

MINE WORKERS, THE STATE AND WAR:  
THE EREĞLİ- ZONGULDAK COAL BASIN AS THE SITE OF CONTEST,  
1920-1947

by

Nurşen Gürboğa

Submitted to  
the Atatürk Institute for  
Modern Turkish History  
in partial fulfillment  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Boğaziçi University

2005

An abstract of the Dissertation of Nurşen Gürboğa for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the B.U Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken November 2005

Title: Mine Workers, the State and War: The Ereğli-Zonguldak Coal Basin as the Site of Contest, 1920-1947

This study investigates the complex relations between the people of the Ereğli-Zonguldak basin, who supplied the underground workforce of the coalmines, the mining companies and the state in the early Republican era, and the tough relations between the basin's people and the state brought by the compulsory paid labor regime during the Second World War period. The study aims to reveal the conditions of the mineworkers following flexible work pattern between mining and subsistence-agriculture, their identities, patterns of solidarity and of struggle. During the period, the labor relations in the basin were shaped by the low-wage policy and labor-intensive production choices of the companies, fluctuations in demand for coal, the state's nationalization policy of the capital and protectionist-etatist industrialization projects, the repressive labor policies of the single-party era, the means of extra-economic coercion and the workers' struggles. The identity of the workers, their relations to the other actors, their patterns of solidarity and of struggle came into being on a junction formed by the articulation of the mining to the village community.

During the 1940s, the forced labor regime made the relations between the state and the people of the basin tense. Instead of submitting, the basin's people developed a wide resistance repertoire. In the post-war era, the state guaranteed labor supply through reconstituting previous work pattern and offering social services to the mineworkers. Hence, the whole basin with its villages became a "company-village" under the control of the state.

Contrary to the arguments which define the underground workers as belonging to primarily a peasant universe and to pre-capitalist social relations, this study defines them as a modern form of labor compatible to the capitalist production relations in the mines. The Zonguldak mineworkers with their cheap and unskilled labor constituted the lowest stratum of the regionally-segmented labor market, who at the same time shouldered the reproduction cost of labor force through subsistence-agriculture.

Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Doktora derecesi için Nurşen Gürboğa tarafından Kasım 2005'te teslim edilen tezinin kısa özeti

Başlık: Maden İşçileri, Devlet ve Savaş: Bir Mücadele Alanı Olarak Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası: 1920-1947

Bu çalışma, Ereğli-Zonguldak kömür havzasında erken Cumhuriyet döneminde yeraltı işgücünü sağlayan havza halkı ile devlet ve maden şirketleri arasında gelişen karmaşık ilişkileri ve İkinci Dünya Savaşı döneminde havzada uygulanan ücretli iş mükellefiyetinin havza halkı ile devlet arasında yarattığı gerilimleri incelemektedir. Çalışmanın amacı madencilik ile geçimlik tarım arasında gevşek bir çalışma örüntüsü geliştiren yeraltı işçilerinin çalışma ve yaşam koşullarını, kimliklerini, dayanışma ve mücadele örüntüleri ortaya çıkarmaktır. Dönem süresince havzadaki çalışma ilişkileri, şirketlerin düşük ücret politikası ve emek-yoğun üretim tercihleri, kömür talebindeki dalgalanmalar, devletin sermayenin millileştirilmesi ve korumacı-devletçi sanayileşme politikaları, tek-parti döneminin baskıcı emek politikaları ile ekonomi-dışı zor araçları ve işçilerin mücadeleleri tarafından şekillendi. İşçilerin kimlikleri, diğer aktörlerle ilişkileri, dayanışma ve mücadele biçimleri madenlerle köyler arasındaki eklemlenme ilişkisinin yarattığı kavşakta oluştu.

Savaş yıllarında uygulanan ücretli iş mükellefiyeti devletin havza halkı ile ilişkilerini gerilimli bir zemine taşıdı. Havza halkı mükellefiyet rejimine karşı geniş bir direniş repertuarı oluşturdu. Savaş sonrasında ise devlet işgücü arzını garantilemek için geçimlik tarım ile madencilik arasındaki esnek çalışma örüntüsünü yeniden tesis etti ve köylerinde yaşayan maden işçilerine yönelik bir dizi sosyal politika tedbirine başvurdu. Böylece tüm havza devletin idaresi altında bir "şirket-kasabası" na dönüştü

Bu çalışma, madencilikle geçimlik tarım arasında esnek bir çalışma stratejisi izleyen işçileri aslen köylülük dünyasına ve kapitalizm-öncesi toplumsal ilişkilere ait gören yaklaşımlar



yerine, madenlerdeki kapitalist üretim ilişkilerine uyumlu modern bir emek formu olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda havzadaki maden işçileri, geçimlik tarımla işgücünün yeniden-üretim maliyetini üstlenen, bölgesel olarak bölümlenmiş emek piyasasının alt katmanını oluşturan ucuz ve niteliksiz işgücünü oluşturmaktadır.

## CURRICULUM VITA

NAME OF AUTHOR: Nurşen Gürboğa

PLACE OF BIRTH: Bingöl, Turkey

DATE OF BIRTH: 20 December 1971

### GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

Middle East Technical University

Boğaziçi University

Boğaziçi University

### DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy in History, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, 2005,

Boğaziçi University.

Master of Arts in History, 1996, Department of History, Boğaziçi University.

Bachelor of International Relations, 1993, Middle East Technical University.

### AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Political History of the Twentieth Century, Labor History, Social History of Early

Republican Turkey.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Research Assistant, Department of Political Science and International Relations,

Marmara University, Istanbul, 2003-2005.

#### PUBLICATIONS:

Gürboğa, Nurşen. " Women Images, Visual Depiction of Women in the Popular Periodicals of the Early Republican Era: 1920-1940." Master's Thesis, Bogaziçi University, 1996.

Gürboğa, Nurşen "Evin Halleri: Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Evin Sembolik Çerçevesi," *İstanbul Dergisi*, 44 ( January, 2003).

Gürboğa, Nurşen " Kitabiyat- Çocukluğun Tarihi Üzerine", *Toplumsal Tarih*, 111 (March 2003).

Gürboğa, Nurşen " İlk Meclis Anketi, Milletvekillerinin Gelecekte Beklentileri," *Toplumsal Tarih*, 128 (August, 2004).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study acquired its final appearance with the support of many people to whom I'm grateful. I would like to thank the people of Zonguldak, who provided me with invaluable details about the living and working experiences of the mine workers who are part of the memory of the Zonguldak people now. The retired mine workers, headmen, technicians and engineers in the basin accompanied my novice steps while I attempted to access a past both distant and unfamiliar to me.

I would like to thank Professor Zafer Toprak for his encouragement in the preliminary stage of the study and his continual support during the preparation of the dissertation. I also thank Professor Mete Tunçay, Professor Ayşe Buğra, Associated Professor Asım Karaömerlioğlu and Assistant Professor Cengiz Kırılı for their valuable critics and contributions in the final stage of the study. In addition, I would like to thank Professor Emre Dölen and Professor Ertuğrul Tokdemir who provided me valuable documents, photographs and maps. My special thank is to Kathryn Kranzler, who patiently edited the drafts and gave moral support during the critical final stages.

During the preparation of the study, the research assistants, Gülfer, Muzaffer, Ebru, Emre, Emre Kan, Şükrü and Zuhale made everything easy for me at the department of the International Relations and Political Science at Marmara University. Their tolerance made me able to devote my time to the dissertation. I'm grateful for the department chair, Professor Günay Göksu Özdoğan, for her support as well. Last, but not least, I would like to thank Professor Ayhan Aktar for his continual encouragement during my academic life.

Murat Koraltürk's familiarity with the primary literature of the early Republican era facilitated my access to this literature. His affection, patience and humor made life easy and amusing at home.

## CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	xiv
--------------	-----

### Chapter

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Revolution and the Rise and Fall of the Coal Mining Industry.....	1
Some Structural Features of Coal Mining in the Period of Industrial Growth.....	8
Organization of the Labor Process and Work Relations in Coal Mining:	
The Hand Loading Era .....	13
The Coal Mining Community, "Labor of Division" and Sources of Solidarity.....	24

#### 2. THE EREĞLİ-ZONGULDAK COAL BASIN UNDER EXPLOITATION

The Legacy of the State Monopsony and the Forced Labor Regime under the Dilaver Paşa Regulation: 1848-1882.....	35
The Legacy of Foreign Capital in the Basin: The Local Mine Operators and the Ereğli Company: 1882-1920.....	42
The Period of National Struggle and the Populist Intervention of the Grand National Assembly into the Conditions of Labor: 1921.....	47
The Departure of the Local Christian Mine Operators: 1920-1923.....	54
From the Rights of Muslim Workers to the Rights of Turkish Mine Operators: 1924-1925.....	59

#### 3. RESTRUCTURING COAL MINING AS A POLITICAL INDUSTRY UNDER STATE INTERVENTION: 1925-1940

The Road to Full State Ownership of the Ereğli- Zonguldak Coal Basin.....	65
The Entry of İş Bankası and the Provincial Nationalization of the Capital Composition 1926-1933.....	68
The Five-Year Industrial Plans and the Basin under Reconsideration .....	78
The Entry of Etibank As a Public Enterprise and the Nationalization of the Ereğli Company .....	83
The Project of the Full Nationalization and Rivalry between Etibank and İş Bankası.....	93

#### 4. WORK RELATIONS, THE MINING COMMUNITY AND THE LABOR MARKET IN THE EREĞLİ-ZONGULDAK COAL BASIN

Working in the Mines: The Organization of the Labor Process, Work Relations and Wages .....	101
The Social Composition of the Mining Community.....	113
The Segmented Labor Market as the Means of Labor Control.....	118
The Recruitment Process, Debt-Bound Relations and Unfree Labor.....	127

5. THE QUESTION OF WORKER PRODUCTIVITY, SOCIAL POLICY AND THE SEARCH FOR A NEW REGIME OF LABOR CONTROL	
The Living Conditions of the Mine Workers: The 1920s.....	135
The Problem of Worker Productivity and Labor Conditions under Discussion:	
The 1930s.....	144
The Worker Village Projects as the Means of Containment.....	156
The Articulation of the Solidarist Discourse to the Social Policy Implementations.....	165
6. LIVING IN-BETWEEN THE MINES AND THE VILLAGES IN THE CONTEST WITH THE RULER	
The Mine Workers, Patterns of Solidarity and Means of Struggle.....	174
Wages and Over Work as Subjects of Contention .....	181
The Companies Retracing of the Forced Labor Regime and the Response of the Mine Workers.....	187
The Mine Workers Quest for Better Living Conditions at the Work Site.....	192
The State, Public Order and the Basin as the Realm of Daily Life.....	200
7. THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE COMPULSORY PAID LABOR ACT AND COAL	
The National Emergency Law and the Establishment of the Forced Labor Regime....	209
The Forced Labor Regime in the Service of the Nations.....	217
The Composition of the Work Force in the Basin during the War Years.....	223
The White Collar Workers, Over-Employment and Criticisms of EKI Management ...	234
Annulment of the Compulsory Paid Labor Act and the Question of Labor Supply.....	237
The Post- War Labor Policies of EKI and Social Services .....	241
8. LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS UNDER THE FORCED LABOR REGIME AND THE MINE WORKERS QUEST FOR IMPROVEMENTS	
Accommodation Conditions of the Mine Workers during the War Period .....	253
Moving between the Mines and the Villages: Transportation Difficulties and Workers' Requests.....	259
The Provisioning Policy of EKI and Nutrition Conditions of the Mine Workers .....	262
Diseases, Epidemics and Health Conditions in the Basin.....	270
The At- Any-Cost Production Policy of EKI, Accidents, and Human Suffering .....	283
The Wage Policy of EKI and Wage Disputes in the War Years .....	288
9. PATTERNS OF RESISTANCE AGAINST THE FORCED LABOR REGIME	
The Failure of the Forced Labor Regime.....	297
To Cope with the Forced Labor Regime by Law: Compulsory Labor Lawsuits.....	303
The Requests and Complaints Mechanisms of the RPP as Channels of Resistance.....	307
The Everyday Forms of Resistance against the Forced Labor Regime.....	322

