, headlines that have relevance to particular happenings at the time are more common. The most recurring topics are related to international disagreements and problems related to political impositions in Turkey.

The function of satirical news headlines differs from other types of news outlets since they also focus on uncovering or creating humorous aspects of political content and political targets (Brugman et al., 2022, p. 3). Headlines provide satirical engagements with authority figures. Examined cover pages often frame political events through depictions of right-wing populist leader Erdoğan or other political actors. Erdoğan becomes a familiar reference point because his ideas and unique

style of political communication is also recalled even if not directly mentioned. Headlines usually serve to establish the merits of political image and act as communicative cues for humorous narratives. In these cover pages, headlines mention one side of incongruity. Incongruity is understood through metaphors, hyperboles, and negations portrayed or written both in the headline and illustrated in the caricature (Brugman et al., 2022, p. 4).

Political events and political remarks have a specific coverage style in headlines. Compared to other humor magazines, *Penguen* prefers to introduce the weekly topics related to political figures and domestic politics and is more likely to base the humor on political figures' utterances and actions. In connection to caricatures, the magazine uses straightforward or factual headlines, sometimes framed in a sensational manner. Although somewhat similar to *Gırgır* and *Uykusuz* in terms of ambiguity of headlines, *Penguen* is more focused on poking fun at targeted subjects. *Gırgır* and *Uykusuz* are more vocal on political oppressions, police brutality, quality of education, freedom of press, informal labor, or political atrocities in their headlines, unlike the less visible critical stance of *Penguen*. Trump's presidency is mentioned once on the headline of *Penguen* related to the coverage of the U.S. elections under the subcategory of political events. The contributions of *Gırgır* and *Penguen* are limited compared to portrayals of Obama's administration, due to ceasing their publication in 2017.

In marking the political events, *Gırgır* slightly takes the lead and *Leman* follows. The narratives related to Turkey–U.S. relations, which corresponds to foreign policies are mostly mentioned in *Leman. Leman* is more likely to include foreign policies rather than political events or political remarks and uses opinion-based headlines. These headlines draw conclusions on foreign policies that are related to geopolitical considerations as well as global trends or disasters. The other three magazines generally reveal one or two aspects about the country in question. *Leman* covers Turkey–U.S. relations more adequately by providing related facts and views rather than downsizing and narrowing the subject. However, narrow focus can be compensated through caricaturized political images in other magazines.

Combination	Gırgır	Leman	Penguen	Uykusuz	Total
Obama's Image	43.33%	20.51%	40%	23.68%	39
Trump's Image	0%	17.95%	10%	23.68%	19
Erdoğan's Image	76.67%	46.15%	65%	42.11%	70
Domestic Political & Well-Known Figures	40%	33.33%	10%	10.53%	31
Political Figure from the U.S.	3.33%	7.69%	10%	0%	6
Foreign Political Figures	6.67%	38.46%	10%	0%	19
Civilians' Image	20%	30.77%	20%	23.68%	31
Foreign Political Events	10%	15.38%	5%	5.26%	12

Table 2: Percentage of caricatures in political humor magazines

Distribution of caricaturized subjects, figures, and events according to magazines are displayed in Table 2. If *Gırgır* and *Penguen* had not ceased their publications, the number and content of data in this study might have changed significantly. Actually, *Gırgır* and *Penguen* illustrated Obama and Erdoğan images more than *Uykusuz* and *Leman.* Erdoğan caricatures are the most popular political humor component especially when domestic politics is connected to the representations of the U.S. or when his allegiance or his mimicry of Obama is portrayed. Other most common domestic political and well-known figures were the foreign affairs minister at the time, Ahmet Davutoğlu, and the missionary religious leader, Fetullah Gülen, whose multiple dealings were ambiguous and questionable long before he and his followers were charged with orchestrating the attempted coup in 2016. Civilian's images were also one of the significant groupings in presenting presidents' supporters and their thoughts or actions on political happenings in a satirical manner. In general, other international political figures and/or political events are caricaturized less than the U.S. presidents.

As mentioned in section 3.5., "combination" exposes satirical political events through caricaturized political subjects or events. Transnational political conflicts, foreign political events, and other political figures from the U.S. are less frequent in weekly coverages. Nonetheless, *Leman* covers international political figures and events more than the other magazines and presents the most detailed coverage on the

intricacies of transnational political events, which can be observed in the comparative coverage of foreign policies (see Table 2). Additionally, *Gırgır*, and relatively *Leman*, portray the domestic political and well-known figures while narrating the incidents. This data suggests that domestic political issues on the cover pages of *Gırgır* and *Leman* are presented in a more detailed manner than *Penguen* and *Uykusuz*. *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* portray domestic politics related events with representations of the U.S. and by prioritizing images of Obama, Trump, and Erdoğan. As stated above, international political figures and other political figures from the U.S. are not portrayed in *Uykusuz*. The magazine presents a satirical point of view through combining and referring to imagined, related, or unrelated political events rather than adding caricaturized subjects.

In the humor magazines, Erdoğan's image becomes the main source of satire. His portrayal is concentrates on how he maintains his preeminent and assertive position as well as how he is idealized. In the contextual sense Erdoğan's appeal lies in three stages. First, he is an outsider with a dominant personality in reference to public issues. Second, he embodies "conservative, heteronormative, and masculine behavior" to mobilize his supporters and solidify his power in the political system. Third, his executive actions are built through a cult of personality which emphasize authority of the current political establishment (Hakola et al., 2021, p. xii). In other words, Erdoğan's image is sarcastically presented especially when he is portrayed with Obama. In *Gırgır* and *Uykusuz*, when Erdoğan is portrayed with Obama, his persona becomes an attention seeking child, a somewhat silly high school girl, a person imitating Obama, and a loyal ally trying to fulfill Obama's interests. His characteristics are parodied and his role is exaggerated in regard to the dynamics between Turkey–U.S. relations. Even with minimum stereotyping, Erdoğan's humorous and satirical portrayals play on the discrepancies between his image as the strong protector of the nation and his transformed roles in his interactions with Obama. These portrayals are sarcastic commentaries on Erdoğan and his executive decisions about Turkey–U.S. relations.

In *Penguen*, Erdoğan's image is mostly portrayed next to Obama as if he tries to persuade or convince that he is a reliable political partner in the Middle East conflicts or Israeli policies towards Palestinians. However, the spatial organization on the

cover pages differs in *Penguen* when contextual reference deals with domestic politics. When Erdoğan is placed in the forefront in an arrogant or docile manner, Obama is placed in a taller and confident position in the background implying that he has a say in domestic issues. Similar spatial placement is also noticeable in *Uykusuz* where Erdoğan's upper hand in or lack of concern is satirically questioned through the silhouette of Obama. In *Leman*, Erdoğan is portrayed as an integral figure in relation to foreign policies. Compared to other magazines in *Leman*, Erdoğan and Obama relations mostly depend on the NATO partnership, which also causes the depiction of a higher number of foreign political figures.

4.1.2. Affective States of Caricaturized Subjects

The tables below provide how many times two main characters interact within their mood states. Table 4 functions as an extension of specifying Table 3. Table 3 breaks down the behavioral information of interacting characters under three initial mood states, namely Negative Affect (NA), Other Affective States (OA), and Positive Affect (PA). OA, refers to the emotional states that do not strongly belong to PA or NA. The data concentrates on the first two characters on cover pages. Only 22 out of 128 cover pages include the third or fourth characters. The two main characters subjected to analysis are chosen according to the apparent speech bubbles. Table 5 shows the rate in which certain sentence types and language elements occur. Inferences drawn from the occurrences of affective states and speech bubbles clarify parody.

The mood states are shown in Table 3. Each of the initial mood states is specified by three "lower affective states," that is mood descriptors taken from PANAS-X scale. Main and secondary characters can refer to any political subject, therefore Turkish and American presidents' mood states are distinguished through filtering the data sheet. Table 3 illustrates that negative affective states are more prominent when the major two characters are interacting with each other. Overall, NA is the most preferred mood state compared to PA and OA. This indicates that political actors have negative feelings or are portrayed as such while political issues are presented.

Linkage of Mood States	Secondary Character's Mood State			
Main Character's Mood State	Negative Affect	Other Affective States	Positive Affect	Total
Negative Affect	27	9	8	44
Other Affective States	9	6	3	18
Positive Affect	9	6	7	22
Total	45	21	18	84

Table 3: Emotional states in interaction

Linkage Between "Lower Affective States"

Main Character's Mood State		Secondary Character's Mood State									Grand Total
		Positive Affect			Negative Affect			Other Affective States			
		Joviality	Self-Assurance	Attentiveness	Fear	Hostility	Sadness	Fatigue	Serenity	Surprise	
Positive Affect	Joviality	**6**				3			3	1	13
	Self-Assurance					2					2
	Attentiveness	1				4				1	6
Negative Affect	Fear	1	1		1	1	1				5
	Hostility	3	1	2	7	**12**			**5**	2	32
	Sadness				1	1	1		1	1	**5**
Other Affective States	Shyness	1				1				1	3
	Serenity				**5**	**1**	2	1	1	1	11
	Surprise		1	1				1	1		4
Grand Total		12	3	3	14	25	**4**	2	11	7	81

Table 4: Specified emotional states in interactions

The breakdown of NA in Table 4 suggests characters mostly communicated in a hostile temperament. Among the Negative Affect, the least mood appears to be sadness, which appears only 9 times out of 81 interactions. Compared to hostility, political figures are not portrayed as heavy hearted because generally sadness is not preferred in parodies. Fear seems to appear when any type of hostile behavior is apparent. Secondary character's fearful mood state corresponds with Erdoğan's fears toward Obama's serene or hostile manner. The findings related to OA shows that when the main character displays an OA state, the secondary character shows an NA state. In other words, when a character is more neutral in the interaction, the other character seems to react in a negative way. When Obama is in a serene mood, Erdoğan is portrayed in a fearful mood or even hostile in one instance because of pressing matters related to foreign policy issues. These oppositional moods create certain exaggerated antagonisms, which are presented as humorous, such as when a subject is hostile towards another serene individual. Erdoğan is presented as being entangled between maintaining power in the domestic arena and trying to establish power in the Middle East. Thereby, his fearful manner is placed opposite to Obama's hostile or serene manner in the caricatures. Depicting Erdoğan in exaggerated emotional states clarifies his (hidden) political objectives and acts as an intentional commentary for salient foreign policies. However, his authority is challenged by Obama's neutral (or hostile to a lesser extent) position in advancing Turkey–U.S. relations.

The least preferred mood state combination is PA to OA or OA to PA. This indicates political caricaturists do not choose to be satirical about an indifferent character or a positive mood state. However, when both characters are in a positive or neutral state, the situation seems to be more attractive. Humor magazines aim to present oppositionality and they focus on treating negative developments by exaggerating the figures' emotional states in interactions. Ideological cynicism is indicated through negative facial expressions which also reflects the figures' concealed motives as opposed to their public image. Miczo (2019), also labeled this choice of using hostility in satire as "symbolic aggression." Humor magazines use most suitable responses attributed to characters when they are in NA or OA. When two parties are smiling at each other, mutual support is established although in an ironic manner.

Consequently, PA is symbolic of how figures' social relations are portrayed through their facial expressions.

The ironic tone is established through understanding events and themes beyond what is portrayed by the headlines or the chosen agenda. Positive attitudes become an observable mocking feature since they imply that the figures are pretending, playing a fool, or acting without leadership qualities. The facial expressions are also independently responsible for portraying discrepancies, saying one thing and meaning another, or portraying something that is not actually present. In general, Erdoğan's laid back or fun-loving attributes are not visible on TV screens or the news, but when he is depicted in a jovial manner in the humor magazines, his actual serious and dominant attitude is transformed due to personal expectations. Trying to gather approval and acknowledgement from other leaders, going to extremes to be likable, and admiring his own accomplishments seem to be Erdoğan's major expectations.

4.1.3. Speech Bubbles in Caricatures

Figure 8: Speech Bubbles

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Political characters communicate through declarative sentences which occasionally occur with idiomatic expressions and clichés. In caricatures, political opinions and intentions are stated directly and often expressed through implying self-interests. In other words, characters tend to express their intentions and experiences openly without knowing how political decisions affect the public. Declarative sentences in speech bubbles are connected to factual headlines that reveal political intentions, opinions, and declarations. Half of the exclamatory sentences are used with the slang expression "Lan," which means "Dude" or "Hey." Slang words are also common in colloquial sentences. Imperative sentences are used for presenting underlining power dynamics. While Turkish political figures use imperative sentences to indicate authoritarianism, Obama uses them to strategically in terms of balancing power dynamics. Interjections and exclamations are used commonly in caricatures in revealing sudden emotions. Many cover pages portray sudden emotions and reactions such as frustration, surprise, or joy. Political humor is mostly constructed as revealing sudden negative reactions when evaluated with characters' affective states. Failures of political figures are portrayed through their sudden reactions towards their opponents or supporters. These sudden reactions mostly involve slang words that aim to establish a sense of familiarity since these words imply an informal tone of daily expression. Political figures' deficiencies become humorous when daily language is used reflexively. Overall, comics acting as a form of parody reveals the humor in political endeavors through sudden emotionality. Informal language is mostly established through the usage of slang words rather than run-on sentences.

Catch phrases are not used extensively which shows that parody through speech is mostly constructed through explicit references to colloquial expressions rather than allusions. Existing allusions by catch phrases are Uncle Sam's army recruitment poster that proclaims "I Want You." There are few instances of domestic politics combined with the language of American cultural products. Although American cultural symbols are embraced visually, few are revealed in the speech bubbles. In one case, Erdoğan parodies the *Casablanca* scene by uttering "Play it again Say…" to Fazıl Say, the well-known pianist. This indirect reference reveals more about Erdoğan's attitude towards Say, regardless of their publicized differences in real life.

In the movie, the line refers to a wish to hear the tune that reminds a past love affair. In the caricature, it becomes Erdoğan's wish to hear more of Say's music.

