

Four Things Bring Ruin to a Mine (c. 1556)

Abstract

This tempera painting depicts the four main reasons for the failure of a mine: war, death, rising costs, and sloth. War brings the mining industry to a standstill (upper left) and causes death (upper right). Price hikes and inflation leave miners holding empty bags instead of grain-filled sacks (lower left). Then comes the issue of poor character: the final scene shows lazy miners lying around the entrance to the mine, refusing to work (lower right). This image was printed in the 1556 *Schwazer Mining Book* [*Schwazer Bergbuch*], which portrayed the Tyrolian mining industry in texts and images. The *Mining Book* is an important source for understanding the lives and work of sixteenth-century miners.

Source



Source: *Schwazer Mining Book* [*Schwazer Bergbuch*], Deutsches Museum, Munich

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