10.THE VILLAGERS, THE LOCAL BUREAUCRACY AND THE STATE IN THE LIGHT OF  
THE PETITIONS

The Republican People's Party, the Local Power Struggles and the Battle of the Villagers in Words.....	339
Village Headmen in Seeking Justice as the Representatives of the Village Community.....	347
Villagers Seeking Justice against the Village Headmen and Follow-Up Officers.....	363
Public Order, the Gendarme and the Village People in Rebellion.....	376

11.CONCLUSION.....	386
--------------------	-----

APPENDIXES

A. ORIGINAL EXCERPTS QUOTED IN THE TEXT .....	412
-----------------------------------------------	-----

B. MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.....	423
---------------------------------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	451
-------------------	-----

## LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
1. Real Estate Left by Greek Exchangees.....	56
2. Population Figures of Zonguldak in 1918.....	56
3. Annual Coal Production and Supply between 1920 and 1934. ....	76
4. Total Coal Production and Supply Market between 1934 and 1940. ....	91
5. Coal Consumers in the Domestic Market in 1938 and 1939. ....	92
6. Categories of Workers and Craftsmen and Wages in 1926.....	106
7. The Wage Sheet for Piece-Rate Payment.....	108
8. Number of Mine Workers in the Zonguldak Coal Basin, 1934-1940.....	116
9. Average Amount of Coal Production per Worker per Day in the 1920s.....	144
10. Average Daily Wages of the Zonguldak Mine Workers between 1933 and 1940.....	184
11. Unwashed and Washed Coal Amounts 1940-1949.....	225
12. Daily Number of Workers in 1941-1949.....	227
13. Comparison of Mine Workers of Zonguldak to Male Population 1935-1945. ....	229
14. Total Calorie Amount of Daily Rations.....	265
15. Weekly Menu, 1941.....	265
16. Most Common Diseases and Number of Cases in the Basin, 1941 through Mid-1944 .....	272
17. The Number of Vaccines Administered by the Health Organizations between 1941 and 1947.....	277
18. The Number of Accidents Resulting in Fatalities and Injury between 1938 and 1947.....	286
19. Accident Statistic between 1941 and 1948.....	286
20. Average Daily Wages for Underground and Surface Workers, 1941-47. ....	289
21. Daily Wages of Underground and Surface Workers Together with Social Contribution, Payment in Kind and Cash, 1941-1949.....	295
22. Absentees between June 1 and December 31, 1940.....	325
23. Rotational Workers Leave- On with Excuse Between 22.12.1942-12.12.1943.....	336



## PREFACE

The Ereğli-Zonguldak coal basin has been Turkey's source of hard coal since the second half of the nineteenth century. Before the coal mining, the region was a forest center in the northwestern part of Anatolia, on the coast of the Black Sea. Its Christian and Muslim inhabitants were engaged in subsistence agriculture, forestry and small-scale trade. The penetration of coal mining into the fabric of rural life transformed the landscape of the region and gradually turned it into a coal basin. The region gained its shape as a coal field throughout the last quarter of nineteenth century. During this period, the labor, capital and market conditions of coal production were shaped within the complex relations between the Ottoman state, the Ereğli Company of French capital, the local mining companies, the small-scale mine operators and the mine workers. The rise of industrial plants and the expansion of steamships and railways within the boundaries of the Empire in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century increased demand for coal, which encouraged the growth of mining in the basin.<sup>1</sup>

Under the extraordinary conditions of the First World War and the National Struggle, during the period between 1914 and 1922, coal production was interrupted to a considerable extent. However, after the establishment of political stability, the ruling elite of the Republican state became concerned with the capital composition of the basin and encouraged the entry of large scale national companies under the control of the newly established national bank, *Türkiye İş Bankası* (Turkey Business Bank). In the 1930s, in parallel to the industrialization attempts under the direct intervention of the state, the basin gained further importance in the state's economic policies. In this line, the production and marketing aspects of the coal mining were restructured under the state intervention, which put an end to the domination of foreign

---

<sup>1</sup> For the growth of coal mining in the Ereğli coal basin in parallel to the emergence of available conditions for the rise of a coal market in the Ottoman Empire, see Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908. Reactions to European Economic Penetration* (New York, NYU Press, 1983), pp. 41-69.

capital and established state control over coal production. In 1940, the state intervention resulted in the nationalization of the basin under full state ownership.

Since 1937, coal mining in the basin has been maintained by one of the largest public enterprises, now known as *Türkiye Taşkömürleri Kurumu* or *TTK* (Turkey Hard Coals Enterprise). Throughout the second part of the twentieth century, the production conditions of coal in the basin were determined by the fluctuations in demand for coal in the economy. Between 1950 and 1970, with the rise of alternative energy sources, coal gradually lost its predominance in the energy sector and gave its place to petroleum, electricity and other energy sources.<sup>2</sup> Since the mid-1980s, the basin has entered a new epoch under the governments' privatization policies, which can be called de-industrialization.<sup>3</sup>

Today, the Zonguldak coal basin has more than a one and a half century long history. From the late nineteenth century up to the mid-1990s, it was one of the most densely populated industrial centers in Turkey. The total numbers of underground and surface workers reached from 4,300 in 1900 to approximately 10,000 in 1914<sup>4</sup> in the late Ottoman period. These numbers continued to increase in the early Republican period, reaching 19,000 in the 1939.<sup>5</sup> By 1938, following İstanbul and İzmir, Zonguldak became the third leading province in terms of numbers of workers. In terms of density of workers per work place, Zonguldak was the leading province.<sup>6</sup> In a sense, by the late 1930s, owing to the state's increasing

---

<sup>2</sup> In 1950, coal constituted 33.8 % of the total energy consumption in Turkey. In 1965 its share declined 31.4% and in 1971, 26.7 %. In 1970, in commercial energy consumption, petroleum with its 53,3 % share replaced coal with its 23,2 % share. The labor intensive production and transportation of coal made its production and consumption highly costly enterprise compared to the other energy resources. For instance, despite the increase in total energy consumption in Turkey as a response to the industrialization of the country in the 1960s and the 1970s, change in energy policy of the governments from the 1950s on inevitably led decline in the share of coal in total energy consumption. For the figures of share of coal in total energy consumption in Turkey between 1950 and 1971, see Türkiye Kömür İşletmeleri Kurumu, *Cumhuriyet'in 50. Yılında Türkiye Kömür İşletmeleri Kurumu* (n.p: Çam Matbaa, n.d.), p.3.

<sup>3</sup> For the general evaluation of the basin's history from the late nineteenth century up to the mid-1990s in the context of state, industry and labor relations and the coal market in Turkey, see Theo Nichols, Erol Kahveci, "The Condition of Mine Labor in Turkey: Injuries to Miners in Zonguldak, 1942-90", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 31, no. 2 ( April, 1995), pp.197-228; and Erol Kahveci, "The Miners Of Zonguldak," in *Work And Occupation In Turkey*, edited by Erol Kahveci, Nadir Sungur, Theo Nichols (London: Mansell, 1996), pp.173-200

<sup>4</sup> For the numbers in 1900-1911, see Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik* (TTK: Ankara, 1994), p.100; and for the numbers in 1910s, see Donald Quataert, "Zonguldak Maden İşçilerinin Hayatı, 1870-1920: Başlangıç Niteliğinde Bazı Gözlemler", *Toplum ve Bilim*, 83 (Winter, 1999/2000), p.80.

<sup>5</sup> Ümran Nazif Yiğiter, *Kömür Havzasında Amele Hukuku* (Zonguldak: İncealemdaroğlu Matbaası, 1943), p.78.

<sup>6</sup> Orhan Tuna, "İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 6 (October 1944-January 1944), p. 336.

intervention in the basin, the region had become the biggest industrial area in Turkey as well.<sup>7</sup> With the nationalization of the basin under state ownership in 1940, the *Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi* (Ereğli Coals Enterprise) became the largest public enterprise in Turkey.

Although the region appeared to be one of the biggest industrial centers of the country, the majority of its workforce resembled neither typical wage workers nor classical mine workers. From the last quarter of the nineteenth century the underground workforce of the mines had been drawn from the male population from the villages surrounding the mining districts of the basin. They constituted a complex rural laboring group with their part-time work pattern between mining and rural pursuits, residing with their families in the villages. Throughout the twentieth century, they constituted more than half of the total workforce and the majority of the underground labor in the mines. Their rotational work pattern in the mines and their continual ties to the land and to the villages constituted their dynamic quality. Although these workers witnessed many political, economic and social transitions in the history of Ottoman/Turkish society and of the basin itself, they retained their living and working modes and did not become full-time wage workers. Owing to the labor-intensive production choice and low-cost production policy in the basin, the villages continued to supply unskilled labor to the mines for more than a century.

From the late 1930s up to the 1980s, the basin, with its rotational underground workers and relatively permanent surface workers, continued to be one of the most densely populated industrial centers in Turkey. Between the late 1930s and the early 1980s, the numbers of the total workforce employed in surface and underground jobs fluctuated between 30,000 to 45,000, parallel to fluctuations in demand for coal in the domestic market. However, by the

---

<sup>7</sup> Gerhard Kessler, "Türk İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 4, no. 1 (October 1942), p.242.

1980s, the numbers of workers employed by the state enterprise TTK first declined from 40,000 in 30,000 and then dropped to 12,261 in 2004.<sup>8</sup>

While the mine workers of the basin gradually disappeared from sight, their history remains unwritten to a large extent, except for a few studies. In these studies, although the history of the basin has constituted a subject of investigation, the history of the state's intervention in the basin and of the coal mining companies occupies the central places. Except for mention of a few of the organized labor movements and the period of the forced labor regime during the Second World War, the Zonguldak mine workers themselves have rarely appeared as the actors in the history of the basin.