4.1.4. Normative Transference in Humor Magazines

Normative Transference	Gırgır	Leman	Penguen	Uykusuz	Total Opinions & Commentary
Political Power of the U.S.	13.33%	17.50%	15.00%	13.16%	19
Political Strategy of the U.S.	13.33%	12.50%	0.00%	5.26%	11
Political Involvement of the U.S.	26.67%	35.00%	20.00%	13.16%	31
Upper hand of the U.S.	26.67%	20.00%	55.00%	42.11%	43
Position of Turkish Government	43.33%	42.50%	60.00%	34.21%	55
Political Power of Erdoğan	56.67%	17.50%	30.00%	26.32%	40
Political development of the U.S.	3.33%	7.50%	0.00%	13.16%	9

Table 5: Percentage of political opinions in humor magazines

On the total cover pages, the political satire mostly focuses on the position of the Turkish government (PTG), and half of these caricatures are presented with the U.S. having the upper hand (UHU). Erdoğan's political power in domestic politics is defined by his authoritarian statements, punishing attitude for voices of dissent as well as increasing nepotism and corruption in Turkey. The repeated treatment of the position of Turkey is expected on cover pages since the magazines are published and distributed for a Turkish audience. The caricatures employ an oppositional stance against the dominant discourse and employ dissenting attitudes from officially held opinions while targeting hierarchical dimensions of political dynamics. Referring back to Öztürk (2022), political circumstances are represented in terms of humor magazines' own political stance. On one hand, the message can be viewed as expressing aggressiveness while evaluating the situation in humorous terms. On the other hand, elements of caricatures can be treated in terms of superiority theory since exaggeration refers to lampooning politics. Graphic oppositional gaze of humor magazines, which is "demystification of privileges and institutions," is interwoven with circulating in an authoritarian regime (Prendergast, 2019, p. 49). Consequently, these humor magazines rely more on critical commentaries of hierarchical political dynamics rather than just a superior outlook towards political subjects. In other words, metaphors used for political subjects remain as metonymies for Turkish political dynamics.

Although not visualized in Table 5, the codes in combination lay out various opinions about the U.S. and related policies. Multiple opinions are revealed in 66 caricatures out of 128. PTG is occasionally coded with the upper hand of the U.S. (UHU), political involvement of the U.S. (PIU), and political power of Erdoğan (PPE). Although this outcome does not necessarily deduce a general pattern, the irony behind Erdoğan's political portrayals rests on his incompatibility and uneasiness in the situations he finds himself in while trying to defend national interests. This is mostly apparent on the cover pages during Obama's second term in which Erdoğan's Syrian war policies are not reciprocated by the Obama administration or Erdoğan's leadership and his bodyguards' arrogant behavior are criticized by Obama. PIU is popular on the cover pages of *Leman* and *Gırgır*. *Leman* insistently caricaturizes U.S. imperialism secured by military forces. *Gırgır* presents interests of the U.S. with allegiance themes. In Figure 9, Erdoğan is portrayed with the American flag to accentuate his willing partnership in *Gırgır*. While Obama praises him, Erdoğan declares "Syria is our domestic problem!" from the podium with the U.S. emblem, which is juxtaposed with his position and duty. The second *Uykusuz* cover presents Obama indicating that Kurds, Turks, Lazes, Circassians, Albanians, Bosnians, Romanians will be fighting for (under) the same flag, that is the American flag.
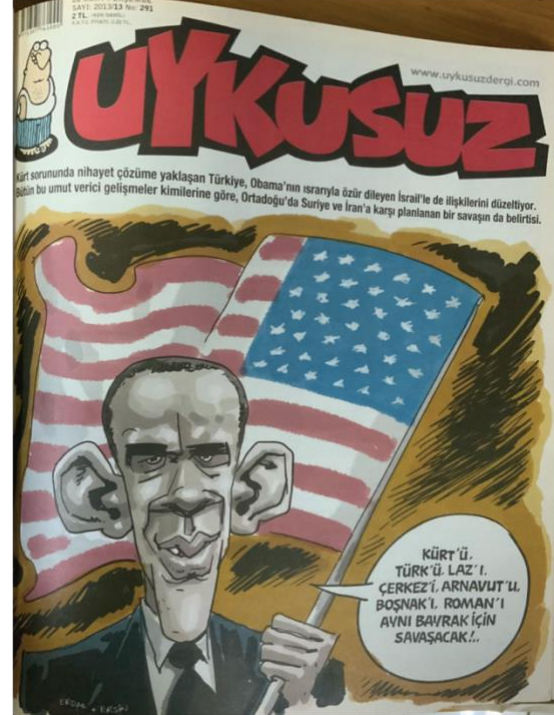
Figure 9: Erdoğan and Obama with the American Flag

Portrayal of Erdoğan with Trump reveals how the vision of superiority of the U.S. has evolved in Turkish caricatures due changing political developments and circumstances. President Trump is also represented ironically, but his statements and mannerism are not taken as seriously compared to Obama's diplomatic interactions. During the Trump administration, Erdoğan is portrayed as less timid and equal to Trump. One prominent back cover page in Figure 10 can be given as an example of equivalent power portrayal.
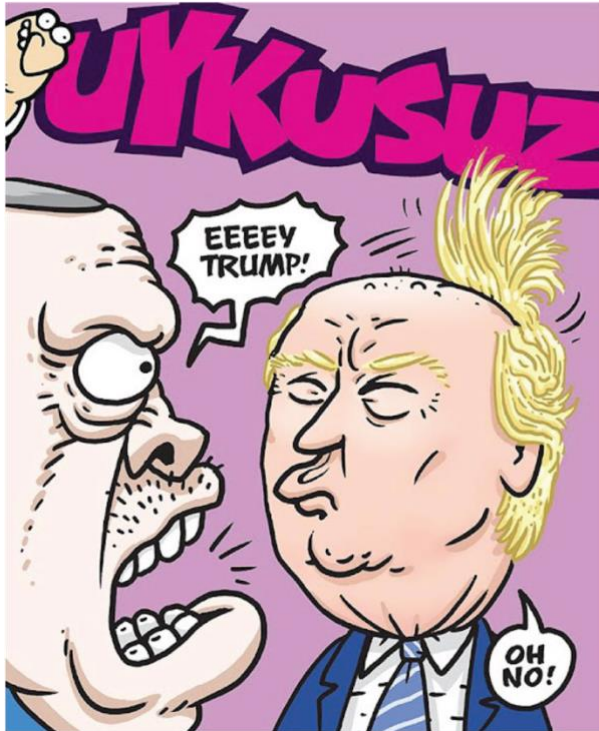
Figure 10: Trump and Erdoğan interaction

This back cover page of *Uykusuz* captures the incident where Erdoğan is not subservient towards the U.S. president as he was with Obama. Erdoğan does not approve that the U.S. is supporting YPG forces in Syria while the Trump administration does not recognize YPG as a terrorist group but as an ally to eradicate ISIS in the region. Although Erdoğan has been previously portrayed as voicing the same anxiety, this time he is not portrayed in a subservient position unlike his caricaturized manners in the Obama administration. In Figure 10, Erdoğan's face is slightly bigger as he is angrily staring at Trump and loudly exclaiming "HEYYYY TRUMP!" This exclamation is his characteristic utterance whenever he wants the addressees to acknowledge his power. This elongated loud exclaim is used to attract attention and to show his disagreement, merged with Trump's unimpressed facial expression and displaced toupee from the breeze of Erdoğan's anger.

Political humor provides an outlook through the above-mentioned framework of the U.S. pooling or delegating Turkey and other nation-states and organizations when dealing with international crises or instabilities in the Middle East. The U.S. and the presidential power are mostly portrayed through the idea of "benevolent supremacy."

As previously stated, the term refers to how the U.S. has overtaken the role of safeguarding international order to guarantee democracy, security, and liberty for other nations after World War II (McAlister, 2001, p. 47). The caricatures portray the U.S. as trying to safeguard democratic conventions or trying to appear as such while protecting American interests. Consequently, political caricatures expose various types of U.S. foreign actions in international relations. These types are the upper hand of the U.S. (UHU), political involvement of the U.S. (PIU), political power of the U.S. (PPU), political strategy of the U.S. (PSU), and political development of the U.S. (PDU). Each perception of the U.S. denotes different political instances. Most UHU portrayals take place on the cover pages of *Penguen* and *Uykusuz*. Besides the political dynamics between Erdoğan and Obama through stereotypical metaphors, *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* reflect UHU with Obama's ability to use his political influence. In the illustrations of *Penguen,* Obama, the representing body for the U.S., has subtle political interests and imposes these on Erdoğan. Erdoğan also acts as a surrogate for Obama. This supports the perception about UHU since the portrayals are about multiple interactions over the course of time coupled with military ties and political influence in the region (Russo & Cotta, 2020, p.12). *Uykusuz* is relatively different in terms of depicting the presence of Obama. He is in the background even in domestic politics, Israeli policies, or Erdoğan's militaristic actions. Erdoğan's hostile and serious attitude is more apparent while Obama is drawn in control despite Erdoğan's often silly remarks or actions. In *Penguen*, Erdoğan is depicted in a more childish manner. Representation with a childish attitude presents Erdoğan's body as a spectacle for Obama which causes him to take on the role of a disciplining adult, legitimizing his political influence. Most of the humor magazines display the upper hand of the U.S. and political power of the U.S. next to Erdoğan's subservient or ridiculous positions, also coded as PPE. During the Trump administration, there was no PPE, as explained in the example given above.

During the Trump Administration *Leman and Uykusuz* used UHU and PPU or UHU and TG together. This combination corresponds to how cover pages parody Trump. His visual representation corresponds to his presented identity in other forms of media. Trump is portrayed as a populist and nationalist leader who tries to gain confidence through asserting the superiority of the U.S. His election campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again" established his position as protecting the

interests of republican, conservative, patriarchal, white groups as opposed to guarding immigrant and minority rights. His policies of putting American interests first, shook the existing dynamics of military alliances under NATO, and led to questioning the feasibility of such an alliance. Although his ideological stance is different, his leadership style had commonalities with Erdoğan. The upper hand of the Trump administration is ridiculed through his abject behavior on the cover pages of *Uykusuz*. *Leman* had a different approach towards UHU during Trump's administration. His face is more assertive and angrier when he feels out of place. Additionally, the caricatures focus more on the complicated foreign politics since Trump aims to advance the American interests. *Uykusuz* is concerned with how Trump's identity politics cause conflicts in the Middle East. UHU in the context of Trump's reputation becomes disparaged humor because his anti-regulatory approach is perceived as uncommon and offensive in foreign relations. The upper hand of the U.S. is considered in a disdained manner compared to the Obama administrations.

4.2. Portrayal of Political Figures and Representation of the U.S.

In addition to displaying binary interactions between political subjects, behavioral information is also presented in Figure 11. The binary struggle between the privileged and unprivileged characters is visualized through a Sankey diagram only if they appear more than 5 times on the cover pages. Since this diagram demonstrates how many times each character is placed in the privileged or unprivileged grouping, it also presents the density of interaction between two parties through the thickness of the lines. Each privileged group or culpable characters in the "opposition" category are attributed different colors, matched with unprivileged presidents or social actor types in the caricatures. Percentage of occurrences regarding familiar symbols are shown through multiset bar charts in the "domestication" category.
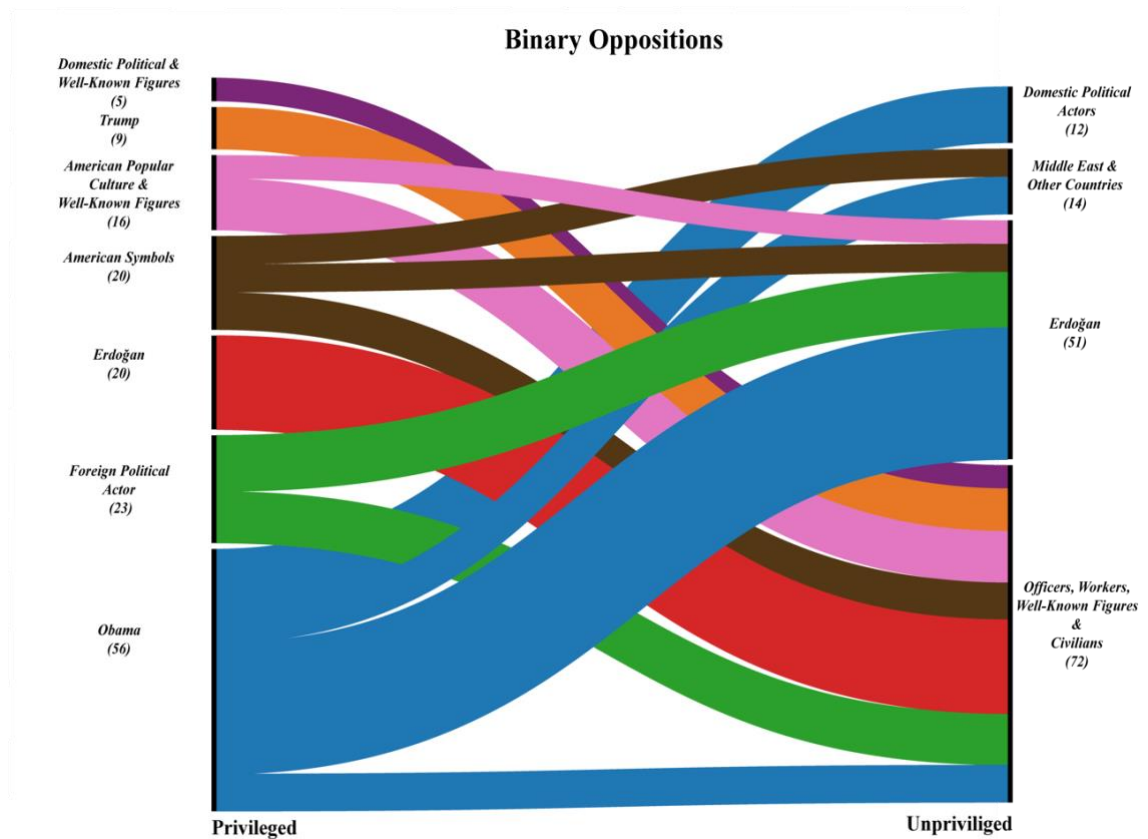
Binary Oppositions

Domestic Political & Well-Known Figures (5)
Trump (9)
American Popular Culture & Well-Known Figures (16)
American Symbols (20)
Erdoğan (20)
Foreign Political Actor (23)
Obama (56)

Domestic Political Actors (12)
Middle East & Other Countries (14)
Erdoğan (51)
Officers, Workers, Well-Known Figures & Civilians (72)

Privileged   **Unpriviliged**

Figure 11: Binary interactions between political subjects

4.2.1. Relations and Representations during the Obama Administrations

Obama is the most widely used privileged character, frequently interacting with Erdoğan who is portrayed in the unprivileged position. In other instances, Obama is privileged compared to domestic political actors or actors and situations in the Middle East and other countries. In contrast to Obama's portrayal, Trump is mostly exposed as a snob while protecting his national interests. Erdoğan is demonstrated in an unprivileged position when he is interacting with foreign political actors, American symbols and other popular cultural elements but he is revealed in a privileged position during his interactions with officers, workers, some well-known figures, and civilians. The satirical commentary upon Erdoğan mostly revolves around his authoritarianism and despotism towards his fellow citizens, as opposed to his compliance towards Obama, foreign political actors, and American related political subjects.