The history of the mine workers offers important insights into state, capital and labor relations in a regional and sectoral context. In addition, despite the peculiarities of coal mining as a field of production and of the mine workers as a particular labor force, their history contains important insights into the labor history of the Republican era in terms of the state and labor relations and of the living and working experiences of people who followed cyclical work patterns between rural and mining pursuits. At the same time, with all of its complexity, the history of the basin offers important clues in understanding the economic, political and social history of the late Ottoman and Republican eras in a regional/sectoral context.

In this context, this study investigates the labor, state and capital relations in Turkey in a regional-sectoral context, focusing on the complex relations between the Zonguldak mine workers, the mining companies and the state in the Ereğli-Zonguldak coal basin during the early Republican era, and the impact of the forced labor regime on the relations between the community of the basin and the state during the Second World War period. One of the aims of the study is to shed light on the economic, political and socio-cultural dynamics in the making of a mine worker community, which at the same time continued its ties to subsistence

---

<sup>8</sup> For the numbers of the workers from 1942 to 2005, see the TTK statistics in <http://www.taskomuru.gov.tr/personelsayi.htm>. [accessed 25 September 2005]

agricultural pursuits and to village life, and the impact of the rural-industrial interaction on the work relations in the context of coal mining. In relation to this, the other aim of the study is to recover the agency of the mine workers in a particular period of the history of the coal basin and of Turkey.

There is no doubt that the history of the mine workers in the basin cannot be comprehended truly without considering the state and capital relations in the basin and the broader economic and political context of the period in question. The authoritarian political regime of the period under the rule of the Republican People's Party and the state's active involvement in the industrialization process of the country constituted two of the main characteristics of the early Republican era. On the one hand, the crucial role of coal as the main source of energy and the raw material in the heavy industry and the transportation sectors, and, on the other hand, the active participation of the state in the industrialization process in the 1930s make the state one of the main actors of the history of the basin. In addition, the status of the coal mines called for state involvement in granting permission license. Furthermore, the existence of the large-scale foreign capital and the state's active support of private national capital in the basin, particularly during the late 1920s, and its direct involvement in coal production by the mid-1930s made the history of entrepreneurship in the basin part of the history of the state intervention.

The labor-intensive character of the production and the concentration of the high number of workers in Zonguldak province invited early state intervention in labor conditions as well. The state's approach to the labor issues in the basin was conditioned to a large extent within the populism of the RPP, which assumed a harmonious and cohesive nation comprising various professional groups differentiating from one another in terms of profession, not class, position in the society. The solidarist and populist discourse of the ruling elite which was

formulated in the "classless, privilegedless and cohesive nation" motto of the time, articulated the repressive labor policies of the state.<sup>9</sup>

In a sense, the coal basin became a microcosm of the relations between the state's economy and labor policies in the early Republican period. In this context, during the late 1920s and the 1930s, the coal basin gradually articulated the state's project of creating a self-sufficient, independent and closed national economy, and of creating a stable social and political order under the strict control of the single-party rule. Hence, the early Republican history of the basin cannot be understood without considering the part played by the state. In this sense, this study will examine the state-coal mining sector and the state-mining companies relations as they related to the state-labor relations in the basin during the period in question.

Some endogenous features in coal mining provide the opportunity to study the community-industry linkage in a regional context. Owing to the geological fixity of the mines, the coal mining industry is a regional industry. Its labor-intensive character makes it rely heavily on the unskilled labor of the inhabitants of the region in which it was established. As the manual labor of the male population of the villages was highly compatible with coal extraction, the coal mining companies drew their labor force from the villages of the basin first with the help of the state's legal coercion in the late Ottoman period and then with the help of local actors in the basin. In this context, the regionality and labor-intensive character of coal mining provide a proper ground for studying the interplay between the local community of the region and the coal mining. The identity of the mine workers, their forms of organization and action, their relations with the semi-skilled and the skilled workers, the mining companies and the state, and last, their perception of these relations came into being to a large extent within the junction between the social-cultural realm of the village community and the work site. In

---

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on the linkage between solidarism, corporatism and populism in the discourse of the ruling elite of the early Republican period and the evolution of the elite discourse on the class problem, see Ahmet Makal, *Türkiye'de Tek Patili Dönemde Çalışma İlişkileri*:

this context, the study will analyze the impact of this junction on work relations during the period in question.

Although the coal mining and the underground labor process had certain peculiarities, the mine workers of the time represented in many ways the state of the workforce employed in non-agricultural fields of production in the early Republican period. In this sense, the working and living experiences of the mine workers present important clues about the experiences of large segments of the working people in this period. Indeed, in the initial decades of Republican Turkey, neither factory nor full-time wage workers were predominant figures in different fields of industrial production in a broader sense.<sup>10</sup> Contrarily, temporary laborers from rural areas appeared as one of the main sources of waged labor in the period in question.<sup>11</sup> Even in 1980, rural laborers continued to be one of the main labor sources in industrial fields and service sectors.<sup>12</sup>

In this context, labor relations in the different industrial branches in the early Republican period cannot be truly comprehended from a perspective that centers on the factory and an idealized version of the factory worker with his/her modes of living, working, organizing and protesting. Contrarily, as was the case in the basin, the interplay between rural and urban, between work site and village, between local actors and capital, and between the means of extra-economic coercion and the means of struggle would say more about the experiences of

---

1920-1946 (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1999), pp. 44-160.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, according to the 1927 Industry Census, only 0.02 percent of the whole population in Turkey constituted "real industrial work force." The distribution of wage workers in different sectors also proves the lack of the industrial laborers in "full sense". Only 3.9 percent of the wage workers were employed in the industrial plants and 90.8 % of them were employed in the small scale enterprises comprising five and less workers. Hence the traditional manufacture and small scale production remained dominant forms in the 1920s. See Erdal Yavuz, "The State of Industrial Workforce, 1923-1940," in *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839-1950*, edited by Donald Quataert and E.J. Zürcher (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), p.96.

<sup>11</sup> For the state of industrial work force and its rural origin, see Ahmet Makal, *Çalışma İlişkileri*, pp. 301-307; Ahmet Makal, "Sanayileşme Sürecinde İşgücü Sorunu ve Sosyal Politika," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 92 (Spring 2002), pp. 38-45.

<sup>12</sup> In 1980, 54.9% of the workers were employed primarily in agricultural sector. Small land proprietorship and non-waged family labor continued to be predominant from the initial years of the Republican Turkey up to 1980s. On the other hand, a part of the workers employed in industrial and service sectors continued their rural ties and subsistence agricultural pursuits. Hence from the early decades of the Republic to the end of the twentieth century, the workers with rural ties continued to prefer seasonal work pattern between farming and waged pursuits rather than permanent settlement in urban industrial centers. For a discussion on the predominance of employment in agricultural production and the state of migratory labor force between subsistence agriculture and waged pursuits in urban centers in the 1980s, see Ayşe Buğra, "Bir Toplumsal Dönüşümü Anlama Çabalarına Katkı: Bugün Türkiye'de E.P. Thompson'ı Okumak," in E.P. Thompson, *İngiliz İşçi Sınıfının Oluşumu*, translated by Uygur Kocabaşoğlu (İstanbul: Birikim Yayınları, 2002), pp.26-27.

numbers of workers employed in various non-agricultural fields of production temporarily. Although this study will concentrate on the state of the labor force in the Zonguldak coal basin in a particular period, the story of the mine workers exceeds the boundaries of the basin and denotes some features of wage labor in Turkey in general. Instead of excluding the experiences of these groups from the labor history of Turkey, it is necessary to focus on them, who actually represented the experiences of the great numbers of workers in early Republican Turkey.

There is no doubt that the experiences of the mine workers under the forced labor regime implemented during the Second World War period represented to a great extent the experiences of the different sections of the working peoples of the time as well. The Second World War period is a special epoch in Turkey's history in the sense that although the country did not enter the war, large sections of the population, particularly the small peasants, workers, non-Muslim minorities, the urban poor and other groups who suffered from the oppressive economic policies of the governments, experienced the time as one of the most tragic episodes in their lives.

The compulsory labor regime was one of the most coercive instruments by means of which the state disciplined the work force and ensured an adequate labor supply to different production fields, one of which was the mining sector. The strategic importance of coal in war time as the source of fuel for the war industry and for transportation compelled various states to implement compulsory labor acts in the coal mining sector. Under the increasing war threat the governments in Turkey also resorted to the forced labor regime in the basin as well. However, the forced labor regime turned the coal miners into guerillas battling, on the one hand, against the state's legal coercion, and, on the other hand, against the difficult working and living conditions in the mines.



Furthermore the workers of the mines suffered from the state's forced purchasing of their part of agricultural products as well. The forced labor regime, which compelled the male population of the basin work in the mines, and the Soil Product Tax, which handed in a part of the agricultural product in the name of government, increased tension between the state, its local representatives and the basin's population. The basin's inhabitants developed various forms of resistance to evade the legal oppression. The study focuses on this specific period to reveal the interplay between the state's coercive practices and the struggles of the basin's population as cultivators and obliged laborers.

There are quite a few studies on the early Republican era of the basin and the period of the forced labor regime. Most of them were written by authors who worked in the technical, managerial and personnel cadres of the mining companies in the basin or in the state's establishments.<sup>13</sup> Most of these authors witnessed the early Republican history of the basin and the Second World War period. Their studies were followed by a second generation of authors some of whom originated among the mine workers.<sup>14</sup> There is a series of novels on the lives of the underground workers of the basin as well, written by individuals who spent part of their lives in the basin.<sup>15</sup> This entire corpus is important as they constitute varieties of perspective on the history of the basin and of the workers, from the inside.

In the studies of the first generation, the Ottoman and Republican states are generally represented as the primary actors in the history of the basin, together with the local and

---

<sup>13</sup> See Hızıroğlu Bedri, *Madencinin Kitabı* (n.p.: Matbaacılık ve Neşriyat TAŞ, 1934); Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası Uzun Mehmet'ten Bugüne Kadar* (İstanbul, 1934); Bahri Savaşkan, *Zonguldak Maden Kömürü Havzası Tarihçesi 1829-1989* (Zonguldak: İlkadım Matbaası, 1993); Yunt, Kerim. ed., *Seçkin Türk Ormancısı Hüseyin Fehmi İmer Hayatı Hatıraları 1871-1960* (İstanbul: Baha, 1973); Hüseyin Fehmi İmer, *Ereğli Maden Kömürü Havzası Tarihçesi* (Zonguldak: Ali Rıza İncealemdaroğlu Matbaası, 1944); Kadri Yersel, *Madencilikte Bir Ömür Anılar Görüşler* (İstanbul: Maden Mühendisleri Odası, 1989); Sadrettin Enver, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzamız* (n.p.: Etibank Yayını, 1945); Necip Tesal, *Zonguldak Vilayetinin İktisadi Ehemmiyeti* (İstanbul: n.p., 1957); Turgut Etingü, *Kömür Havzasında İlk Grev* (İstanbul: Koza Yayınları, 1976).

<sup>14</sup> Sina Çıladır, *Zonguldak Havzasında İşçi Hareketlerinin Tarihi 1848/1940* (Ankara: Yeraltı Maden/İş Yayınları, 1977); Sina Çıladır, *Zonguldak Havzasındaki İşçi Hareketleri ve İşçi Örgütleri 1908-1993* (Kdz. Ereğli: İlke Yayınları, n.d.); Kadir Tuncer, *Tarihten Günümüze Zonguldak'ta İşçi Sınıfının Durumu "Kumpanyalar Dönemine Geri Dönüş"* (İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1998); Erol Çatma, *Asker İşçiler* (İstanbul: Ceylan Yayıncılık, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> İ. Behçet Kalaycı, Kıvırcık, *Genç Bir Madencinin Öyküsü* (Ankara: R Prodüksiyon, 1992); Levent Ağralı, *Göçük* (n.p.: Milliyet Yayınları, 1976); İrfan Yalçın, *Ölümün Ağzı* (n.p: Gölge Yayınları, 1980); Mehmet Seyda, *Yanartaş* (İstanbul: Ararat Yayınları, 1970).

foreign mining companies.<sup>16</sup> Most of these authors base their periodization of the basin's history in accordance with the state establishments responsible for the administration of the basin.<sup>17</sup> This state-centered periodization is maintained in works of the second generation as well. The development of coal mining under the state's intervention in between the 1850s and 1880s, then the state's increasing intervention in the 1930s, which brought the full nationalization of the basin under the state ownership, made the state of the basin one of the important actors in the history. However, in most of the studies the position of the state in its relations to the other actors of the basin is overemphasized and it is represented as if an unchallenged one. Hence, the other actors, particularly the mine workers, are obscured in these narratives.

In the studies of the first generation, the state-centrist perspective articulates nationalist one and the Republican state's involvement in the basin is praised as the leading factor in the development of coal mining in the basin. From the same perspective, the French and Italian capital in the basin are criticized in terms of their excessive exploitation of the workers and their destructive production strategies, which are said to have wasted the "underground wealth of the nation." In this context, the first intervention of the national government into the labor conditions of the basin in 1921 via pro-labor laws, the entry of *İş Bankası* in 1926, the progressive social policies towards the mine workers in the 1930s and the nationalization of the mines in 1940 appear in their narratives as progressive stages in the early Republican history of the basin.

---

<sup>16</sup> For a critical evaluation of this literature, see Donald Quataert, "Maden İşçileri'nin Hayatı: 1870-1920," *Toplum ve Bilim* (Winter, 83), pp. 80-84.

<sup>17</sup> Ahmet Ali Özeke's and Ahmet Naim's studies reflect this conventional periodization. According to this schema the history of the basin from the late Ottoman period to the early Republican era is composed of four periods. The first period between 1848 and 1865 was period of the Privy Purse (*Hazine-i Hassa*). The second period started in 1865 when the mines were administered by the Naval Ministry (*Bahriye Nezaretî*). The third period began in 1908, when the mines were transferred from the authority of Naval Ministry to first the Ministry of Public Works (*Nafia Nezaretî*), and then the Ministry of Commerce, Agriculture and Mines (*Ticaret, Ziraat ve Maadin Nezaretî*). The Republican period is generally started with the first intervention of the Grand National Assembly's in the production conditions of the basin in 1920 and transmitted to another epoch by the nationalization of the basin in 1940.

In most of these studies, the actual existence of the mine workers at the work site, their living and working experiences, rarely appear. The work relations, the underground labor process, mining methods, wages, living conditions, features of the labor market, recruitment processes, and work disputes between the workers and the employers are rarely mentioned, hence, the workers appear more as peasants pursuing a temporary livelihood in the mines rather than as mine workers. In a similar line, they are generally depicted as victims who were exploited by the foreign companies, the small scale mine operators and the local actors in the "pre-Republican" era and then were rescued by the Republican government, which provided them with protection and better living and working conditions. Their appearance at the work site is depicted mostly in reference to the improvements and social facilities the national mining companies and the state provided them.<sup>18</sup>

Three of the authors from the first generation, Ahmet Naim, Kadri Yersel and partly Hızıroğlu Bedri, give more details on the mine workers themselves. They generally sympathize with the workers in their narratives. The workers are depicted in hard and unsafe working conditions, and in poor living conditions at the work site. Ahmet Naim, in his *Emekçi Hikayeleri* (Proletarian Stories), and Hızıroğlu Bedri, in his *Madencinin Kitabı* (Miner's Book), vividly depict the underground labor process and workers in continual motion of a cooperative sort, digging, timbering, blasting, carrying, talking, smiling, complaining, contesting, submitting, in short living and working.<sup>19</sup> Ahmet Naim's other study, dated 1934, and Kadri Yersel's memoirs vividly depict the poor housing, nutrition and unhealthy conditions of the workers and their oppression by the mine operators, the labor recruiters and other local actors. However, as was the case in Ahmet Naim's and Turgut Etingü's narratives, except for the 1923 strike wave in

---

<sup>18</sup> For instance, Enver gives detail information on the numbers of the dormitories, baths, cafeterias constructed during the 1930s and he emphasizes how the workers obtained healthy living and working conditions under the protection of the state and national capital. Enver, pp. 76-87. In a similar line, İmer emphasizes the social facilities, health services, vocational training opportunities and legal rights the Republican government provided the basin's workers and defines all these improvements as a revolution in the history of the basin. İmer, pp. 33-37, pp.47-48.

<sup>19</sup> Ahmet Naim, *Emekçi Hikayeleri* (Kdz.Ereğli: Demokrat Ofset, nd.), Hızıroğlu Bedri, *ibid.*

the basin when all of the workers appeared in solidarity, seeking their rights and imposing their demands on the Ereğli Company of French capital,<sup>20</sup> the mine workers are represented generally as victims that suffered from the coercion of the local actors in collaboration with the mine operators. The mine workers then turn into peasants who were forced to work by the local recruiters, ağas, and gang bosses in exchange for their debts.<sup>21</sup> In a similar line, in Yersel's narrative, the mine workers appear as commodities, circulating in the labor market under the control of the greedy local actors.<sup>22</sup> Hence, in both narratives, the mine workers appear as unfree labor. In addition, Yersel and Ahmet Naim implicitly criticize the Republican government, which brought no improvements to the workers' lives.

In the narratives of the first generation, while the underground laborers from the villages of the basin are depicted as poor cultivators, following a seasonal work pattern in the mines, the surface laborers and workers in auxiliary underground jobs are depicted as "true" workers with their better living and working conditions, with their long duration in the mines and with their skill levels. The authors distinguish these workers from the underground workers in terms of their duration in mines and their regional origin.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, they reveal the labor market which was segmented on the basis of regional origin and work duration of the laborers. As the authors describe, while the workers from the villages of the basin constituted the lowest segment of the market with their cheap and unskilled labor, worse living conditions, rural origins and temporary work patterns, the workers from the north-eastern Black sea region constituted the higher segment with their relatively expensive and skilled labor, better living and working conditions, and relatively long duration in the mines. While disregarding the workers from the villages of the basin, they highly regard the workers from the Black Sea

---

<sup>20</sup> For the 1923 strike wave in the basin, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp.125-131, Etingü, pp. 78-106.

<sup>21</sup> Ahmet Naim, *ibid.*, pp. 149-154

<sup>22</sup> Yersel, pp. 12-14.

<sup>23</sup> Ahmet Naim compares and contrasts these two groups under the title of permanent and temporary workers; *ibid.*, pp. 148-152 . Yersel's perception of the temporary workers is more elitist than of Ahmet Naim. While depicting the living conditions of the villagers of the basin in

provinces. Instead of emphasizing the similarities such as the continual rural ties of groups, their migratory characters, the recruitment mechanisms they belonged to, and the coercive relations they suffered from, both authors reproduce the segments at the narrative level, in reference to their differences. The culturally and regionally marked distinctions of the workers in the labor market are reconstructed in the narratives.

The second generation of authors adopts a more worker-centered perspective in their narratives. Tuncer's and Çıladır's works are of this sort. However, in their studies, the agency of the mine workers appears only if they were on strike. When they do not protest, in the narratives, they remain mere peasants suffering from the poor living and exploitative working conditions and from the oppression of the local powers in collaboration with the mining companies. Once again, when not protesting, the worker identity of the laborers disappears in the narratives.<sup>24</sup> At this point, their narratives articulate those of Ahmet Naim and of Yersel. The workers were replaced by passive, obedient, easily driven rural laborers.

On the other hand, both of the authors try to overcome the culturally and regionally marked distinctions between the underground and surface workforce in their narratives. They deliberately underline the common experiences and solidarity among them. Çatma, Çıladır and Tuncer adopt a critical stance against the repressive labor policies of the early Republican state and particularly against the forced labor regime in the 1940s. Particularly Tuncer devotes a number of pages to interviews conducted by a local journalist Saffet Can with retired workers and villagers who had worked in the mines under the forced labor regime.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Çatma devotes a number of pages to the state of the workers during this period.<sup>26</sup> However, once

---

the mines, he frequently points out their "backwardness," their resistance to even the social facilities the companies provided them and their submission to the local labor recruiters. Yersel, pp. 7-17.

<sup>24</sup> Çıladır, *Zonguldak Havzasında*, pp.154-155, pp.170-174.; Tuncer, pp.48-49

<sup>25</sup> Tuncer, pp. 70-83.

<sup>26</sup> Çatma, pp. 122-170.

again, the workers appear in their narratives as victims and as a silent mass who submitted to the legal coercion rather than opposing it.

The authors from the first and second generations evaluate the state of the mine workers between 1920 and 1950 from the inside. Although they provide valuable insights on the state of the workers in the basin, their evaluation is limited by the mine workers. On the other hand, the basin came on the agenda of some academics, intellectuals and specialists in the 1930s and 1940s in relation to the problems of the industrial workforce in Turkey. The observations made in the 1930s by an American specialist group under the leadership of Walker D. Hines and Ahmet Ali Özeke's evaluations, from the Department of Economy at İstanbul University, clearly illustrate the resemblance between the state of Zonguldak mine workers and of the industrial workforce in Turkey in the period in question.<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, both the mining sector and the different industrial branches in Turkey badly suffered from the high turnover rates, unskilled nature of labor, workers' lack of enthusiasm to become full-time wage workers, their continual ties to rural life and seasonal participation in industrial production and as a result, their perception of wage works as a source of income supplemental to their subsistence economy rather than as a source of livelihood appeared as basic problems in Turkey's industrialization.<sup>28</sup> Hines and his friends underline that the low wage rates, lack of permanent settlement facilities for the workers and their families and inadequate social services discouraged the rural laborers from binding themselves to wage work. Hence, as Özeke points out, the shortage of permanent and professional worker, widespread absenteeism, low productivity and low-capacity production in some leading industrial branches

---

<sup>27</sup> Ahmet Ali Özeke wrote various books and articles on the basin in the 1940s and 1950s. Some of his books are *Ereğli Kömür Havzası Tarihi Üzerine Bir Deneme* (İstanbul: Kanaat Matbaası, 1944); *Türkiye Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi, Birinci Kısım* (İ.Ü. İktisat Fakültesi: İstanbul, 1955). Two of his studies evaluate the industrial workforce of the time in Turkey and the state of mine labor in the basin; "Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçiyi Barındırma Problemi," *Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları*, III. Kitap, pp.103-130; *Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi Problemleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1948). Kessler is another academician interested in the basin in terms of the labor relations; Gerhard Kessler, "Zonguldak ve Karabük'te Çalışma Şartları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 9, no.3 (1948), pp. 173-196. Last, an American specialist group who was invited in Turkey in the early 1930s to evaluate the economic conditions in Turkey in the context of the state's industrialization targets. Hines, Walker D. et. al. *Türkiye'nin İktisadi Bakımdan Umumi bir Tetkiki 1933-1934*, I, II (Ankara: Köyöğretmeni Basımevi, 1936).