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Prior to Obama's presidency, the Bush administration was mistrusted due to the U.S. policies and not being able to address Turkish security interests regarding the PKK. When Obama was elected to the office a new beginning in Turkey–U.S. relationship was expected. His African American roots, his familiar name, and his father's Islamic background caused sympathy in the Turkish media. This general reverence is depicted on the *Uykusuz* cover right after his election: All caricaturists gather around a table filled with previous humor magazine issues, taking an oath and promising the readers that they would not make any offensive jokes in relation to Obama's name (Figure 12). This consensus would continue throughout the Obama administrations, despite criticizing U.S. foreign policies through his caricaturized portrayals.

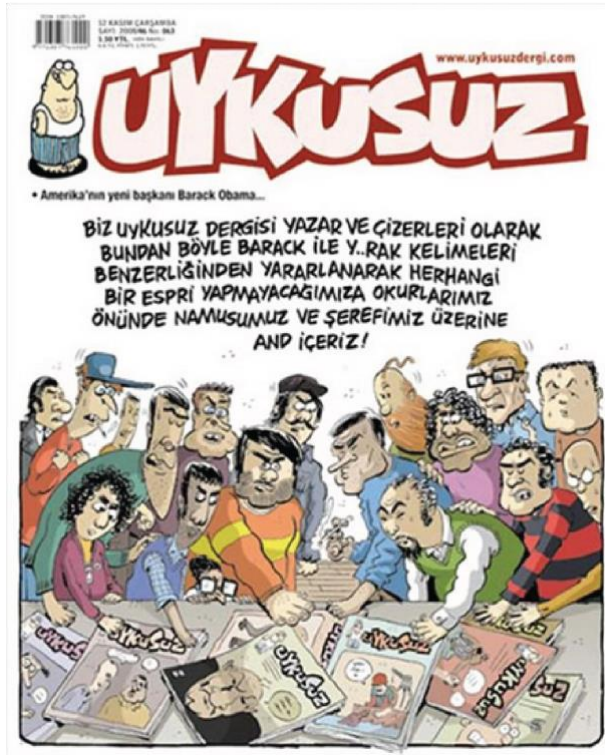*Uykusuz* Cover Page
(2008, November 12)

Figure 12: Uykusuz caricaturists taking an oath

When Obama visited Turkey during his first term, his promises and public perception toward him were reiterated throughout the humor magazines. *Leman*'s headline reveals how Obama highlighted the U.S. intentions of avoiding a war against Islam and how his Islamic background makes him understand both Turkish and the U.S. standpoints. Obama's background and assurances influenced the creation of satirical

caricatures in which he is depicted as seemingly considerate towards Turkish foreign policy concerns. Yet, these early caricatures also address an anxiety on how the events will eventually unfold. In Figure 13, initial receptions of Obama's presidency and his visit to Turkey are exposed. The cover page of *Leman* parodies Obama in an Uncle Sam outfit with a turban. Obama's repetition of "model partnership" is a matter of incredulity in this depiction (as the explanatory section reveals). "Should he be trusted?" or "Will he continue to follow the previous U.S policies?" are major questions in the beginning of his administration. The U.S. wish to endure militaristic partnership resonates with the Uncle Sam symbol, whereas the turban refers to a Muslim accessory. Thus, the ambiguous reception of Obama's image in Turkey is portrayed on the cover.

Leman Cover Page
(2009, April 8)

Penguen Cover Page
(2009, April 9)

Figure 13: Obama's first visit to Turkey.

In Figure 13, the cover page of *Penguen* displays Erdoğan's confidence towards Obama. During Obama's visit to Turkey, Erdoğan is caricaturized as a scared little child, asking to sleep between his father (Obama) and mother (Michelle Obama) at night. The headlines clarify that Obama had listed the problem areas in Turkey–U.S. relations with a hopeful note that all issues could be solved and stressed the importance of Turkey before leaving. The presence of the Obama family in Turkey

indicates renewed partnership possibilities but the unequal representation is obvious. Placing a child-like Erdoğan in the caricature beneath Obama's remarks during his first visit is a remark on the subservient position of Turkey. Realizing the incongruity between how Erdoğan is portrayed and how he should ideally behave creates political humor.

In Figure 14, *Uykusuz* cover page reveals how Obama's visit renewed hopes of an improved Turkey–U.S. relations, from Erdoğan, Davutoğlu, and Abdullah Gül's viewpoint. All politicians are depicted as over enthusiastic young school girls, ecstatic over a small gesture of connection while the plane carrying Obama is returning. The title reads "Obama Came and Everybody was Infatuated with Him." The three girls' happiness over having obtained the telephone number of a beloved, places Obama in the position of a desirable candidate in a courting relationship.

Uykusuz Cover Page
(2009, April 8)

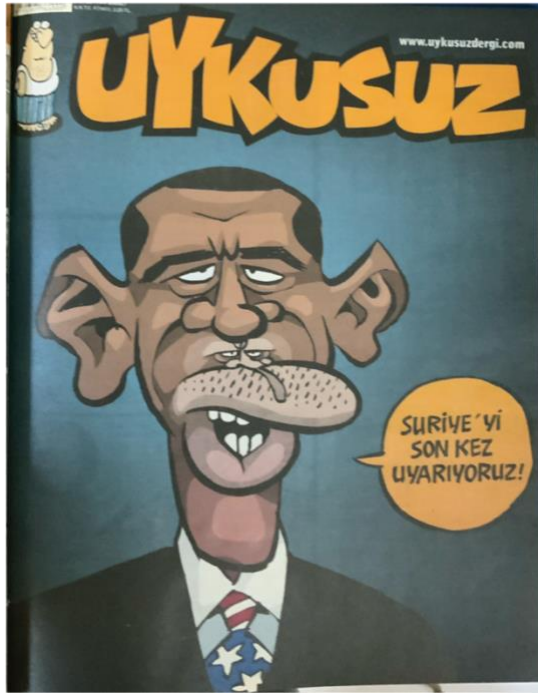*Gırgır* Cover Page
(2010, December 1)

Figure 14: Erdoğan seeking Obama's attention

A similar portrayal is repeated on the cover of *Gırgır* when the Wikileaks scandal exposed secret documents of governmental agencies in the second page in Figure 14. This time Erdoğan and Davutoğlu are once more presented as school girls reading a

note from an admirer who seems to be Obama. While the first girl (Davutoğlu) wants to know what is written, the second girl (Erdoğan) reveals that the sender (Obama) expresses his interest but adds his confused state of mind. While the two girls are trying to make sense of what this in-between situation means, the sender (Obama) is watching them and smiling in a sly manner. In both cases, the upper hand of the U.S. is obvious. Obama is the desirable object of attention, Erdoğan is drawn as seeking his affection and attention. In these depictions, humor is achieved through the clown-like presentation of Turkish politicians which reminds a carnivalesque situation where the roles are reversed and the privileged can assume other roles for the sake of laughter.

Uykusuz Cover Page
(2012, April 12)

Gırgır Cover Page
(2011, February 2)

Figure 15: Erdoğan becoming Obama

Erdoğan's infatuation turns into wanting to actually become Obama in the caricatures. This wish is portrayed in further exaggeration of Erdoğan's facial characteristics to produce a hybrid of Erdoğan-Obama. Figure 15 shows the *Uykusuz* cover page with merged faces and with the speech bubble of warning Syria for the last time. In this amalgamated portrait, the two leaders have become one in manner and speech. In the second *Gırgır* page, Erdoğan wakes up and finds himself

transformed into Obama as his wife confirms contentedly. Erdoğan readily exclaims that this metamorphosis will be completed by adopting the presidential system in Turkey. The humor arises from the exaggeration of Obama's racial features adopted on Erdoğan's face as well observing his uncontrollable wish to become the sole ruler of the nation. The transformations in these caricatures work on several levels; Erdoğan's lack of individuality and his wish for power through imitation and emulation is criticized while his foolishness in performing to be another person is satirized.

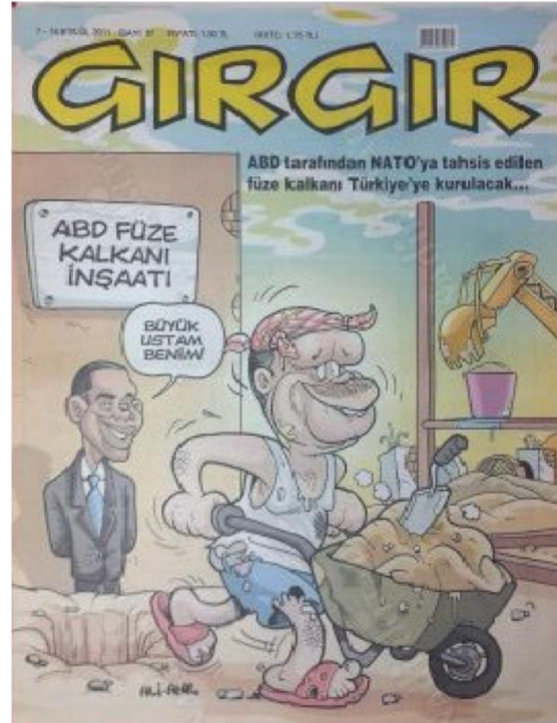*Gırgır* Cover Page (2010, November 24)   *Gırgır* Cover Page (2011, September 7)

Figure 16: Obama–Erdoğan interactions 1

This theme of asking Obama's attention or wanting to become Obama is carried out in various Turkey–U.S. relations. Figure 16 shows the interactions between Obama and Erdoğan about the issues of missile defense shields through the NATO alliance. *Gırgır* cover pages represent Erdoğan as Obama's soldier or an employee under the NATO alliance. In the first cover page, Obama salutes two soldiers (Erdoğan and Gül) who are ready to fulfill his commands. The soldiers' facial expressions are unenthusiastic, but they are not brave enough to decline the duty. Both soldiers are drawn shorter than Obama and less sure of themselves while Obama is relaxed with

his hands in his pocket. The second soldier (Gül) whispers, "should we have waited to apply for paid military service?" insinuating their reluctance in enlisting as soldiers sooner than necessary. In the second *Gırgır* cover page, almost a year later, the same subject is repeated. This time, Erdoğan is depicted as a very enthusiastic construction worker. Obama acknowledges his vigorous work with the words, "My great foreman" from a distance. The worker Erdoğan is unaware of being manipulated. Once again, the U.S. is portrayed as having the upper hand in the relations between two countries where the authority figure in Turkey becomes a subservient blue-collar worker and fulfills the U.S. wishes.

Penguen Cover Page
(2011, September 22)
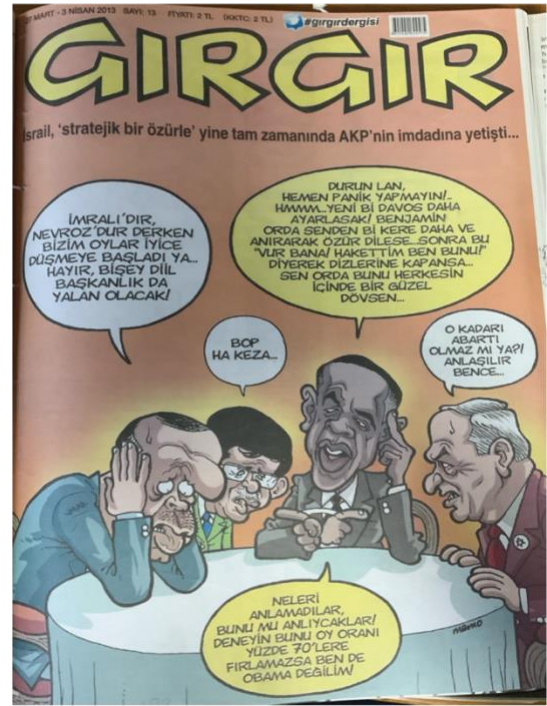
Gırgır Cover Page
(2013, September 14)

Figure 17: Obama–Erdoğan–Nethanyahu interactions

Obama is portrayed in various roles of shaping Turkish foreign and domestic politics. He is portrayed as instigating an apology from the Israeli president due to the Mavi Marmara crisis or trying to renew Erdoğan's domestic political image. Cover pages indicate how the U.S. plays a role in shaping Turkish–Israeli relations. Erdoğan rebuked Israeli president Shimon Peres for the Gaza operations in 2009, and Israeli soldiers attacked the Turkish ship carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza because the necessary permissions were not filed. After the Mavi Marmara incident, there was an

unfavorably received apology. The U.S. sought a joint defense agenda by identifying common benefits in the Middle East despite ideological differences (Arbell, 2014, pp. 31-40). *Penguen* portrayed the rift between Netanyahu and Erdoğan with their frowning and peeved expressions while Obama is trying to reconcile each party by physically pushing the figures closer to each other and saying "Come on, kiss and make up…" (Figure 17). Additionally, the cover page recycled Erdoğan's remarks towards Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the main opposition party leader, who had remarked that he would kiss Erdoğan's forehead if he was brave enough to take an action towards Israel. Erdoğan had answered by saying he would not allow Kılıçdaroğlu's stained lips to touch his forehead. On the cover page, while Obama is trying to bring the presidents closer, Erdoğan is pondering on Kılıçdaroğlu's words and the English word for "lips," a reference to his poor foreign language skills. In this caricature, Obama is portrayed, once more, as taller and wiser than the two other presidents who are depicted as immature for avoiding each other.