<sup>28</sup> Hines, Walker D. et. al. *Türkiye'nin İktisadi Bakımdan*, vol.5, pp. 233-238; Özeke, Türkiye Sanayiinde, pp. 6-14.

such as leather, textiles, iron and steel, and last, the ineffectiveness of social policy implementations to stabilize the workforce were the main problems from the mid-1930s onwards.<sup>29</sup>

Actually, the low wage policy of the industrial plants and determination of wages in accordance to the subsistence of a single worker were important factors behind the part-time work patterns of the rural laborers. However, instead of evaluating the problem in a broader context, Özen, for instance, relates the problem to the "peasant mentality." Accordingly, as long as the rural laborers did not change their conservative mentality, which made them content with little and kept them out of "money economy," they would not turn into industrial workers.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, Behice Boran evaluates the problem of lack of the full time professional wage workers in the industrial sectors in the context of lack of an agrarian transition in Turkey.<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, for the rise of an industrial workforce from the agricultural labor pool, there should be a fundamental transformation in the techniques of agricultural production. Only an intense mechanization of farming could bring about the disintegration of subsistence rural economy and lead to the rise of a labor surplus in the countryside. Hence, for Boran, while losing their livelihood, then the surplus rural laborers would be able to cut their ties with the land. The villagers with their families then would have to immigrate to the industrial centers permanently and this would give rise to industrial labor in the full sense.

However, considering the fear of a class society with class struggles which was assumed to threaten the harmony of society, large scale migration from the rural areas to industrial centers and the formation of a working class were not the desires of the ruling elite of the time. The industrialization attempts of the 1930s were part of a close, self-sufficient and an import-substitution economy model aiming to meet the main requirements of the country

---

<sup>29</sup> Özen, *Türkiye Sanayiinde*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Behice Boran, "Sanayide Köylü- İşçi," *Yurt ve Dünya*, Cilt 3 (March -April 12942), pp. 80-84.

within its own sources. Unlike the state's economy policy of active state support for private accumulation in the 1920s, in the 1930s, it was involved in the economy as the major productive and investing agent. The state first adopted policy of protectionism and import substitution based on private capital, than by 1933 a synthesis of protectionism and etatism. In this line, the ambitious program of state investment in industry and mining became the main characteristics of the 1930s. As a result, as Boratav points out, by 1939, Turkey which had imported its flour, sugar and cloth in 1923, achieved to produce a wide variety of basic consumer goods and a quantity of capital goods in the factories most of which were established by state investment of the post-1932 years.<sup>32</sup> However, the ruling elite of the time tried to solve the shortage of skilled and permanent labor demand of the new industrial plants without disturbing the stability of the rural area which would be the main pool of the labor.

The acute labor shortage in the industrial plants was an outcome of the peasantist outlook of the time and the desire to keep the rural structure unchanged. As Karaömerlioğlu points out, during the 1930s, despite the favorable conditions for industrialization, both the intelligentsia and the officials evaluated the question of industrialization from a conservative and peasantist outlook.<sup>33</sup> The consensus on preventing the dissolution of the rural social structure made the seasonal migration of the rural laborers to the industrial centers compatible with the desires of the ruling elite. So, the continuation of the part-time engagement of the workers from the villages of the basin in mining was in harmony with the political objectives of the ruling elite. In that sense, the part-time laborers of the mines and the temporary laborers of the industrial plants seem to have fitted, rather than contradicted, the political concerns of the time.

---

<sup>32</sup> For the periodization of the state's economic policies between 1920 and 1940 and a general evaluation of the state investments, see Korkut Boratav, "Kemalist Economic Policies and Étatism," in *Atatürk: Founder of a Modern State*, edited by Ali Kazancigil and Ergun Özbudum (London: C Hurst & Company, 1981), pp. 167-176.

<sup>33</sup> Karaömerlioğlu, Asım. "The People's Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34, no. 4 (October, 1998), p. 85.



Then, how can the part-time mine workers and part-time rural laborers be defined, were they mere peasants, cultivators, half-peasants and half-workers, or modern workers of early Republican Turkey? In the 1940s, Boran described the seasonal laborers as peasant workers in reference to their part time work patterns in industrial sectors and their continual ties to rural pursuits. The same category with different versions has been resorted to by various academics in recent decades to describe the in-between position of the Zonguldak mine workers as well. This perspective defines the Zonguldak mine workers as rural laborers rather than a grade in modern industrial workforce. Compared to the classical proletarian, who lacks ownership or control over the means of production and over the labor power of other workers and depends solely on wage for subsistence,<sup>34</sup> the basin's mine workers seem a deviation from the classical proletarianization model. In this line of reasoning, Quataert and Kahveci define the mine workers of the basin either as cultivator/miners and worker-peasants.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, Oskay defines them as a transitional worker phenomenon.<sup>36</sup> In one or another way, the mine workers of the basin appear in these works not as a modern workforce. In this line of reasoning, they denote, implicitly or explicitly, the lack of class identity and of organized labor movements among the mine workers to the cultivator/peasant identity of the worker. For instance, for Quataert, since the mine workers retained their village orientation and worked in the mines for supplemental income, they did not acquire a group identity based on job function at the mines. Hence, they did not develop any sense of working class consciousness, and as

---

<sup>34</sup> For the description of "proletarian," see Ira Katznelson, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons," in Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg eds. *Working Class Formation Ninetieth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), p.4.

<sup>35</sup> Quataert defines Zonguldak mine workers as a labor force which did not fit classical proletarianization model. Following Quataert, the mine workers of the basin did not rise among the landless and propertiless masses and become "free labor." Hence, he defines the mine workers as cultivator/miners or worker peasants in his studies. See, Donald Quataert, "Zonguldak Maden İşçilerinin Hayatı, 1870-1920," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 83 (Winter 1999-2000), p. 89; and Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 41. Similar line of reasoning can be found some other studies, which define the Zonguldak mine workers as primarily peasants or in a less accented way, as cultivators. For instance in his article, Kahveci reflects the uncertain identity of the mine workers. Under a sub-heading "cultivator/miners or proletarians" he denotes both their cultivator and proletarian characteristics but he does not clarify their class position. Kahveci, "Zonguldak Mine Workers," pp.191-194.

<sup>36</sup> Ülgen Oskay defines the underground workers of the basin as peasant-workers seen primarily in the transitional societies which transform from agricultural and traditional structure to industrial and modern one. Ülgen Oskay, *Geçiş Dönemi Tipi Olarak Zonguldak Kömür Havzası Maden İşçisi* (İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, 1983), pp.238-241.

a result, became an unorganized and obedient labor force in the initial years of the twentieth century.<sup>37</sup>

In the 1960s and 1970s the situation seems to have remained unchanged. In his studies on labor movements in the basin in the 1960s and 1970s, Roy establishes a similar linkage between continual rural ties of the mine workers and their disinterest to labor unionism and organized form of struggle. He defines the underground work force as first and foremost peasants. When he compares the temporary and unskilled underground workers to the relatively permanent and skilled surface workers he observes that the later group dominated the union organizations and showed more affiliation to unionism than the former group.<sup>38</sup> In a sense ability to organize in "class way" also proves the "worker" identity of the laborers. Otherwise they are simple peasants.

It is true that, owing to the subsistence agriculture, the Zonguldak mine workers did not fully depend on the sale of labor power in the wage form for their subsistence. Income deriving from mining was supplemental rather than a mere means of livelihood.<sup>39</sup> In addition, since they allocated their labor time between mining and farming in accordance to the requirements of agricultural cycles, they did not resemble full-time wage workers. In that sense they appeared primarily as small land proprietors, engaging in non-agricultural production fields to obtain small amounts of cash income. Their temporary existence in mining and continual residence in their respective villages made them seem to belong to the peasant world rather than to an industrial one. Furthermore, the functions of local actors in the recruitment process

---

<sup>37</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 62.

<sup>38</sup> Delvin Roy, "Labor and Trade Unionism in Turkey: The Ereğli Coalmines," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 12, no. 3 (October 1976), pp. 126-129 and 144-169. For the loose relations of rotational workers to the union and their indifference in comparison with the permanent work force in 1980s, also see Oskay, pp. 174-183 and p. 240.

<sup>39</sup> Indeed, supplementing farm revenues with income from non-farm sources has a widespread practice among the peasant communities. This pattern, hence, is not peculiar to villager communities of Zonguldak basin. As long as the supplementary income is obtained by temporary labor in non-agricultural sectors, it has little effect on the lives and income composition of the peasant community. Franches Rothstein, "The New Proletarians : Third World reality and First World Categories," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 28, no. 2 (Apr., 1986), p. 217.

and in the work relations, and the widespread use of extra-economic forms of coercion made the appearance of the Zonguldak mine workers resemble more peasants than workers.

In addition, compared to the classical mine worker profile, there appears certain discrepancies. For instance, as Shubert and Yarrow point out, coal miners around the world represent a classic proletariat and constitute the aristocracy of militant labor with their class formation and organized form of action.<sup>40</sup> The mining industry in general and coal mining in particular, appear as one of the most strike-prone industries in the world as well.<sup>41</sup> However, in the one hundred and fifty year history of the Zonguldak basin, there appeared only ten to twelve strikes, most of which were spontaneous.<sup>42</sup> The low frequency of strikes and weakness of organized labor movement in Zonguldak coal basin made the mining community of the basin different from the classical profile of the mining community as a militant and aggressive one.

Contrary to the arguments on the identity of the Zonguldak mine workers, this study will argue that, in the early Republican era, the Zonguldak mine workers came on the scene as a modern laboring group with a flexible space and time organization in their relation to mining. It is inappropriate to identify them as a transitional worker phenomenon, a deviation from the classical proletariat or simply cultivator/worker due to their rotational work pattern between mining and subsistence farming and their continuous residence in their villages. Instead, they constituted a modern form of labor arising from the compatibility of the unskilled labor of the male population of the villages with the labor-intensive production conditions of the coal mining in the basin, and of the subsistence agriculture to the low-wage policy of the companies. The relationship between mining and subsistence agriculture as two different production fields was

---

<sup>40</sup> Adrian Shubert, *The Road to Revolution in Spain: The Coal Miners of Asturias 1860-1934* (University of Illinois Press, 1987), p. 26.; Michael Yarrow, "The Labor Process in Coal Mining: Struggle for Control", in Andrew Zimbalist ed., *Case Studies on the Labor Process* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979), p.170.

<sup>41</sup> M.I.A. Bulmer, "Sociological Models of the Mining Community," *The Sociological Review*, 23 (February, 1975), pp. 64 and 67.

<sup>42</sup> For a chronology of the strikes and an informative evaluation, see Şemsi Denizer, *Şemsi Denizer Anlatıyor, Zonguldak Gerçeği* (Zonguldak: Uyanış AŞ, 1991), pp. 264-269.

a harmonious one. This harmony led to the articulation of coal mining to the existing social texture and the subsistence economy of the village-based community.

Once the relationship is comprehended not as a juxtaposition of two different production fields, but as an articulation, then it is revealed that the subsistence agricultural production of these land-poor villagers articulated the capitalist production relations in the coal mining as a specific form of reproduction of labor power. As long as the basin served as a pool of unskilled labor and reproduced labor power through feeding and housing the laborers with their families, the mining companies were able to determine the wages at a level which would provide for the subsistence of a single worker and a small margin to meet the most urgent cash requirements of the family. In terms of the mine workers, the hard working conditions in the mines, the low wage rates below the level of subsistence of the whole family and the opportunity to maintain rural pursuits with mining prevented them from cutting their ties to the land and from becoming full-time mine workers residing with their families near the mines.

In this context, the mine workers of the basin were not peasants, but simply unskilled and cheap labor for the mines. Compared to the surface workers, the mine workers constituted the lowest segment in the labor market, with their unskilled labor power, with their lower wages, disregarded status and with their poor living and working conditions at the work site. In a similar vein, as long as the mining was articulated to the texture of the village community in the basin, the already existing power relations in the village community were also articulated to the work relations in the mines. Hence, the local power figures such as village headmen, landlords, merchants and the local representatives of the state articulated the work relations in the mines easily. Instead of seeing them as the actors of a peasant world, it would be better to situate them within the capitalist production relations in the mines.

In this context, comprehending the Zonguldak mine workers as peasant-workers or cultivator miners or a deviation from classical proleterianization is quite problematic at various

points. First of all, the classic proletarianization conception, as Rothstein points out, holds an idealized version of the nineteenth century western European transition to industrial capitalism and set this version as the standard against which all other experiences around the world are compared and measured.<sup>43</sup> In a similar line, the classic proletarianization model offers an idealized version of the wage worker, originating from the landless and propertiless mass who were deprived of agricultural or other traditional means of subsistence and hence were left no choice but to exchange labor power in wage form.<sup>44</sup> Such a view leads to a static and narrow conception of the wage worker, which excludes varieties of laboring people who combine various forms of waged and non-waged labor to maintain their subsistence.<sup>45</sup> Indeed they were part of the same process of capitalist accumulation as the full-time wage workers were. Instead of looking at the property relations and rural ties of the workers, it would be more comprehensive to situate such workers in the industrial-rural linkage. Such a linkage would broaden the narrow conception of modern wage worker and make for the inclusion of various workers, pursuing livelihoods through combining different forms of labor in the modern worker category rather excluding them as peasant, cultivator or transitional worker.<sup>46</sup>

Considering the industrial revolution and its impact on working people in early nineteenth century Britain, for instance, the idealized version of the new worker which is assumed generally as the factory worker, appeared on the scene, in E.P. Thompson's words

---

<sup>43</sup> For a critical evaluation of classic proletarianization concept in relation to the peasant worker phenomenon and the workers of the "Third World," see Rothstein, p. 232.

<sup>44</sup> Indeed, views on industrialization which assume a linear and inevitable transition from peasant to proletariat, from country folk to urbanite represent an oversimplified picture of the formation and composition of industrial labor force in English industrial development. For this criticisms, see Holmes, Douglas R. Holmes and. Quataert, Jean H. "An Approach to Modern Labor: Worker Peasantries in Historic Saxony and the Friuli Region over Three Centuries," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 28, no. 2 (April, 1986):191-216.

<sup>45</sup> For instance, Ahmet Makal holds this conception of proletarianization as a standard and unproblematic process and measures the nature of the workforce and the industry-agriculture linkage in the early Republican Turkey in accordance to the idealized version of transition of surplus labor force from agricultural sector to modern industrial ones. Ahmet Makal, "Sanayileşme Sürecinde İşgücü Sorunu ve Sosyal Politika," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 92 (Spring 2002), pp. 34-45.

<sup>46</sup> Following critical evaluation of "working class" concept by M. Hardt and A. Negri, the category of "working class" itself is a limited concept based on exclusion of large numbers of the laboring groups. As they argue, in its limited usage, the working class category only expresses industrial labor, hence excludes all other laboring groups. Even when it includes wage workers in its broadest sense, it continues to exclude non-wage workers. In one or other forms, the working class category is based on such an assumption that there are difference by nature between men-industrial labor and reproductive labor of women, between industrial labor and peasant labor, between labor of the employed from labor of the unemployed and last between the labor of worker from labor of the poor. M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Çokluk*, translated by Barış Yıldırım (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2004), p. 120. In that sense narrow conceptions of worker or working class lead exclusion of high numbers of workers with their experiences from the labor history.

as the "eldest children of the industrial revolution."<sup>47</sup> In that sense, the characteristic industrial worker in Britain in the 1830s did not work in a mill or factory, but in a small workshop, at home or in casual employment on the street, on building-sites, or on the docks.<sup>48</sup> As Hardt and Negri suggest, although the industrial form of labor occupied a hegemonic place in the global economy during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, through diffusing its practices and becoming organizational principle in the daily texture of the life, it was not the dominant form of labor compared to the other fields of production.<sup>49</sup> In addition, from the nineteenth century industrial revolution to the end of the twentieth century, numbers of changes occurred in the organization of work, the labor process and workers' struggles. Hence, standardizing some characteristics of an idealized version of industrial worker, and fixing them as timeless and universal phenomena limit our understanding of various forms of labor and experiences of working peoples who combined wage earning pursuits with subsistence pursuits.

To see the part-time, unskilled, mostly migratory laborers as the lowest segment of the labor market would expand the category of worker. As Philip Corrigan points out, the allegedly distinctive strata of the labor market "share their market position with any member of the working class. Their unfree or ascriptive economic and social relations are the precise pedestal for (relatively) more free, seemingly 'achieved,' relations of others within the working class."<sup>50</sup> In this sense, for instance, according to Corrigan, housewifery is part of the necessities of a certain kind of wage laboring. Without the unfree labour of housework the reproduction cost of labor power would be substantially increased through private company, or

---

<sup>47</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century, both the factory system and factory workers were seemed to contemporaries to be new. In 1830-1840s the factory system continued to be perceived as novelty. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), pp.192-193.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 235.

<sup>49</sup> M. Hardt and A. Negri, *Çokluk*, translated by Barış Yıldırım (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2004), p. 121. As they argue, when working class category in its limited usage expresses industrial labor, it, hence excludes all other laboring groups. Even when it includes wage workers in its broadest sense, it continues to exclude non-wage workers. In one or other forms, the working class category is based on such an assumption that there are difference by nature between men-industrial labor and reproductive labor of women, between industrial labor and peasant labor, between labor of the employed from labor of the unemployed and last between the labor of worker from labor of the poor. Ibid., pp. 120-121.

<sup>50</sup> Philip Corrigan, "Feudal Relics" or Capitalist Monuments? Notes on the Sociology of Unfree Labour, *"Sociology the Journal of the British Sociological Association"*, 11, no.3 (September, 1977), p. 449.

social expenditure replacing this domestic private labour service. In short, "the continued exploitation of the whole working class depends upon the marked (visible) oppression of its weakest members."<sup>51</sup> In this perspective the underground workers of the basin seem to have constituted the lower segment of the labor market with their unskilled, cheap, rotating and unfree labor in respect to the relatively skilled, expensive and "free" labor of the permanent and semi-permanent workers in the basin.

In the same vein, to assume the "free labor" as a form of labor which divorced all kind of labor relations attributed to the pre-industrial world, and as the only form compatible with the capitalist relations of production, limit our understating of the various forms of unfree labor as part of capitalist society. In this context, Philip Corrigan criticizes the assumption that all kinds of extra-economic means of coercion such as political, legal, religious, kin and customary sanctions belonged to pre-capitalist modes of exploitation. Contrarily, he argues that various means of extra-economic coercion persisted in labor exchange not as feudal relicts but as essential relations of capitalism.<sup>52</sup> In a similar line, Stenfield points out that in the most advanced liberal market society of the nineteenth century, wage labor was unfree labor. Free markets and free labor did not invariably occur together as fixed components of the liberal market society.<sup>53</sup> Hence, free wage labor is neither inevitable nor natural outcome of the rise of the free market society. Indeed, the rights to work for an employer and to leave job on the basis of the free will of the worker were part of a process of labor struggles.<sup>54</sup> As Steinberg argues in his article on the role of legal institutions in the capitalist development of labor discipline and legal foundations of unfree labor, the capitalist development does not

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> For the criticisms of the perspective which evaluates unfree labor relations and means of extra economic coercion in labor exchange as feudal relicts rather than part of the essential relations of capitalism, see Corrigan, pp. 435-464.

<sup>53</sup> Robert J. Steinfield, *Coercion, Contract and Free Labor in the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge [ England], New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.82-83

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. pp.1-25.

necessitate "free labor." The legal freedom of labor is "a contingent and politically realized outcome of class conflict" rather than is an "inherent feature of capitalist development."<sup>55</sup>

To comprehend the rural ties of the Zonguldak mine workers and coercion of the local *ağas*, middlemen, labor recruiters, *muhtars* and other local actors in collaboration with the mining companies, as feudal relicts limit our understanding of how the capitalist work relations in the mines were fused into the already existing power relations in the village community. So, the exact nature of the relations between the villagers of the basin and the coal mining companies cannot be comprehended truly in the theory of modernization which assumes that "pre-industrial, traditional, underdeveloped" social formations become "modern, industrial, developed" through the expansion of the modern sectors which are characterized in terms of a free wage-labor market, forms of democracy and so on.<sup>56</sup> In this context, to see the Zonguldak mine workers as a prolonged transitional worker phenomenon is a fallacious assumption. A transitional worker approach is far from explaining the half and one century lasting of the work relations in the basin.<sup>57</sup>

On the other hand, another version of peasant worker category seems to be more explanatory than peasant-to-worker transition version. In the northern Italian context, Douglas R. Holmes elaborates the peasant worker category in terms of the various labor strategies of the rural workers between the wage earning activities and family-based agrarian system.<sup>58</sup> In the discontinuous strategy, Holmes defines a cyclical migration between wage earning activities and the family-based farming. Through the discontinuous work strategy rural households became intermittently tied to the wage economy.<sup>59</sup> Although Holmes's conceptual

---

<sup>55</sup> Marc, W. Steinberg, "Capitalist Development, the Labor Process and the Law I," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 109, 2 (Chicago: Sep. 2003), p. 446.