In Figure 17 in the second cover of *Gırgır*, Obama's intervention to repair the strained relations between Turkey and Israel is reflected as another U.S. strategic interest. Erdoğan and Davutoğlu are drawn with anxious faces, worried about their domestic political image, votes, and their role in the Middle East, while Obama frantically proposes one made-up scenario after the other for remedying both situations. The proposed scenarios include sensational clashes with the Israeli president to divert attention. The Israeli president objects softly without challenging Obama's proposals. The round table portrays Obama as the major player or shaper of the events in relation to his interests in the region. In both caricatures, humor is once more established through exaggerations of Erdoğan's behavior. These caricatures are not exactly produced for laughter. In fact, unlaughter seems to accompany these depictions.

Figure 18: Obama–Putin–Erdoğan interactions

When the caricatures are traced chronologically, Erdoğan's infatuation with Obama in the beginning developed into being manipulated by him. Later, Erdoğan is depicted as allowing Obama to shape foreign and domestic policies until the inclusion of Russia in the Syrian crisis. In Figure 18, Obama and Putin are portrayed in relation to Erdoğan whose lack of power or failure to understand that stronger opponents are manipulating him are criticized. Erdoğan is being portrayed as anxious and hasty towards any possible violations. On both *Uykusuz* cover pages, Obama and Putin are associated with resolving the issue and changing borders. On the contrary, Erdoğan and Davutoğlu are portrayed like immature children asking to use firearms and escalating tensions in the region. Erdoğan and Davutoğlu's depreciative glances and words "Let me at least vent!" indicate how the Turkish government mishandles policies. The second cover page from *Uykusuz* acts as a summary: Obama, Erdoğan, and Putin are gathered around an outlined map of Syria, all trying to shape borders. The subjects' facial expressions and speech bubbles are parodies of their intentions. Obama and Putin show disapproval over Erdoğan's political interests. The underlying meaning: Solutions in Syria will be shaped by American and Russian players and Erdoğan's efforts to be in the decision-making process are futile.
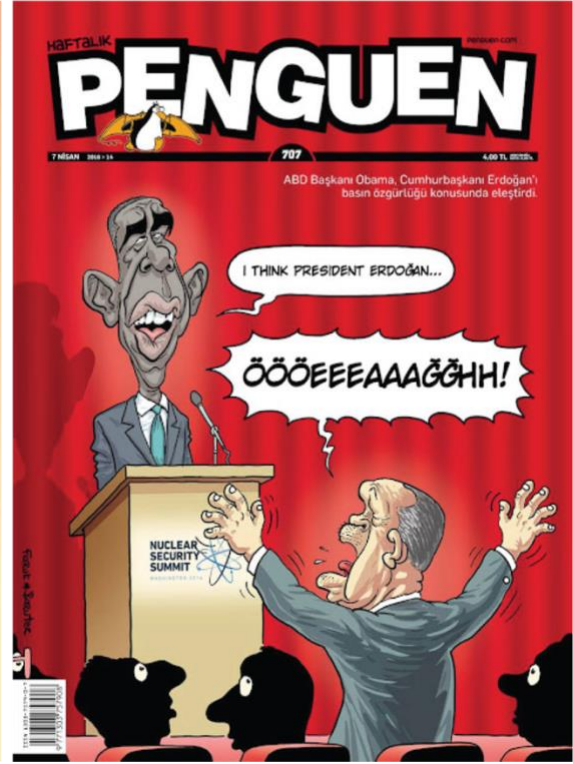
Figure 19: Obama–Erdoğan interactions 2

During Obama's second term key political moments intensified the decline of
Turkey–U.S. relations. Cover pages in Figure 19 is about Erdoğan's bodyguards'
reaction towards the protestors during the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington
DC. Some bodyguards suppressed voices of protest by howling and making loud
noises during Erdoğan's entrance to his hotel (Cumhuriyet, 2016). The cover pages
of *Leman* and *Penguen* create partially imagined related events. In *Leman*, Obama
criticizes Erdoğan about his authoritative decrees against the press and warns him
that democratic rights are being ignored. The bodyguards start howling to suppress
Obama's words while Erdoğan observes complacently. The cover page of *Penguen*
depicts Obama on stage during the Nuclear Security Summit. His sentence starting
with "I think President Erdoğan..." is interrupted by Erdogan's nonsense shouting
and protesting, an act of mimicking his bodyguard's reactions. Erdoğan obviously
does not want to be criticized for his policies and he is covering critical opinions with
similar adverse reactions. This depiction also refers to the struggle between Erdogan
and the press, as well his diminishing tolerance to free speech.

These caricatures during the Obama administrations also trace the changing relationship between Turkey and the U.S. In the beginning of his term, Erdoğan's readiness to ingratiate Obama evolves into wanting to be him and accepting his submissive role in foreign policy and considering him as the "big brother" in international and domestic relations. Finally, his relationship turns into being able to stand up and disregard Obama, despite in an undiplomatic and immature manner. During all stages of these depictions, Obama is always depicted as having lean body proportions, mostly calm with controlling stature while wearing a proper suit and tie. He is depicted without a suit and tie in rare occasions such as when he is impersonating Uncle Sam. Meanwhile, Erdoğan is criticized in clownish depictions: He becomes a short skirted immature girl seeking love, a happy idiotic worker wearing shorts and slippers, a child-like adult playing with firearms, an ineffective politician who ends up implementing powerless policies and finally almost a bully imitating his bodyguards. It is obvious that humor is directed in the depictions of Erdoğan's figure, rather than Obama's figure.

4.2.2. Relations and Representations during the Trump Administration

Unlike Obama's portrayals, offensive jokes related to Trump's personality and body parts start as early as his presidential candidacy. The *Uykusuz* caricature artists who took an oath for not writing offensive remarks about Obama's name, returned to portraying Trump in derogatory situations even during his candidacy. His campaign talks included discriminatory remarks towards ethnic and social groups and these became the subject matter of political humor. As stated before, Trump and Erdoğan's populist conservative rhetoric are comparable. These similarities are also mirrored in the depictions on the cover pages. For example, Erdoğan supporters are depicted as supporting Trump or both presidents give advice to each other on political matters.

Figure 20 shows receptions towards Trump's campaign and election process. In the beginning, potential implications of Trump's foreign policy were supported and perceived through hopeful lenses by Turkish authorities (Pierini, 2016). The Obama administration eventually had failed to consider the Turkish interests in the Middle East and the Erdoğan government was hopeful about the new president. After Trump's election, there were many protests in the U.S. The *Gırgır* cover page

caricaturizes pro-government Turkish media supporting Trump's administration, metaphorically. In the caricature, arrogant Erdoğan supporters are targeting Trump protestors violently, shouting that they have worn their burial shrouds, implying that they will defend Trump to death. Wearing burial shrouds is a reference to the Trabzon youth branch of the Justice and Development Party who greeted Erdoğan by wearing burial shrouds to show that they will support him to the end (Cumhuriyet, 2013). The protestors carrying anti-Trump banners do not understand Erdoğan supporters' attack. The incongruity and difference in outlook and manner of two groups create humor. This caricature employs an imagined clash between two ideologically different groups from Turkey and the U.S. and plays upon their similarities. The Erdoğan supporters are not different from Trump supporters or Trump and Erdoğan opposers are similar by the same token.

Figure 20: Beginning of the Trump administration

Penguen cover page exposes Erdoğan's statements related to the existence of freedom of lifestyles in Turkey, which is uttered in his interview on Al Jazeera TV (*Cumhuriyet,* 2016). On the cover page these statements are exaggerated through an imaginary phone conversation between Erdoğan and Trump. Erdoğan tells Trump to

proclaim "We do not persecute lifestyles" and suggests declaring a state of emergency if he is having trouble controlling the citizens. The caricature indicates that Erdoğan is paying lip service to such freedoms rather than defending democratic rights. The headline based on Erdoğan's declaration "Turkey has never been freer and more comfortable in its history" shows the discrepancy between declarations and reality (Figure 20). The concealed victims in the caricature are citizens of both nations, as they are the ones who are going to be affected by the authoritarian outlook of these two leaders. Moreover, compared to his caricatures during the Obama administrations, Erdoğan's portrayal has been reversed. Erdoğan was portrayed in a submissive position as mentioned in the previous chapter, but now he is depicted as confident enough to advise Trump on his domestic problems. Trump, meanwhile, does not recognize Erdoğan and seems confused as to who is calling him. This confidence and Trump's indifference causes the incongruity and thus, the humor.

Uykusuz Cover Page
(2018, January 25)

Figure 21: Trump's Syria policy 1

Notable illustrations of Trump's impulsiveness and carelessness compared to the Obama illustrations are obvious on the cover pages related to the Syria crisis. To sum

up the political background, Turkey requested the U.S. to stop aiding PYD and YPG at all cost because they were collaborating with PKK. Later, Turkey conducted Operation Olive Branch in Afrin district; since long-term solutions were needed to negotiate if ISIS would regroup (Üstün, 2018, p. 3). This context correlates to the first 2018 *Uykusuz* cover page, in which a Trump's employee asks whether or not YPG should send support to Afrin. Trump, whose face is depicted as an ass, answers that he is not sure because everybody has a different opinion (Figure 21). Trump's rhetoric and style is in the foreground compared to the portrayed motives during Obama's term. Hence, the political context of the humor functions through Trump's inefficiency which is a departure from decisive Obama's portrayals.
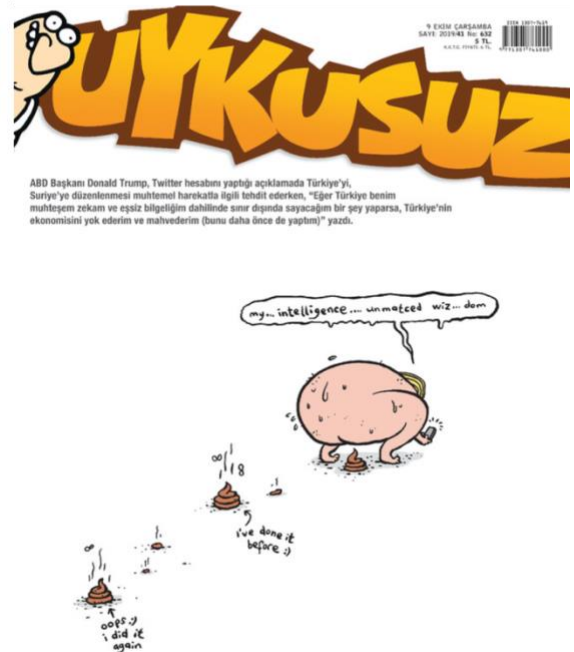

Figure 22: Trump's Syria policy 2

Trump's hasty Twitter diplomacy is another recurring theme besides his unusual and often degrading portrayals, such as defecating on the Syrian map or in the middle of nowhere. Trump is depicted as unstable and threatening on matters related to Syria. On *Leman* and *Uykusuz* cover pages, Trump's phony attitude is given through his proclamations. The cover pages mock the tweets by combining his proclamations to his defecating routine. To elaborate further, *Leman* cover page caricaturizes Trump's

decision-making process after Esad's chemical attack. While he declares that he is going to make a decision about Syria in 24 to 48 hours, he is drawn as waiting to defecate. Since the headline suggests the possible action might be signaling a third world war, *Leman* cover page, differing from *Uykusuz*, includes existing discussions on how Trump's decisions will lead to an escalation (Figure 22).

The *Uykusuz* cover refers to Trump's thread of tweets about his opinion on Syria and reiterates warnings about Turkey's planned operation after he declared to withdraw the U.S. troops from Syria (Günerigök, 2019). The feces on the ground mockingly represent his threat of "destroying and obliterating" Turkish economy if he considers any of the actions as "off-limits" while indicating that he did it before (Reuters, 2019). Trump's humming of Britney Spears's song *Oops!.. I did it again* becomes the basis of satire (Figure 22). The song lyrics also refer to the attitude of a lover who has developed an unreciprocated attachment, which insinuates Trump's similar interest and basis for his empty threats. These portrayals lampoon Trump indecently, partially because such kind of humor was also circulating internationally. For example, Mexico Caricature Museum exhibited Trump's indignant caricatures during his candidacy (Cummins, 2016).
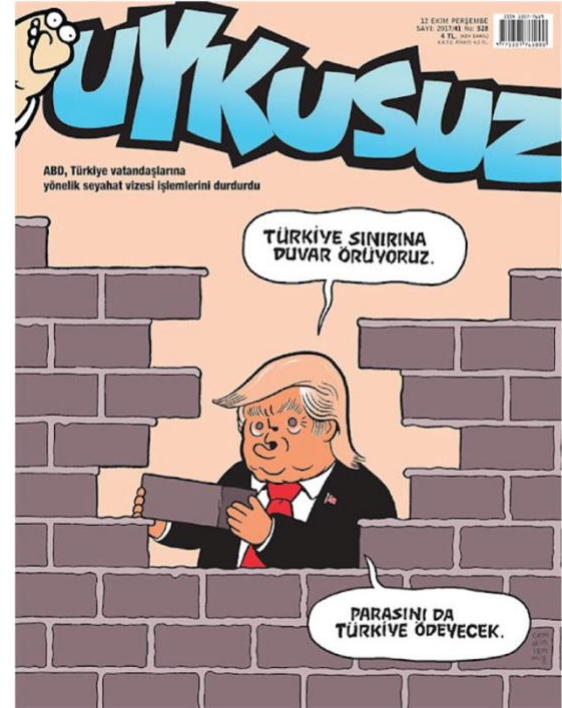
Figure 23: Trump's travel and immigration bans

In Figure 23, the cover pages of *Leman* and *Uykusuz* present Trump's convictions on Making America Great Again (MAGA) through travel bans and establishing white supremacy in the nation. The cover page of *Leman* presents short information about the protests on the travel ban around the world combined with Trump's declarative sentence and pose. In the headline and informative textual section, Erdoğan's silence towards Trump's islamophobia is criticized through a pun on the movie title, *The Silence of the Lambs*, read as "The Silence of the Supportive Lambs." while Trump is portrayed as prompting Erdoğan to protect the U.S. vested interests. This caricature makes use of oppositions; Erdoğan's silence is criticized in the headlines while Trump is satirized through his dull facial expression, open mouth, and puckered lips which cover the larger portion of the page. Another problematic issue was related to suspending nonimmigrant visa services due to the arrest of Americans charged with aiding the attempted coup of Fetullah Gülen organization. *Uykusuz* cover page depicts Trump as building a wall to Turkish borders while saying that expenses will be paid by Turkey; an obvious pun to his actual remarks of building a Mexican border wall. These cover pages featuring political polemics outline the public opinions on Trump's declarations and deeds.