<sup>56</sup> Corrigan, p.441.

<sup>57</sup> For instance, Rothstein criticizes the arguments which stems from Lenin's assumption that development of capitalism would eliminate both the peasant-worker and peasant as the outcome of rising of industrial wages which would reduce the contribution of the farm to negligible portions, hence, would give rise to the industrial way of life. pp. 217- 218.

<sup>58</sup> Douglas R. Holmes, "A Peasant-Worker Model in a Northern Italian Context," *American Ethnologist*, 10, no. 4 (Nov., 1983),p. 737.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.



framework would be useful to elaborate rural laborers in Turkey who developed flexible work patterns between household-based farming and wage earning in urban centers, the peculiar relations between coal mining and village community of the basin exceed the second version of the peasant worker category as well.

First of all, the mining and rural pursuits of the workers did not juxtapose but were incorporated into each other. From the late nineteenth century on, working in the mines became a tradition infused into the texture of the daily lives in the villages. While the villages near the mines became hewer-villages or chock maker-villages, their villages further on became hewers, chock makers or timbermen. As long as the sons maintained their fathers' occupation in the mines, working in the mines transmitted to the next generation and became tradition. There is no doubt that in time the mine workers differentiated from the ordinary cultivators of the villages in the basin, who did not work in the mines. The villager and occupational identities of the mine workers merged into each other rather than juxtaposed one another temporarily. The shared hardships, dangers, threats, bad treatments, wage cuts, fines, accidents, in short, shared work experience and exploitation in the mines further enforced their occupational identity. While moving between the mines and villages, they did not lose half of their memory inscribing shared working and living experiences in the work site and the villages.

In this context, throughout the dissertation it will be argued that the Zonguldak mine workers based their identity on the junction between villages and mines. The interaction between the coal mining and rural community brought socio-cultural realm of the daily life to the very heart of the work relations in the mines. The agency of mine workers as the actors of their lives in the villages and at the work site stemmed from the very junction between the mines and the villages. The identity, solidarity, the patterns of struggle and of collective action against the coal mining companies and the state came into being at this junction. Instead of

seeing this junction as a site of oppression, it is proper to see it as one of contention. The contentious relations between the actors of the basin configured and reconfigured them continually in this junction.

In that sense, their subject position cannot be comprehended from an elitist point of view. They were neither pre-modern laborers, resisting the cutting of their ties with the land, owing to their conservative peasant mentality, nor the silent mass that suffered from the coercive policies of the state or from the exploitation of the mining companies due to their inability to act collectively or to identify themselves as workers in their relations to the ruling classes. On the contrary, they constituted their repertoire of struggle on the very junction of the village and the work site. In accordance to the circumstances, they resorted to this repertoire in their contentions with the state and/or the mining companies. Both the local networks and shared experiences at the work site constituted plural struggles. In this context, the mine workers of the basin will appear in the dissertation neither as mere victims oppressed by the state and the mining companies nor as a militant workforce in rebellion, but as mine workers contesting the ruling classes to improve their wages, their working and living conditions and to keep their flexible work patterns.

Like the narrow conception of free wage worker, the conception of labor struggle in the form of union-based or organized labor movements limits our understanding of the multiplicity of struggles the various segments of the working people developed against the ruling classes. Likewise, the labor history of early Republican society has been studied either in relation to left-wing ideologies and intellectuals,<sup>60</sup> or to the urban workforce and its labor movements.<sup>61</sup> The repressive labor policies of the state, the legal arrangements on labor issues, the elite's perception of working classes, and the living and working conditions of the workers employed

---

<sup>60</sup> For instance, see Feroz Ahmad, "The Development of Class Consciousness in Republican Turkey," in Quataert and Zürcher eds.; Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar 1908-1925*. (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1978)

<sup>61</sup> For instance Erdal Yavuz sketches the general state of work force in the industrial sectors. Yavuz, *ibid*.

in the public enterprises are some other favorite themes in the labor literature.<sup>62</sup> The state of workers under the compulsory labor code in the period of the Second World War is another subject to which attention is devoted.<sup>63</sup> In these studies the state-centered analysis has continued to be instrumental. The role of the state or other outside agencies has been over emphasized in examining labor's past.<sup>64</sup> Except for the strike waves, demonstrations and May Day celebrations in the 1920s,<sup>65</sup> the workers in this scheme are depicted as silent masses.

In general, labor historians have paid inadequate attention to the out-work relations of the workers and the junction between the work site and the out-work realms of the workers. As was the case in the context of the Zonguldak mine workers, such junctions might be the site where workers made their identity, their patterns of solidarity and of struggle. When the historians de-emphasize the daily run of work relations and multilayer identity of the workers then, they miss various everyday forms of struggle. Denial of the workers' daily expedience of work and life also brings about denial of the worker's subjectivity. Concentrating only on organized labor movements excludes varieties of the autonomous struggles which, indeed, constitute a wide repertoire.<sup>66</sup> In this context, this study will seek to reveal the ways by means of which the workers represented their common interests.

The discussions on the everyday forms of struggles outside of the organized labor movements would provide us opportunity to recognize the subject position of the relatively

---

<sup>62</sup> For the bills prepared by different sections of the ruling elite before the 1936 Labor Code, see for instance, İkin, Selim. "Devletçilik Döneminin İlk Yıllarında İşçi Sorunlarına Yaklaşım ve 1932 İş Kanunu Tasarısı," *Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Gelişme Dergisi Özel Sayısı* (1978): 251-338. For the 1936 labor code and institutionalization of labor capital relations in the context of the discipline of labor economics and industrial relations, see Gülmez; and Makal, *Çalışma İlişkileri*.

<sup>63</sup> For the National Emergency Law and the state of the workers under the Compulsory Labor Act, see Mehmet Şehmus Güzel, "Capital and Labor during World War II," in Quataert and Zürcher eds; and Ahmet Makal, "65. Yılında Milli Korunma Kanunu," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 102 (2005).

<sup>64</sup> Quataert criticizes labor historians to overly stress outside agencies and role of the state. The same is true for the studies on labor history of the early Republican Turkey. For Quataert criticisms, see Quataert and Zürcher eds., p.16.

<sup>65</sup> For a brief evaluation of the strikes in the 1920s see, Yavuz, pp.102-107.

<sup>66</sup> As Quataert argues for Ottoman and Turkish labor studies, "historians also needs to focus more on labor that was not organized into guilds, syndicates or unions, in Middle Eastern history, that seems to be the story of most workers. We need to trace changes in the forms and importance of non-organized labor. And, for the same reason, labor that was not rioting, demonstrating or striking equally deserves more attention...Historically (and at present), most labor was not organized and was not on strike. In Ottoman and Turkish history at least, most workers were probably neither proto nor card-carrying socialists. And yet, they could and did represent their interests in ways that at present are not very clear." Quataert, p.17, in Quataert and Zürcher eds.

powerless groups. Scott's conception of everyday forms of resistance would contribute to our effort to recover the struggles of the working people. As Scott points out, since the everyday forms of resistance are by their nature anonymous, silent and without leadership, they do not "throw up the manifestos, demonstrations and pitched battles that normally compel attention, but vital territory is being won and lost here too."<sup>67</sup> The day-to day struggles of the working people at the work site over the leisure, wages, autonomy, privileges and respect should be comprehended as the part of the class struggle, not separate from it.

Although Scott's conception of everyday forms of resistance has brought insights into the autonomous, fragmented, less coordinated, individualistic forms of "resistance," the concept of resistance gives these practices a defensive character. Hence, oppression prevails over resistance and resistance becomes limited in defense. Scott's model, in a sense, reproduces domination/subordination, oppression/resistance, active-revolutionary /passive-nonconformist action binaries. The model fixes the positions of the "oppressed" and the "oppressor" in respect to each other in an unchanged hierarchy of power relations. However, the powerless groups do not resort only to everyday politics to "resist," but also to make claims to improve their conditions and to compel the strong to retreat from its claims. Instead of comprehending power relations in a symmetrical hierarchy, it would be more useful to comprehend them in an asymmetry which comprises more dynamic and more contentious forms of power struggle. The agency of the relatively powerless groups cannot be recovered through situating them in constant subalternity.

On the other hand, Asef Bayat's conception of "quiet encroachment" provides opportunity to recognize the "offensive" and "organized" practices of the grassroots. The quiet encroachment is "the silent, protracted and pervasive advancement of ordinary people on the propertied and powerful in quest for survival and improvement of their lives. They are

---

<sup>67</sup> J. Scott, "Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 13, no.2 (January., 1986), pp .6-7. Scott, resorts his conception of "weapons of the weak" in his analyzing of peasant resistance. However, he also underlines that the peasantry has no monopoly

characterized by quiet, largely atomized and prolonged mobilization with episodic collective action, open and fleeing struggles without clear leadership, ideology or structured organization."<sup>68</sup> It comprises the direct actions of individuals and families to acquire the basic necessities of their lives in a quiet and unassuming, illegal fashion. These struggles are important in terms of their consequences since they bring about significant social changes for actors.<sup>69</sup> Compared to Scott's "everyday forms of resistance," the quiet encroachment emphasizes more the "activism" of grassroots rather than the passive, reflective and defensive forms of their actions.

In addition, Bayat's conception of "passive networks" provides another opportunity to recognize seemingly unorganized and spontaneous mass eruptions. According to Bayat, ordinary people who share the same space and who have a tacit recognition of their common identity in this place notice each other even they do not communicate. The passive network among them is formed through the mediation of space and the recognition of shared identity, interests and threats against them. The juxtaposed individuals, then, can potentially act together when they are subjected to a common threat. The "unexpected", "spontaneous" and "surprising" mass eruptions, indeed, are the moments of the transformation of the passive networks to action.<sup>70</sup> Bayat's conception of passive network provides conceptual opportunities to comprehend the "spontaneous" labor protests of the unorganized workers.

Certainly, the "everyday forms of resistance", "quiet encroachment", "passive networks" and such conceptions should be seen as the constituent elements of a wide repertoire of struggle. As both Bayat and Scott point out, the vision of justice constitutes a

---

on these weapons.

<sup>68</sup> Asef Bayat, "Activism and Social Development in the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 34 (2002), p.19. Bayat uses the notion in explaining the activism of the urban poor in pursuing redistribution of social goods and opportunities in the form of unlawful and direct acquisition of collective consumption such as land, shelter, piped water, electricity; public place such as street pavements, street parking places; opportunities such as favorable business conditions, locations and labels, and other life chances essential for survival and minimal living standards. The other goal of quiet encroachment is attaining autonomy, both cultural and political, from regulations, institutions and discipline imposed by the state. See also, Asef Bayat, "Politics of Informal People," *Third World Quarterly*, 18, no. 1 (1997), p.59

<sup>69</sup> Bayat, "Activism," p.3.