As far as diplomatic relations are considered, there are only a few caricatures representing Trump and Erdoğan together. In Figure 24, the *Penguen* cover presents Erdoğan receiving a video call from Trump who says "Are you with me to Make America Great Again?" Erdoğan is portrayed as surprised and trying to make sense; an unlikely reaction compared to his initial infatuation with Obama. The second caricature on the *Leman* cover page depicts the interaction in Japan during the G20 Osaka Summit as it really happened except for Erdoğan's inner speech bubble. Trump exclaims "Look at these people! They are so easy to deal with. You can never create such a team on a Hollywood movie set…" (Habertürk, 2019). In the caricature Erdoğan is seen as pondering whether or not he should respond while recognizing Trump's audacity. He is thinking about a cliché sentence from Turkish movies where the leading male character exclaims, "You are as patronizing as your beauty!" This slice of life portrayal was deemed as humorous in its own account and the caricature reproduces the actual interaction by only incorporating Erdoğan's inner voice. In fact, humor is established through this imagined speech bubble while portraying the underestimation and insult in Trump's actual sentences.

Figure 24: Trump and Erdoğan Interactions

The difference between Obama and Trump representations can be traced throughout the aforementioned examples. Obama is often drawn in normalized political situations and his interaction with Erdoğan or other actors are more pronounced. Trump is also motivated in furthering U.S. interests but he does not seem as interested as Obama in communicating or persuading other international partners. He is often portrayed alone or in the company of few people and without meaningful interactions with other political figures. Rather than focusing on interactions, Trump is depicted as doing whatever he feels like doing or saying and commanding his wishes through social media. For example, on the *Penguen* cover page, he asks if Erdoğan would like to join him to "Make America Great Again" through a video call (Figure 24). Erdoğan is startled since he does not comprehend the inappropriate invitation. Yet, this cover page depicts both leaders in an equal stance; Erdoğan is no longer infatuated with the American president or does not look for his approval. Thus, the criticism rests more on Trump rather than Erdoğan's position or the relationship between them. The cover pages portray Trump in abject positions, such as having an ass face or defecating randomly without considering the implications of

his actions, rather than personating the role of a respected politician and president. Another aspect about Trump caricatures are his direct portrayals with minimal additions to the caricatures, such as when he is seen as building a wall to Turkey (Figure 23) and talking with Erdoğan in 2019 G-20 Summit in Japan (Figure 24). In both cases, the caricatures use Trump's own words with minimal additions or changes. Thus, Trump's character traits, manner of speech, declarative sentences in social media, and decisions are depicted as they appear in actuality. These caricatures seem to blur the line between the humorous and serious. Compared to Obama caricatures, which are more creative both in depictions and speech bubbles, Trump caricatures are less imaginative.

4.3. Findings and Discussions of Symbols, Stereotypes, and Figures

A number of familiar symbols related to the representations of the U.S. are used as rhetorical tools in caricatures. The American images, symbols, and celebrities are mostly mentioned or portrayed together with the presence of other political subjects or figures. Domestication element illustrates what kinds of cultural imagery are used or modified in the caricatures. American images, symbolism, or celebrities are sometimes merged with Turkish characters or religious and cultural symbols to add mannerisms to the frames. Turkish religious and cultural symbols are used to revisit the dynamics of typical daily behavior and to transpire irony, sarcasm, and parody through familiar cultural depictions. Anti-American symbols and sentiments are recycled in the caricatures to express opposition, to voice anti-imperial sentiments, or to criticize the U.S. vested interests. Stereotyping is also related to domestication and suggests some form of antagonism for caricaturized subjects. Stereotypical attributes hinder an in-depth analysis of political subjects but places them into familiar subject positions. Although findings reveal 82 out of 128 issues as using familiar symbols, total usage and distribution of images expose other findings. Each humor magazine prefers different choices of symbols, stereotypes, or iconic representations. American elements, mostly used by *Gırgır* and *Uykusuz*, include impersonations of American representations such as Uncle Sam, Rosie the Riveter, or a cowboy figure. These symbolic representations can also be used in the portrayal of domestic political issues or political dialogues and create humorous exchanges through their subverted inclusion in the frame.
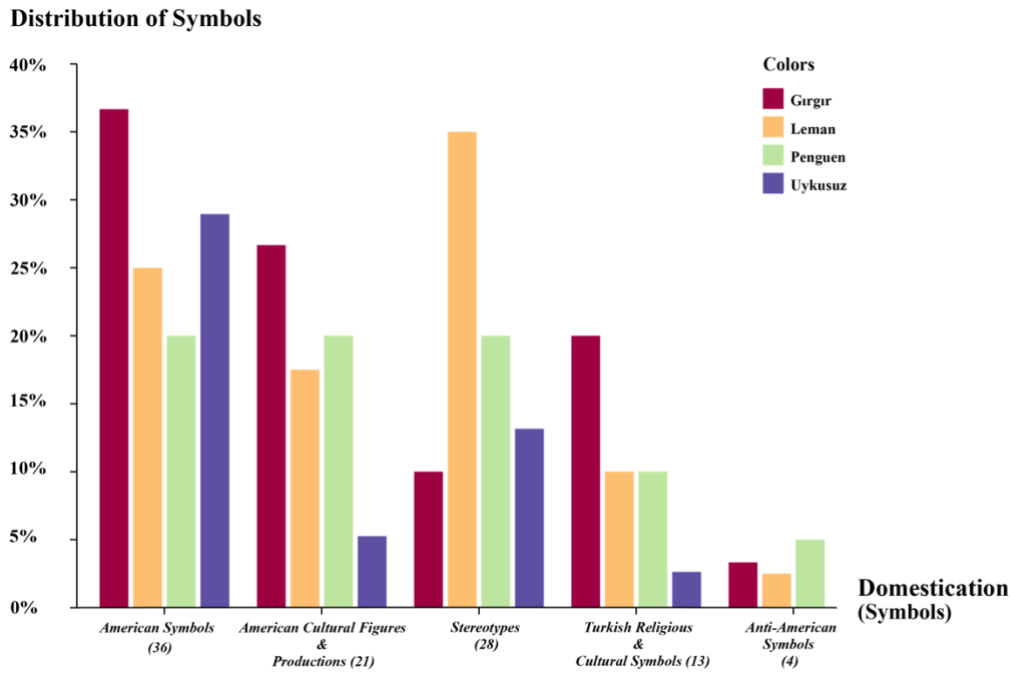
Distribution of Symbols

Figure 25: Symbols, Stereotypes and Domestication

Uncle Sam figures first appeared in illustrations during the mid-nineteenth century in the U.S. and resembled president Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. James Montgomery Flagg created an army recruiting poster for World War I in 1916, which coined the Uncle Sam figure as the key symbol in representing America. In this drawing, a male bearded figure with a hat in American flag patterns and colors, is pointing his finger outside of the frame and declaring, "I Want You" (Hess & Northrop, 2017, p. 30). In Figure 26, Erdoğan is seen as mimicking Uncle Sam on the page of *Gırgır*. His interest in military combat is forged in the headlines "If you want peace, get ready for war!" His smiling manner is the added proof of his enthusiasm and shows his eagerness in fulfilling his interests similar to the U.S. Obama's Uncle Sam portrayal is different from his initial Uncle Sam image in the beginning of his administration discussed above (Figure 13) where the ambiguous reception of his term was depicted. In Figure 26, Obama as Uncle Sam presents Obama's reluctance to meet Erdoğan due to strained relations. The welcoming Uncle Sam image in the beginning of Obama's administration has transformed into an unresponsive one with the reversal of the hand gesture at the end. In both representations the humor element is present in exaggerated facial gestures.

Gırgır Cover Page
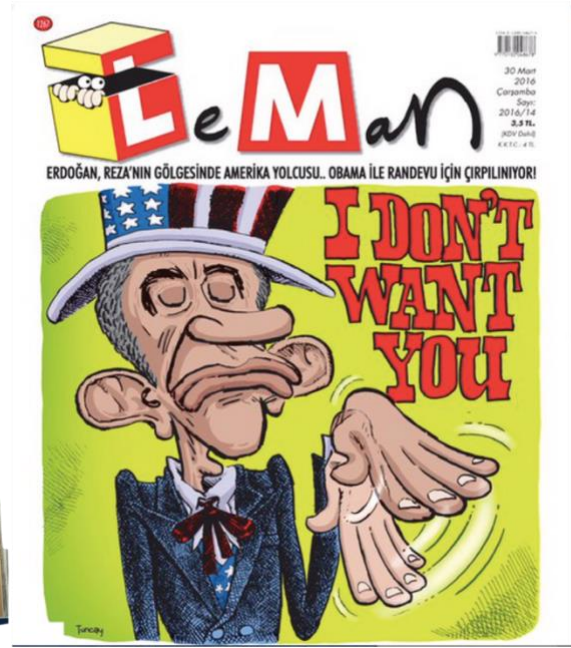(2017, October 10)
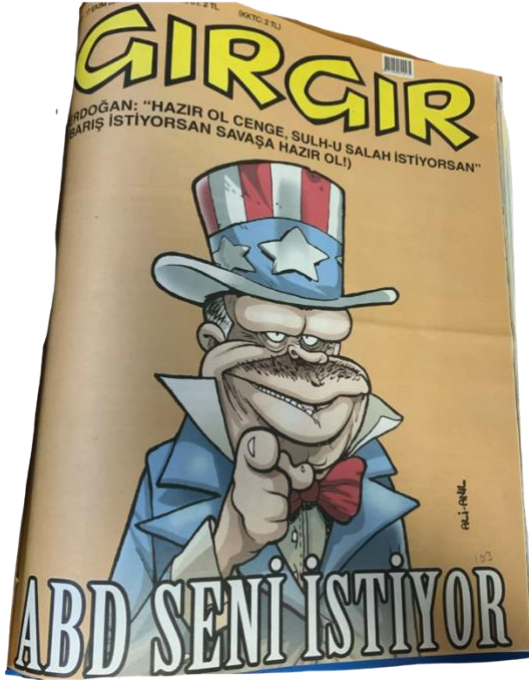
Leman Cover Page
(2016, March 30)

Figure 26: Erdoğan and Obama's Uncle Sam portrayals

In Figure 27, Trump is represented as a member and supporter of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) twice on *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* covers. The KKK is an American white supremacist and right-wing group whose targets have been all groups outside the white society such as Jewish people, African Americans, and immigrants. The organization was established in the beginning of the twentieth century to advance the interests of white Protestant Americans and to restrict the rights of other racial, ethnic, or religious groups. Although they claim to be tolerant, they are known to inflict violent acts upon those whom they perceive as enemies. The Klan members defended their opinions while wearing sheets and hoods to conceal their identities. They enforced conformity and practices they determined as "American" (McVeigh, 2009, p. 196). The Charlottesville, Virginia Protests in 2017 were organized by white nationalist groups including Klan members who objected to tearing down confederate monuments (Franklin, 2020, p. 275). Trump did not openly condemn the protestors which established him as indulging the Klan, although he is not a registered member of the organization. Trump's decisions and actions are addressed in a more exaggerated and concerned manner through the Klan images in the caricatures. On the *Uykusuz* cover page Trump's ban on refugees entering the U.S. is criticized through depicting him as the Statue of Liberty in a Klan outfit. The

indication is that the American symbol of freedom is replaced by the white supremacy. In the second *Uykusuz* cover, representatives of supremacist groups, including a Klan member, are jumping on a trampoline that has Trump's facial imprint, a remark on his tolerance to these groups. The similarity between the word "trampoline" and "Trumpoline" is used to intensify the message. Unlike Obama, an African American president portrayed in a dignified manner even when American policies are criticized, Trump is portrayed as undignified and superficial in the caricatures as mentioned before.

Uykusuz Cover Page
(2017, February 17)
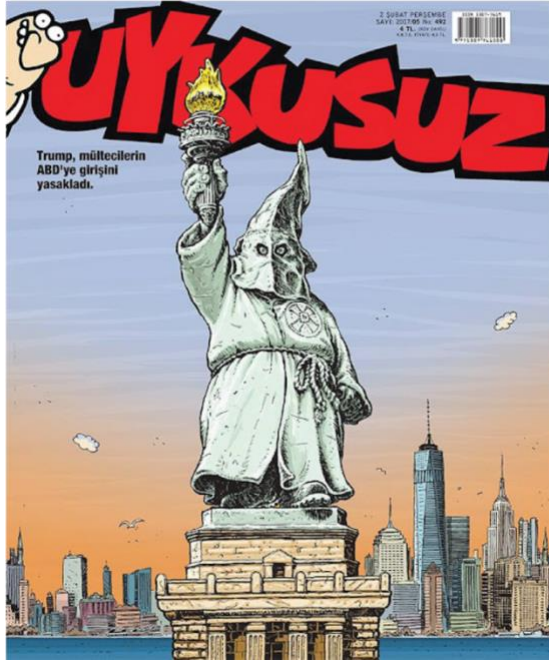
Uykusuz Cover Page
(2017, August 17)
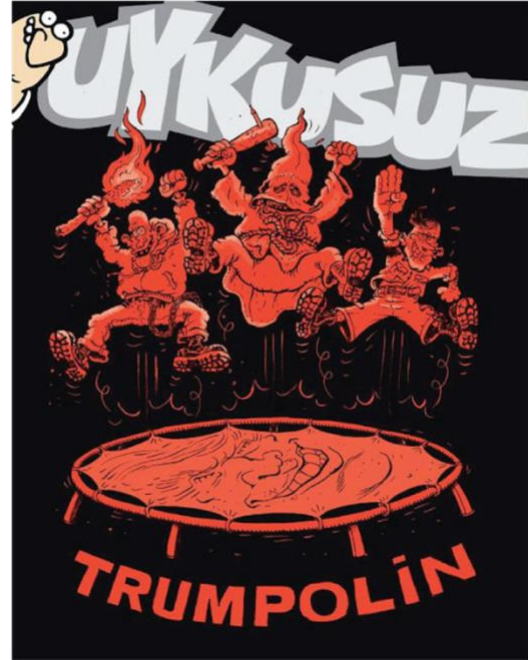
Figure 27: Trump's representations with Klan outfits

Erdoğan or domestic political figures can be seen as impersonating American cultural figures, movie characters, or fictional characters such as Rambo from *Rambo* series, Neo in *The Matrix*, Rick Blaine in *Casablanca* with the pianist character Sam, Batman movie scene or characters from *Star Wars*. Celebrities (Michael Jackson, Nicholas Cage, and Angelina Jolie, etc.), American icons, and superheroes (Batman, Spiderman, etc.) are sometimes merged with domestic incidents related to the education system, the economic crisis, corruption, media coverage of Turkish martyrs, and Erdoğan's image. American celebrities, icons, and symbols are not only

employed to represent the U.S., but are also used to elucidate domestic and foreign politics within the depicted context in their exaggerated and subverted versions to create humorous depictions.

Figure 28: Erdoğan's impersonation of Rambo and meeting Angelina Jolie

In Figure 28, Erdoğan, in a Rambo costume and make-up, is asking his wife if she wants anything as he is getting ready to leave. The unseen wife's reply, "Sweets from Damascus!", is an indication of the explanatory headline: "While Syrian intervention is being discussed, a sixty-million-dollar war combat helicopter was purchased." Erdoğan's readiness to start military intervention in Syria is criticized together with his consubstantiality with Rambo, who is known as always being ready to take on the duty alone. Erdoğan's depiction as Rambo, combined with his traditional husband gesture, is treated as a play on different types of cultural masculinities. Two unlikely images—a vigilante character and a concerned husband—are merged to create humor. In the second caricature, the headline states that Erdoğan meets with Anjelina Jolie. Erdoğan is smiling, a characteristic rarely seen in his actual public appearances. This is further emphasized with a civilian's remark to Erdoğan "You have never smiled like that to us." The discrepancy between his pleasant manners to American celebrities and his serious outlook and disciplining

rhetoric towards fellow citizens are revealed as a source of concern and disapproval. Once more, unlaughter is at work in this caricature since the image is not produced for humor but to denunciate Erdoğan's manners.
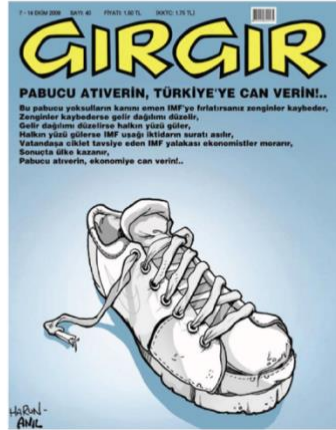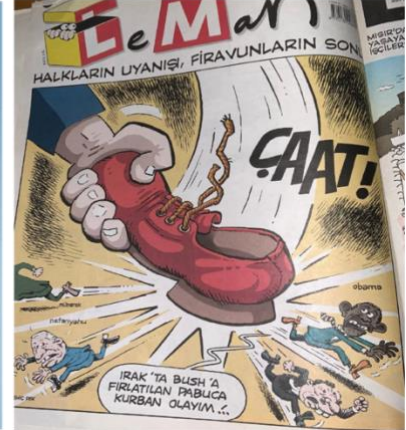

Figure 29: Various portrayals of the Bush's shoe throwing incident

One of the most encapsulated political incidents in terms of symbolisms were the Bush shoe throwing incident, Erdoğan portrait on the cover page of TIME magazine, and Paul Auster's decline to visit Turkey. The common point between these caricaturized incidents is the connection to the caricaturists' commentary and criticism about past domestic or political policies. Bush's shoe incident, originally caused by an Iraqi journalist, became a repeated tool in circulating political action throughout different time frames related to economic influence or Arab Spring. This incident indicates changing and evolving interpretations of Turkish Islamic synthesis. Although the studied humor magazines do not advocate political Islam, they publish critical comments on the U.S. political involvement in the region. Figure 28 shows how the thrown shoe becomes a symbolic entity that acquires different meanings in time: It becomes a realistically portrayed shoe during the actual incident in 2008; a casually worn Nike shoe to entice uprising against the international financial institutions in 2009; and a tool to crush and overthrow presidents by anonymous civilians during the Arab Spring in 2011. This change also reveals the improving relations between Turkey and the Arab world. In the last caricature, presidents are running away from the gigantic shoe that is aiming to crush them. Portraying Obama

alongside Netanyahu and Hosni Mubarak, the former Egyptian president, is a remark on the destructive influence of U.S. involvement.

Figure 30: Erdoğan on the cover of TIME

Erdoğan's portrait on the *Time* magazine cover page becomes the subject for *Gırgır* and *Leman* covers (Figure 30). *Time* is one of the prominent weekly news magazines in the U.S. and appearing on the cover indicates notability, fame, or notoriety. The magazine cover presents him in a black and white portrait from waist up and his arms crossed with the headlines "Erdoğan's Way" and explanatory subtitles: "Turkey's pro-Islamic leader has built his (secular, democratic, Western friendly) nation into a regional powerhouse…/…but can his example save the Arab Spring?" (Time, 2011). The humor magazines cover this incident the same week. *Gırgır* cover presents Erdoğan ogling his portrait while Obama and the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton are observing him. Obama asks whether or not Erdoğan is going to "dive into" Syria in a colloquial manner and Clinton answers, "We raised him to the bait by placing him on the cover of *Time*. I think he will since he is carried away." The implication is that the U.S policy is based on manipulating Erdoğan and using the *Time* cover to convince him to act according to their wishes. The *Leman* cover page presents a parody of the *Time* cover with the headline "The Employee of the Month," playing

on the idea that the "employee" is actually the U.S. Erdoğan seems very serious, cross eyed, unhappy, and almost crazy looking in this reproduction. The elaborately framed portrait is hanging on a wall, which further intensifies the ironic portrayal of the *Time* cover.

Figure 31: Paul Auster declines to visit Turkey

Almost a year later, well-known writer Paul Auster declines to visit Turkey because "writers and journalists are kept in prison" and he refuses invitations from countries where democratic rules are not observed (Hürriyet, 2012). Erdoğan answers "Who cares if you come or not?" and calls him "ignorant" because Auster visited Israel before, a country that used chemical weapons in Gaza. The dispute between them increased with comments from other political figures and writers (Flood, 2012). The ensuing polemics between Auster and Erdoğan became the topic of humor magazines. The *Leman* cover page presents Auster in New York City with his secretary while recounting his answers to the Turkish Prime Minister and declaring, "Enough is Enough! These people have finished my writing career! Why have we decided to meddle with them!" (Figure 31). This response is a criticism of the level of political incivility in Turkey. On the *Uykusuz* cover page, the angry Auster is portrayed as adopting Erdoğan supporters' rhetoric when he exclaims "I have worn

my burial shroud to become a writer, Mr. Tayyip!" to which an innocent bystander warns him not to enter into a battle of words with Erdoğan since it is not possible to win such an argument. The humor in both cases is built upon the ridiculousness of such a controversy and how this incident has transformed Auster into pessimism.

Gırgır Cover Page
(2013, September 4)

Gırgır Cover Page
(2012, October 24)

Figure 32: Rabia Sign and Erdoğan's acceptance sign

Figure 32 exemplifies the co-presence of Turkish and American symbols on the cover pages. The *Gırgır* cover adopts the Rabia Sign as a hand painted with the American flag. This gesture was used by Erdoğan to display support in protests of Muslim Brotherhood. Each extended finger carries the finger puppets of Davutoğlu, Erdoğan, Bülent Arınç, and the commander of Turkish Armed Forces, suggesting that Turkish political actors can only be puppets and the U.S. has the control of the situation. Second *Gırgır* cover reveals Erdoğan's acceptance of Obama's offer to get involved in Syria, presented through the Turkish religious/cultural "eyvallah" gesture. The caricature picks up on Erdoğan's actual frequent usage of this gesture. Obama speaks in a Turkish colloquial manner, ending with the affectionate address "Kurban" (colloquial usage for the person you are willing to give your life for). Meanwhile, the headline acknowledges eid al-adha, the feast of the sacrifice which is also a covered criticism of possible lost lives as a result of this mutual decision.

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Humor arises from both figures' unlikely cultural interaction; Obama would not use Turkish colloquial expressions and Erdoğan would not reciprocate with that particular cultural gesture to Obama.

Figure 33: Carnivalesque interactions

In Figure 33, the Bakhtinian concept of carnivalesque is apparent in the two caricatures since there seems to be multiple interactions going on at the same time. The *Leman* cover page features a caricature about accepting the construction of the NATO defense shield. The headlines reveal that the target is Iran and Islamic countries. The other presidents from the NATO alliance are observed on the stairs of the landing plane watching the welcoming ceremonies given to the honor of their arrival. Erdoğan and Gül are dressed in folkloric outfits and are performing a Turkish folk dance, "Kılıç Kalkan" (Sword and Shield). The props in the dance are changed to miniaturized defense shields instead of swords. The folk dance replicates phases of combat, thus the similarity of arming for safety or expecting military action. The other nations watch and admire from a distance, uttering the word "Fantastic" in their own languages. The figures of Erdoğan and Gül feel that they are doing something valuable by showing their capability. The obvious satire is directed towards the manipulation of NATO members and the gullibility of Turkish politicians in a jovial

atmosphere where everybody is smiling. The possible future chaos is suspended for a period of fun and games and the actual situation is subverted through humor. In a carnivalesque situation the unlikely people are brought together and the hierarchical relationship disappears as the unacceptable behavior becomes acceptable. The dancing of happy Turkish politicians might be viewed as an improper performance in actuality. According to Bakhtin (1999) the carnival employs symbolic language whether in a large scale or individualistic carnivalistic gestures. This language is different from verbal language. Thus, the dancing performance and how the Turkish leaders are immersed in their new role can be viewed as part of this type of language. The participants of the carnival embrace reversed or subverted experiences and a new mode of relationships exists between individuals as interrelated aspects are brought together in a unity of opposites (pp. 122-123). This caricature can be viewed from the lens of Bakhtinian carnivalesque type of humor.

The second caricature in Figure 33 can be viewed as a parody of a carnivalesque situation. The atmosphere is portrayed as a mixture of gloomy, serious, and optimistic and jovial situations. The *Uykusuz* cover page about Operation Euphrates Shield—the military operation Turkish Armed forces conducted in Northern Syria to secure its interests in the region (2016-2017)—is portrayed in the form of a movie poster. The poster includes a number of disjoint events: On the top of the page, there is a battle tank engaging in combat with infantry on the side, a figure of a soldier with a dagger in his mouth, aggressively engaging with an unseen enemy, a mosque with a Turkish flag on its minaret, Uncle Sam mimicry by Erdoğan, and the iconography of *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima* reproduced with the Turkish flag in the middle. At the bottom of the page Davutoğlu gives military orders in a jovial manner while three military personnel are planning war strategies around the table. One figure is depicted as a grinning skeleton with a beard and turban, the indication of an imam or a religious figure, possibly signifying the deaths as a result of the military intervention. The bottom of the page lists the director and actors of this constructed movie where domestic political figures are named. The parody is achieved by bringing several dualistic representations together; the sacred (mosque, Turkish flag) and the profane (war efforts) and the commanders (Erdoğan and Davutoğlu) and soldiers. The *carnivalistic mésalliances* where the distanced hierarchical elements are brought together (Bakhtin, 1999, pp. 123) are achieved through the coexistence

of American symbols and Erdoğan's imitation of the U.S. iconic figures. Thus, the event is portrayed as a parody of what other allies (NATO and Russia) are doing in the Middle East.

Leman Cover Page (2014, February 19)   *Uykusuz* Cover Page (2014, November 27)
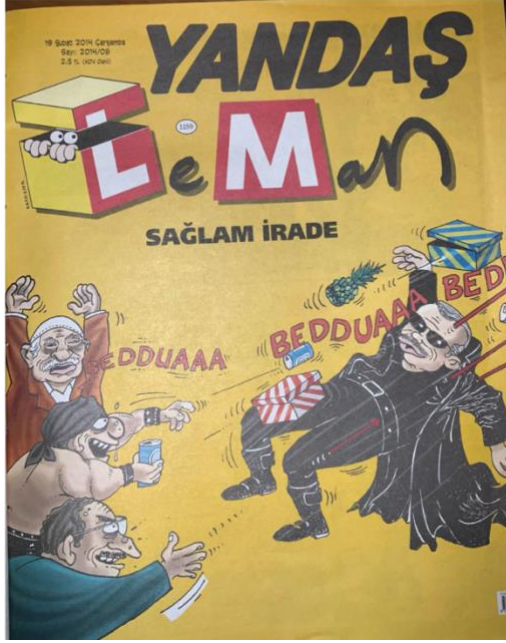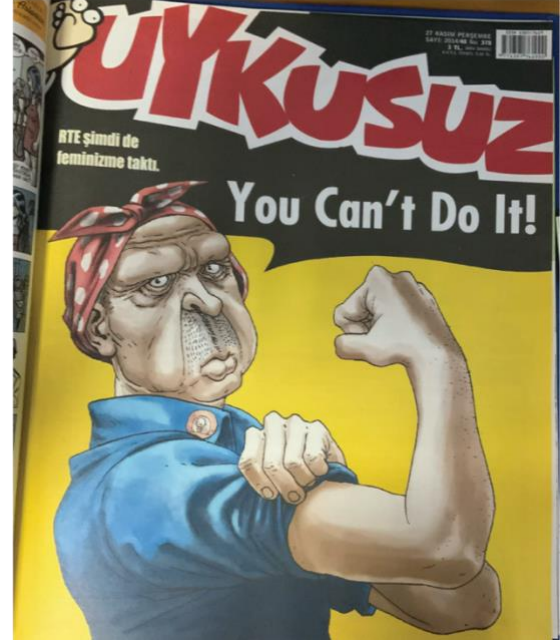
Figure 34: Erdoğan as Neo and Rosie the Riveter

In Figure 34, the bringing together of symbols is also apparent where Erdoğan is seen as impersonating the Neo character in the movie *Matrix*. Neo manifests superhuman powers when he faces his enemies in the simulated reality designed by codes. He acquires the ability to bend and shape to avoid bullets aimed at him. Thus, the *Leman* cover presents Erdoğan as being strong enough to avoid anything thrown at him. On the side, Fetullah Gülen is portrayed as cursing him but his bad sentiments do not harm Erdoğan and pass over his head as words. Since Erdoğan is portrayed as having superhuman powers, *Leman* makes sure that the magazine is not diverting from its left-wing oppositional stance and not intending to glorify Erdoğan. By adding the word "yandaş" (Partisan/Supporting) over its name, *Leman* is also satirizing supportive partisan media which portrays Erdoğan as a strong leader who is capable of overcoming all difficulties. Erdoğan's consubstantiality with Neo is transformed into a mocking depiction by indicating his portrayals in the supporting media.

The iconic representation Rosie the Riveter, who stands for the power of women who worked in the factories during World War II, becomes another Erdoğan impersonation (Figure 34). The *Uykusuz* cover page headline clarifies that Erdoğan has been commenting against feminism. The cover page depicts Erdoğan as Rosie the Riveter with the reversal of the accompanying slogan "You Can't Do It!", meaning that he does not have the power to stop feminist actions. The caricature criticizes Erdoğan's opinions by transforming him to an icon that he does not intend to identify due to his conservative outlook. Therefore, this unlikely transposition becomes humorous because of its incongruity.

American symbols, cultural figures, productions and stereotypes serve the purpose of exaggerating subjects and thus emphasizing satire and parody. These exaggerated generalizations are attributed primarily towards the U.S. presidents, Erdoğan, and well-known figures in *Leman* and *Pengue*n. Parody is achieved through stereotypes and mimicry of one's utterance, as exemplified in Paul Auster's mimicking of Erdoğan's speech patterns. As mentioned in the literature review section, parody is considered through two forms of references by Dentith (2000). One form of parody is deliberate and explicit in referencing already existing texts, which can be equivalent to American symbols, cultural figures, productions, Turkish religious and cultural symbols, or anti-American symbols in approaching recognizable incidents. Another form of parody emerges through implying standardized conception of daily language and narratives (Dentith, 2000, p. 7). When Erdoğan and Davutoğlu are represented as high silly school girls compared to Obama, they embody a certain stereotype and are parodied as such. Erdoğan's bodyguards' general behavior is also stereotyped after their behavior in the U.S. visit.

In the findings, Turkish religious and cultural symbols are in lesser proportions. Twenty percent of Turkish religious and cultural symbols are in *Gırgır* and they are specified during Obama's second term (2012-2017), most probably because religious symbols became prominent in Erdoğan's rhetoric and Turkey–U.S. relations were disrupted at that particular time. Erdoğan and his supporters started referring to symbols related to the Ottoman past and Islamic practices. These evoked or imposed symbolisms were merged with support towards Muslim Brotherhood during the Arab Spring and continuing U.S. interest in Syria. Turkish militaristic missions about

Syrian conflicts were featured together with American interests in the humor magazines. Although Turkish and American demands differed, regional power of NATO and the U.S. were in the forefront in the caricatures. The differing interests were not portrayed because the aim to eliminate the Bashar al-Assad regime and ISIS were similar political agendas at the time. Thus, similar targets were stressed. Anti-American sentiments were also fewer than ten percent, indicating that humor magazines did not recycle much anti-American sentiments, such as "Yankee go home!" slogan, the shoe aimed for Bush, or memorializing anti-imperialist leaders. In other words, satirical criticism about the U.S. is not constructed directly but through depicting the policies affecting the region. American symbols and representations in these criticisms are used in a cynical tone and a more subtle manner.

As far as incongruity theories of humor are concerned, a humorous text starts with one script and moves along with the other hidden construct until both texts intersect and the reader is able to connect the seemingly incompatible situations. This approach is related to "cognitive impact of political humor" and to the participatory role of the reader who brings together the unrelated events and arrives at a new type of understanding. Audience becomes "complicit in the creation" of the exposed meaning (Young, 2017, p. 5). Almost all caricatures related to the representations of the Obama and Trump administrations can be interpreted under the incongruity theory of humor. The humor magazines use certain techniques to clarify the incongruent texts such as headlines or explanatory remarks to assure that the readers understand the context. For example, in Figure 19, the headlines of the second caricature reveal that Obama had criticized Erdoğan for neglecting democratic freedoms (first text). The visual depictions reveal Erdoğan's refusal to listen and behave immaturely by making incomprehensible noises and gestures (second text). Combined with the knowledge of actual events at the time (Erdoğan's bodyguard's howling to suppress the voices of the protestors) and the exaggerated depictions a new meaning is achieved through both texts: Erdoğan is like his bodyguards when he is reminded of democratic rights. When the recipient understands the punch line of the joke, the incongruous parts are reconciled and the pattern is clarified. In other words, the incongruity disappears and a new understanding or justification occurs (Attardo, 1997, pp. 397-398).

Evaluating humorous engagements on representation practices depends upon inquiries of common contexts of political mobility, national security discourses, and mass-mediated cultural circulations of images (Rosenberg & Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 12). Findings on cover pages of humor magazines reveal different styles of articulation as well as their ideological underpinnings. On cover pages, everyday life becomes embedded in the interactions of political figures with markers of identity. Political elements of humor revolve around the bodies of Obama, Trump, and Erdoğan. Mediatic appearances of these political figures' become metonymies for political humor, such as Erdoğan's hand gesture of acceptance (Figure 32). This chapter focused on the patterns of interactions between political figures and humorous components of caricatures.

CHAPTER V:

CONCLUSION

Political humor and political satire in caricatures provide visual and/or textual opinionated information and remarks about political figure(s) or situation(s) by portraying entertaining mannerisms through exaggerations, disfigurations, or constructed situations. Political caricatures incorporating humor and satire provide alternative narratives by demonstrating or hinting at the dominant apprehension or the dominant consent on a political happening. While examining the political caricatures, an understanding of the social context is necessary since the visual properties of the drawing may not be enough to incite an effect, such as laughter or unlaughter–the deliberate opposite of laughter. Although humor does not necessarily provide laughter, there is an invitation towards an entertaining discourse related to the political happenings in question. Satire, on the other hand, proposes a humorous exchange by incorporating an ethical end with a persuading potential. Although it can help social causes for the marginalized and the oppressed, satire is not necessarily radical or conservative (Condren, 2014, p. 663). Political humor and political satire are used interchangeably in this study since the caricatures employ both humor and satire and it is hard to distinguish these forms at times.

This thesis focused on the caricatures on the cover pages of weekly Turkish humor magazines *Gırgır*, *Leman*, *Penguen*, and *Uykusuz* to survey humorous elements, to examine patterns and to detect changing depictions in Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. from 2008 to 2021. The cover pages and constituents of

caricatures were categorized and analyzed with Greenberg's (2002) framework. Greenberg's (2002) framework included categories of "condensation," "combination," "opposition," "domestication," and "normative transference." "Comics acting" and speech bubbles have been inserted in this framework since these elements revealed incongruity in political caricatures. To clarify the frequency of certain appearances, the elements of caricatures were coded and classified under different groupings. Tables and charts were created from the collected data.

This study aimed to answer the first research question of how humor operates in the caricatures involving Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. with the elements mentioned in the second research question, namely explanatory headlines, caricaturized elements, emotional states, and expressions. Examining the caricatures revealed that political figures' presentations were the prominent aspect of the cover pages. The content and ideas of the magazine were promoted through political satire on these cover pages. The political leaders' existing characteristics were depicted in exaggerated and parodied forms. Representations of both American presidents with Erdoğan revealed layers of interpretations and opinions about Turkey–U.S. relations. On one hand, political figures were constructed through their emotive dispositions, ways of cultivating in-group favoritism, and expressing hostility and fear towards out-group figures (Mendiburo-Seguel et al., 2023, pp. 27-28). On the other hand, cover pages established an oppositional stance towards the self-centered motives of the politicians and their authoritarianism. Consequently, the third research question, related to how opinions and interpretations of the subject matter were reflected in comical narratives, was answered through revealing the patterns and differences of representations between two very different presidents, Obama and Trump, with the addition of Erdoğan's fluctuating style and tone in the given time frame. These interactions were also indicative of the changing and evolving Turkey–U.S. relations and representations of the U.S. as well as varied depictions of political humor.

Most of the selected cover pages concentrated on international politics and reverberations of foreign policies on domestic politics. Headlines on the page presented a synopsis of the depicted political happening and often laid the foundations for satirical descriptions. Political actors' performances were also constructed in an exaggerated and sensational manner. The satirical treatment of the

subject matter added to the humorous depictions of the portrayals. Condensed headlines suggested that caricaturists did not try to cover the particular event from all aspects although political issues were tied to politicians' actions and performances on the cover pages. Headlines provided one side of the incongruity in terms of atypicality, vastness in scope, complexity, and social bearings. If additional textual information on that political event was provided on the cover page, the depictions were more pronounced, which facilitated interpretations in relation to incongruities. Among the humor magazines, *Leman* took the lead in long and definitive explanations. On the contrary, *Penguen* used short headlines or no titles but employed exaggerated drawings of relationships between political subjects, especially of those between Obama and Erdoğan. Thus, what lacked in textual information was compensated through cartooning. Among all the caricatures examined, the most portrayed figure was Erdoğan. As the constant political figure during the Obama and Trump administrations, he represented Turkish policies and politics and as the head of the state his idiosyncrasies in the caricatures became part and parcel of humorous situations.

Political subjects were mostly portrayed in negative states, especially in hostile temperaments accompanied with feelings of anxiety. Sometimes they showed hostility towards seemingly calm individuals. When political subjects were portrayed in a jovial manner, they often had hidden motives or were plotting. Connected with their emotional states, characters expressed themselves through declarative statements, exclamatory statements, and slang words. Parody was constructed through explicit references to the characteristics of political subjects and their situated positions. Negative sudden emotionality was dominant in the dialogues of depicted figures. Their reactions and expressions were either illogical and worse than expected which were juxtaposed with the headlines. Consequently, cover pages created humor by benignly distorting the function of headlines and merging this distortion with maladjusted political figures. The viewpoint of humor magazines was revealed clearly in the juxtaposed relationship between Obama and Trump on one side, and Erdoğan on the other.

In the caricatures, a number of international crises shaped the power dynamics between Obama and Erdoğan. Obama was drawn in a slender and athletic physique,

almost always wearing formal attire and acting in a composed demeanor. Erdoğan was depicted as disproportionated compared to him and in a range of personalities including a young and naive girl, dressed in a short skirt seeking affection from her beloved, a cheerful but foolish laborer wearing shorts and slippers, a child playing recklessly with guns, a politician who failed to make a significant impact with his policies, and even mimicking the behavior of his bodyguards in a manner that could be interpreted as bullying. He was portrayed as subservient and ready to fulfill any duty given to him. While Trump was similarly motivated to advance American interests, he appeared to be less invested in diplomatic engagements compared to Obama. Trump was often portrayed in solitary settings or in a small group of individuals, with limited meaningful interactions including Erdoğan or other political leaders. Instead of emphasizing interpersonal relationships, Trump was depicted as acting and speaking on his own accord and asserting his desires through social media. During Trump's term, Erdoğan was surer of himself and did not employ an immature attitude compared to his portrayals with Obama in the caricatures. This was partially related to Erdoğan's rising confidence in his own political standing and his newly gained power based on establishing the presidential system. Accordingly, political satire rested more on Trump's words and actions and when they were portrayed with Erdoğan both leaders were in an equal stance.

Although there were fewer cover pages dealing with Trump's presidency, his behavior on transnational issues became more prominent compared to his predecessor Obama. His hyperbole rhetoric and his shameless attitude reverberated a decline in the reputation or prominence of the U.S. presidency in satirical magazines. According to Waisbord (2019) "populist rhetoric" referred to "an agonistic, anti-systemic narrative about politics, and is a transgressive language" (p. 223). Compared to Obama, Trump's "populist behavior" caused his abnormal or almost indecent portrayal on cover pages. For example, he was seen as defecating shamelessly in caricatures. Barack Obama was portrayed as more determined and purposeful as well as an expert in designing and implementing foreign policies during his presidency. He even employed humor in delivering his messages about U.S. policies, whereas Trump was more uptight and often aggressive in his dealings in foreign policy matters (Izadi, 2016). The demeanor and physical characteristics of

these two leaders reflected empathic or unsympathetic mirror images which were influenced by the depicted opinions in the U.S. related issues.

Erdoğan portrayals were often synchronized with actual mediatic appearances in Turkey. Since Turkish caricaturists followed his daily transactions, they knew more details about Erdoğan. Erdoğan's dream of creating a "new Turkey," was defined through challenging established secularism and creating paths other than Atatürk's vision of westernization. Any opposition directed towards his policies was met with his hostile remarks (Scharfe, 2014). Since Erdoğan's national political agendas were outside the scope of this thesis, his portrayals in domestic situations were not chosen. The chosen Erdoğan caricatures were related to his interactions with the two U.S. presidents or his contacts with the U.S. popular figures or cultural aspects. During the Obama administration, Erdoğan's interest in other international events were chosen when the U.S. was also represented in the caricature. Since the U.S interests in the region were clear, related international events were also selected. The Turkish president, Erdoğan was depicted as wanting to assert power alongside the U.S president, Obama but he was often portrayed as being unrealistic among other politicians who were more influential in the region, such as Putin or Netanyahu.

Familiar subjects, situations and symbolism were presented in the caricatures to make them more accessible. American images were used in conjunction with Turkish images. The most used American symbols were the Uncle Sam figure and the American flag. Both symbols indicated power and the upper hand of the U.S. in the caricatures although sometimes icons and symbols were used to acquire different meanings. Obama was portrayed as an Uncle Sam with a turban in the beginning of his presidency, symbolizing the ambivalence of his motives, or an Uncle Sam figure with a hand gesture, signaling "go away" instead of the traditional invitation gesture when he declined Erdoğan's visit later. Erdoğan was also depicted as a smiling Uncle Sam to satirize his conceitedness or criticized allegiance. Sometimes American symbols were used in conjunction with Turkish/Islamic symbols such as the Rabia sign, Erdoğan's "eyvallah" gesture, mosques, and the Turkish flag. The symbolism on cover pages added to the satirical portrayals and the concept of humor by creating familiarity, showing incongruity, or depicting carnivalesque situations.

The American popular culture figures or various other material aspects were employed as part and parcel of political humor. Political humor together with satire was used to present preposterous situations in the political arena. This thesis adopted an inductive reasoning in analyzing the recurring elements and patterns in the caricatures as well as presenting how these elements and patterns were exemplified under certain contextual categories. The caricatures on cover pages referred to historical milestones and portrayed Turkey–U.S. relations in an interpreted manner to entice certain viewpoints that ran counter to the dominant news circulations. In the findings section, the data presented in the tables and charts supported the fact that these caricatures employed a critical outlook on Turkey–U.S. relations, policies, and dealings.

Among the four magazines within the scope of this study *Gırgır* and *Penguen* ceased their publication in 2017, the same year Trump came into office. This situation limited the data in terms of frequency since, most possibly, the caricaturists would have continued to draw caricatures on the U.S. themed subjects if the publications had continued. The discontinuation of publications created an unequal balance in the number of depictions related to each president but since this study concentrated on general U.S. representations, the collected data still yielded valid results for the evaluations. Further studies could be conducted about various aspects of political humor in the humor magazines outside the scope of this study. For example, this thesis did not examine how humor reflected or challenged cultural, social, and personal identities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, and religion. It would have been possible to concentrate on excluded, misrepresented, marginalized or deliberately ignored individuals or communities if a different selection of cover pages were chosen but this study concentrated on the U.S. based political relationships and representations. In the spirit of exploring the importance and potential of political caricatures, future research questions could include other domestic or foreign incidents, relevance and limitations of humor theories, roles of social media platforms, and reception of audiences. The line between the humorous and the serious has been blurred more in the twenty-first century. The increasing use of humor in political activism and protests has altered the position of political humor from criticism to commentary. Political parodies and satirical portrayals have increased on several online platforms and social media sites, since citizens

increasingly distrust mainstream media and search for alternative sources of information. Thus, humor itself has acquired political relevance and has become politics itself (Petrović, 2018, pp. 202-203).

The gradual disappearance of publications makes it impossible to conduct current research on printed media, although one can conduct such studies on the internet-based disseminations such photo-based memes (reaction photoshops, stock character macros, or photo fad), videos, or copy paste collages. The format of memes is similar to political caricatures as captioned pictures or videos. Studying aspects of political humor is more complicated in memes since the creator is unknown compared to the identifiable artist and institutional affiliation of political caricatures. Memes are created easily and in a relatively shorter time because they do not require expertise in drawing and they are consumed online or on social media platforms. Political issues and political remarks of politicians can be instantly subjected to political humor and satire. Memes as an evolved genre of political caricatures are becoming more mashed with politics in the fluidity of the Internet. They commodify politics and foster formation of temporary cohesive groups (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021, pp. 2368-2371). In line with evolving avenues of expressing humor, future questions could include: How has the Internet and social media affected the role of political humor and the dissemination of caricatures? How do cultural and linguistic differences impact the use and interpretation of political memes in different countries and regions? How do political caricatures interact with other forms of political communications such as collective actions, collective mourning, misinformation or disinformation? How do insider and outsider perspectives operate and differ in the creation and reception of the political caricatures or satirical memes? How effective are political memes at increasing political engagement and participation? How can one measure the evolution of aesthetic choices of memes? How do different types of regimes affect informal communication through political memes?

The possibilities for future research are not limited to the questions above. Political humor and satire are topics that have not ceased their effect on the audiences and readers since ancient times and forms of criticism and ridicule will continue to exist as long as political systems endure. The Turkish political scene continues to present a vibrant arena for political humor of many forms, including stand up shows, sketches,

songs, and anecdotes. The use of humor in response to international and domestic incidents and the propagation of these comical visual and textual productions have certainly found a resourceful arena on the Internet, if not the printing press as it was a few decades ago. Political humor continues to thrive and present undisclosed implications behind relationships and events while functioning as a form of dissidence against dominant discourses as well as raising authoritarianism.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Code Book for Greenberg (2002) Framework

1) **Condensation:**

A) Domestic Politics (DP)

    i.   Economic Crisis
    ii.   Education System
    iii.   Foreign conflicts or foreign politics mirrored on domestic politics (e.g., Turkish presidential complex's economic status about Syrian conflict, Reyhanlı Car Bombings)
    iv.   Political censorship
    v.   Domestic political discussions (e.g. about Kenan Evren and İsmet İnönü)
    vi.   Fetullah Gülen
    vii. Excessive power of Turkish police

B) Political Event (PE)

    i.   Intergovernmental forums (e.g., G20 Summit)
    ii.   Politicians' Presence at the event (e.g., Ahmet Davutoğlu)
    iii.   Erdogan's Bodyguards as supporters
    iv.   Nobel Peace Prize to Obama
    v.   Political/Diplomatic meetings and visits
    vi.   Protests about foreign policies (e.g., in Iran, in Palestine)
    vii. The U.S. Elections
    viii. Egypt Revolution

C) Turkey's Image (TI)

    i.   The U.S.'s press
    ii.   Wikileaks
    iii.   Erdoğan's image in TIME magazine
    iv.   Freedom House Report
    v.   Moody's Credit Note of Turkey

D) Political Remarks (PR)

    i.   Political apology
    ii.   Erdoğan's remarks about Syrian conflict
    iii.   Obama's Remarks
    iv.   Trump's Remarks and Tweets (about Syrian conflict)

E) Foreign Policies (FP)

    i.   NATO's militaristic mission
    ii.   Russian militaristic mission
    iii.   Foreign political endeavor (e.g. Libya…)
    iv.   American military and CIA (Osama bin Laden, Gaddafi's lynching)
    v.   Trump's ban
    vi.   U.S.A's embassy in Palestine
    vii.   Withdrawal from Iraq
    viii.   Future of the Syrian conflict
    ix.   Khan Shaykhun chemical attack
    x.   The U.S.'s involvement on Turkish domestic politics
    xi.   Netanyahu's Apology to Turkey
    xii.   Turkey's Foreign Policies
    xiii.   Support of Israel by the U.S. and other Western Nations
    xiv.   IMF

F) Other (O)

    i.   Public and National Holidays
    ii.   Paul Auster
    iii.   Foreign domestic political happenings (Public Shooting, Venezuelan Politics, Boston Marathon Bombing, Presidency of Donald Trump and his supporters)

2) Combination

A) Obama's Image (OI)

    i.   Obama's upper hand
    ii.   Obama running away from 2011 Egypt Revolution

B) Trump's Image (DTI)

    i.   Trump's manner
    ii.   Trump … (as a Social Media user, taking a dump, as an ass, asthe Statue of Liberty with KKK costume…)
    iii.   Trump's ignorance

C) Erdogan's Image (EI):

    i.   Erdogan's manner (e.g. lack of concern for Turkish citizens, arrogance, tetchiness, ignorance…)

ii.   Erdogan's upper hand in domestic politics
iii. Erdogan … (as Uncle Sam, as a high school student, as a scared child, as Rambo, as a soccer player)
iv. Erdogan's allegiance to Obama
v.   Erdogan's mimicry
vi. Erdogan's mimesis of Obama

D) <u>Domestic Political and Well-Known Figures (DPF):</u>

i.   Davutoglu
ii.   2011 President of ÖSYM (Ali Demir)
iii.   Binali Yıldırım
iv.   Kenan Evren
v.   Erdal Eren
vi.   Abdullah Gül
vii. Bülent Arınç
viii. Fazıl Say and Orhan Pamuk since they are represented in relation to Erdoğan
ix.   Fetullah Gulen
x.   Turkish Judicial Staff
xi.   Emine Erdoğan
xii. Opposition party politicians (e.g., Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu)
xiii. Gezi Park protestors
xiv. Bilal Erdoğan

E) <u>Political Figures from the U.S. (UPF):</u>

i.   Bush
ii.   Michelle Obama
iii. Bill and Hillary Clinton
iv. U.S. Soldiers

F) <u>Foreign Political Figures (FPF):</u>

i.   Netanyahu
ii.   Western Nations or Western Nations… (as vampires, as a background character)
iii.   Israeli soldier
iv.   Gaddafi
v.   Usama Bin Ladin
vi.   Berlusconi
vii. Sarkozy
viii. Free Syrian Army
ix.   ISIS Fighter

G) <u>Civilians' Image (CI):</u>

i. Civilians' dialogue about weekly agenda
ii. Erdoğan's supporters (e.g. bodyguards, nephew…)
iii. Civilians' submission towards domestic politics
iv. Caricaturists taking part in the caricature related to subject matter
v. Journalists
vi. Obama's bodyguards

H) Foreign Political Events (FPE):

i. Trump Wall
ii. The Bush Shoe Throwing Incident
iii. 2011 Egypt Revolution
iv. U.S. soldiers in Syria, Libya, Palestine, and Iraq

I) American Images, Symbolism and Celebrities (AIS):

i. The Statue of Liberty
ii. American Flag
iii. KKK outfit
iv. Angelina Jolie
v. Uncle Sam
vi. "We can do it!" poster
vii. Cowboy
viii. Star Wars
ix. Paul Auster
x. Neil Armstrong's Quote ("That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.")
xi. Nicholas Cage
xii. Michael Jackson
xiii. *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
xiv. Rambo
xv. Nike Shoe Brand

3) **Oppositions:**

A) Foreign Political Actor (FPA): Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, IMF, CIA, MOSSAD, FSB, Wikileaks, Israeli Soldier, Netanyahu, NATO, Sarkozy, Berlusconi, Bush, Free Syrian Army, Comandante Chavez, ISIS fighter, Merkel, Michelle Obama, UN, Moody's, UNICEF, Kaddafi, Osama bin Laden, Baghdadi (ISIS Leader)

B) Domestic Political Actors (DPA): Kılıçdaroğlu, Davutoğlu, Abdullah Gül, Emine Erdoğan, Fetullah Gülen, Bülent Arınç, Turkish Military, Kenan Evren, Erdal Eren, the Gezi Protestors, Opposition Party Members, İsmet İnönü, Binali Yıldırım

C) <u>Officers, Workers, Well-Known Figures, and Civilians (OWWC):</u> Foreign and Turkish Journalists, Imam, Obama's bodyguards, Erdoğan's bodyguards, Erdoğan's family, Egyptian Civilians, Leman Caricaturists, Orhan Pamuk, Foreign Civilian Shooter in the U.S., Muslim People, Palestinians, Fazıl Say, Trump Supporters

D) <u>American Symbols (AS):</u> Uncle Sam, American Flag, American Citizens, American Press (TIME, Wall Street Journal), White House, Statue of Liberty, American Soldiers

E) <u>American Popular Culture and Well-Known Figures (APCWF):</u> Superheroes, Michael Jackson, Nike Shoes, Rambo, Neo (Matrix), Casablanca Scene, American Celebrities, Cowboy, Rosie the Riveter, Paul Auster

F) <u>Middle East and Other Countries (MEOC):</u> Turkey, Syria, Iran, Israel, Russia, China

G) <u>Obama</u>

H) <u>Erdoğan</u>

I) <u>Trump</u>

4) Domestication: Symbols

A) <u>American Cultural Figures and Production (ACFP):</u> Michael Jackson, Baseball, Rambo…

B) <u>Stereotypes (S):</u> School Girl, Finger Puppets…

C) <u>American Symbols (AS):</u> Uncle Sam, Rosie the Riveter, imitation of Obama, American Flag, White House…

D) <u>Turkish Religious and Cultural Symbols/Figures (TRCSF):</u> Turkish Greeting ("Eyvallah!"), Turkish Praying, Rabia Sign, Kefen…

E) <u>Anti-American Sentiments (AAS):</u> "Yankee go home!" slogan, Bush shoe throwing incident…

5) Normative Transference

A) <u>Political power of the U.S. (PPU):</u> Allegiance with the affiliated institutions with the U.S., the U.S. militaristic operations, Trump's executive orders

B) <u>Political strategy of the U.S. (PSU):</u> Support of the U.S. (e.g., Israel)

C) <u>Political involvement of the U.S. (PIU):</u> Imperialism of the U.S., the U.S. being an insider for domestic politics, allegiance with interests of the U.S., American journalists' coverage

D) <u>Upper hand of the U.S. (UHU):</u> Clintons, Obama's Upper Hand, Trump's upper hand, Obama's criticism towards Turkey, the U.S. setting boundaries of IR,

E) <u>Position of Turkish Government (PTG):</u> Erdoğan's upper hand in domestic politics, Reyhanlı car bombings protest, domestic political/cultural discussions, nepotism and corruption in Turkey, Erdoğan allowing his bodyguards to be arrogant, Fetullah Gulen, Diplomatic visits of Erdoğan while domestic politics has issues

F) <u>Political power of Erdoğan (PPE):</u> Erdoğan's gullibility, Erdoğan's image portrayed as over exaggerated actions, Erdogan subservient towards the U.S.

G) <u>Political development of the U.S. (PDU):</u> Trump's election, arrogance of Turkish citizens

APPENDIX B: Coding Sheet and Cover Pages

Dropbox Hyperlink:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/5kox41mq2ytje3xmpuo9c/h?dl=0&rlkey=antxfaqw
dgalc0jrri4k65avn

APPENDIX C: Missing Cover Pages (Year and Issue Number)

GIRGIR		*LEMAN*	
Year	**Issue Number**	**Year**	**Issue Number**
2008	2, 5, 7, 9-19, 21-27, 31, 33, 34, 37	**2008**	4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 40, 46, 48
2009	1, 2, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 28, 34, 42, 43, 45, 47, 52	**2009**	*No missing issues*
2010	5, 6, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 38, 50, 52	**2010**	*No missing issues*
2011	2, 8, 27, 30	**2011**	3
2012	1, 17	**2012**	1, 44
2013	*No missing issues*	**2013**	10
2014	29, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 41, 43, 48	**2014**	*No missing issues*
2015	7, 12, 14, 15, 38, 49, 50	**2015**	15, 17, 18, 22, 25, 27, 31, 34, 35, 47, 48, 51, 52
		2016	2, 7, 9, 12, 24, 25, 31, 32, 34, 43, 44, 51, 52
		2017	2
		2018	10
		2019	5
		2020	1, 8, 9, 13, 29, 36, 40, 51, 52
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