<sup>70</sup> Bayat, "Politics," pp.64-66.

common denominator of various resistance practices. The ordinary people's vision of justice justifies their actions against the ruling classes. It inevitably brings a moral ground to their action as well.<sup>71</sup> The everyday forms of struggle reveals, indeed, their disgust, indignation, anger, or just the opposition of the ordinary people to what they regard as unjust or unfair.<sup>72</sup> As their actions are justified on different elements of justice, such as "livelihood," "dignity," "necessity," these elements also imply what is fair, just and legitimate. The vision of justice also constitutes an alternative vision of society.

Actually, E.P. Thompson emphasizes the moral grounds of the popular actions in his study on the food riots in eighteenth century England. Accordingly, the grievances of the poor in the food riots operated within a popular consensus as to what were legitimate and what were illegitimate practices in the market place. "This in its turn was grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community, which, taken together, can be said to constitute the moral economy of the poor. An outrage to these moral assumptions, quite as much as actual deprivation, was the usual occasion for direct action."<sup>73</sup> In this context, as long as the moral economy of the working people and the moral assumptions behind their struggles against the ruling classes were not taken into consideration, the working people become another version of the notion of the "economic man" of the free market society. It should be taken into consideration that the descendants of the eighteenth century poor became the workers of the nineteenth century industrial society. However, following Thompson, there were no automatic, over-direct correspondence between the dynamic of economic growth and the dynamic of social or cultural life. The impact of industrial revolution on the working people cannot be

---

<sup>71</sup> For Bayat, "the disenfranchised groups carry out their activities not as conscious political acts; rather they are driven by the forces of necessity-the necessity to survive and live a dignified life. Thus the notion of "necessity" and a quest for dignity justify their struggles as "moral", "natural" and "logical" ways to survive and advance their lives.", Bayat, "Politics," pp. 57-58 and 61. Similarly Scott points out the vision of justice of the weak as moral grounds of the justification of everyday practices of resistance .Scott, p. 9.

<sup>72</sup> Benedic J. Tria Kerkvliet, "Everyday Resistance to Injustice in a Philippine Village," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 13, no. 2 (January., 1986), p. 108.

<sup>73</sup> E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, 50 (Feb., 1971), pp. 77-78.

grasped without considering the continuity of cultural and political traditions among the working people and their role in making of working-class consciousness.<sup>74</sup> Contrary to the impression that the cultural and political traditions, the rural ties and kin relations of the workers were replaced rapidly by urban and industrial concerns, and organized forms of labor struggle, all previous patterns persisted in a variety of forms<sup>75</sup> and continued to shape the working and living experiences of the people and their ways of struggle.

To reveal the multiplicity of the struggles to which the working people resorted, it is necessary to look closely at the popular culture. Michel de Certeau underlines the ordinary people's art of making use of strength. By using the instruments of this art, the ordinary actors of daily life, who are generally assumed to be passive and guided by the established rules, deal with the existing social order. Clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, the hunter's cunning, maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, joyful discoveries, manipulation, turning events and circumstances into opportunities are some of the everyday practices of the weak used to evade the strong without direct challenge. All these practices constitute the art of making use of strength which operates in a popular logic.<sup>76</sup>

De Certeau finds some similarities between rhetorical movements and the everyday ways of behavior of the ordinary actors in their dealings with power. Accordingly, rhetoric and everyday acting manipulate the existing system in order to change the will of another. Like rhetoric, the tactical nature of everyday acting makes the weaker position seem strong. Both rhetoric and everyday practices can be defined as internal manipulations of a system of language or of an established order.<sup>77</sup> Steinberg defines the struggles of the working peoples

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp. 192-193

<sup>75</sup> Rotshtein, p. 233.

<sup>76</sup> For the linkage between popular culture and everyday practices, see Mitchell de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1984), pp. xvii-xxiv.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 21-39.

within a hegemonic discursive formation as "a way of class struggle."<sup>78</sup> Through combining the analysis of hegemony with the dialogic theory of language predicated on the Bakhtinian Circle of literary analysis, Steinberg attempts to show how class struggle occurs within languages of domination. As "the word in language is half someone else's," in Bakhtin words, no class can claim sole proprietorship, hence, the inherent multivocality of language creates the condition for ongoing conflict over meanings of the words.

Although the dominant class tries to limit what can be said and how the said can be understood and draws the critical boundaries in the way subordinates see their place in a system of power and act within it, the dialogic nature of language bares the potential for subversion. Through appropriating the key components of the language of the dominant group, the subordinates impose on the words opposite meanings, and attempt to subvert the legitimacy of the dominant group's meanings. Indeed through appropriating the "other half of the word," the subordinates impose their notions, meanings and interpretations on the words and construct a moral foundation for a collective resistance.<sup>79</sup>

Steinberg's conceptual framework provides us some conceptual opportunities to evaluate the battle going on within the language of the early Republican ruling elite, between the ruling elite and large segments of the society. Particularly petitions submitted by the working people to the official channels, or the Republican People's Party's (RPP) local and central bodies may exemplify working people's use and the appropriation of the state's language. There is no doubt that the main components of the ruling elite's language in the single-party era, such as the populism and republicanism principles of the RPP and the paternalist and constitutionalist vision of the new regime, would provide the various subordinated groups proper grounds for imposing their requests, demands and expectations

---

<sup>78</sup> Marc W. Steinberg. " 'A Way of Struggle': Reformations and Affirmations of E.P. Thompson's Class Analysis in the Light of Postmodern Theories of Language," *The British Journal of Sociology*, 48, no. 3 (Sep., 1997).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp.479-481.



on the ruling elite. The Zonguldak mine workers were no exception. Throughout the study their struggle with the language of the ruling elite and their skillful use of the instruments of the ruling elite in their favors will be seen.

In a broader context, the dissertation adopts a critical stance against the state-centrist understanding of the early Republican society. Indeed, the state-centrist understanding of the society is corollary of defining the state as the center of society. The state-centered perspective reconfigures different sections of society in a hierarchical order, in reference to their proximity to this center.<sup>80</sup> The history of society then becomes a narrative of the power contest between different sections of the political elite, or between the ruling classes in an historical context. As long as the upper classes are assumed to be the driving forces of change, history of the ruling elite and the upper classes are devoted much attention than that of the peasants, working peoples, city dwellers and other segments of society whose historical role is considered to be subjected to the dynamics led by the upper classes. From this standpoint, the history of the early Republican period has tended to be evaluated from within the modernization projects of the ruling elite. Such a perspective over-emphasizes the role of the state and ruling elite and erases the history of the masses from historical memory. Peasants and workers have received little attention from historians unless within the context of the projects of the ruling elite. Detaching the history of the masses from the memory serves to reproduce the state's self-portrait. Although the authoritarianism of the single-party era is the target of criticism in the literature, the early Republican state continues to be perceived as if it was a coherent, integrated, and goal-oriented body. In a sense, this study seeks to de-center the state, through provincializing its appearances in a particular region and within a particular social, economic and historical context.

---

<sup>80</sup> Inspiring Shils's notion of center, Joel S. Migdal analyses actual states as shaped by two elements, image and practice. In his state in society model, state appears to be image of a dominant and single centre of society. Joel S. Migdal, *State in Society Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.16.

The Zonguldak mine workers were first and foremost mine workers who resembled mine workers everywhere in the world in the pre-mechanized era of coal mining. The mining in the basin was run on principles similar to elsewhere in the world. Chapter One provides a comparative perspective to compare and contrast the development of the coal mining industry and traditional mining communities in the leading industrial countries and Turkey. The rise of coal mining as one of the leading sectors in the nineteenth century and the fall of the sector in the inter-war years will be analyzed in reference to the capital and market aspects of the coal mining. In the following sections, the organization of the labor process, work relations, the recruitment and supervision processes, and the characteristics of the labor market will be evaluated. Last, the rise of the mining communities in the coal fields and the social and demographic characteristics will be underlined in the context of the source of solidarity and militancy in the traditional mining communities.

Chapter Two and Chapter Three are devoted largely to state and capital relations and the development of coal mining in the basin from the late nineteenth century to 1940. The late Ottoman history of the basin will be summarized in reference to the legacy of the state intervention in the basin and the entry of the Ereğli Company and the formation of the mining community in the basin. The state's forms of intervention in the capital composition to the basin in the late 1920s, and the reorganization of the production, marketing and capital composition of the coal mining in 1930s in parallel to the state's industrialization policies will be elaborated in detail in the chapter.

The Chapter Four is devoted to the organization of the labor process and work relations in the mines, the social composition of the mining community, characteristics of the labor market and the means of labor control in the basin. Chapter Five elaborates the state's changing perception of the living and working conditions of the workers in the basin and its search for a new labor policy towards the mine workers in the context of the labor productivity

and the containment of the workers. Chapter Six focuses on the living and working experiences of the mine workers, their forms of solidarity and modes of struggle against the mining companies. Throughout these chapters the experiences of the mine workers at the work site and in the villages, their source of solidarity among themselves, their ways of struggle, their reactions to the living and working conditions and their forms of collective and individual actions will be discussed in relation to the labor policies of the state and of the coal mining companies.

The last four chapters focus on the Second World War period. Chapter Seven elaborates the impact of the National Emergency Law, the establishment of the forced labor regime in the basin, EKI's labor policies during the period of the forced labor regime and its search for a new labor policy for the labor question of the post-war period. In Chapter Eight the living and working conditions of the obliged workers in the mine districts and at their villages are portrayed. Their attempts to improve their conditions are the other theme of this chapter.

Chapter Nine is devoted to the resistance of the workers against the forced labor regime. The patterns of resistance they developed during the period of the forced labor regime and the outcomes of their resistance will be discussed in this chapter. Chapter Ten reveals the tension between the villagers of the basin, who at the same time worked as obliged laborers in the mines, and the local bureaucracy and the complex relations between the inhabitants of the basin and the Republican People's Party during the war years.

In general, archival materials remain inadequate where the workers themselves are concerned. The available archival sources are for the most part limited to those areas that were of concern to the state. Such documents enable historians to portray the state's vision on labor. On the other hand, because the workers themselves usually came into the picture when they made trouble, the everyday circumstances of their daily life are scarcely reflected in the documents. Fortunately, the Prime Ministry State Archives provide rich documents on the

early Republican history of the basin. Particularly in the second part of the 1930s, the state's new economic objectives increased the state's interest in the coal basin. Therefore, the production conditions of coal and the living and working conditions of the mine workers became the subjects of special interest. The compulsory labor regime and the nationalization of the basin under full state ownership provided proper grounds for documenting the conditions of the war years in the basin. Most of the materials in this study are from the Republican Archives of the Prime Ministry State Archives Office. The RPP's Catalogue is of special importance. The booklets of the RPP's provincial congresses, the reports of the RPP party inspectors and of the Zonguldak deputies, petitions sent by the basin's people to the party General Secretariat provide plenty of details on the basin. Along with the RPP's catalog, various catalogs in the Republican Archives provide another set of documents on the social history of the basin.

Alongside the state documents, the archives of the two state establishments, the *Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü* (Mine Investigation and Exploration Institute) and the TTK (Turkey Anthracite Organization), contain rich documents on the early Republican period of the basin. In addition, the archives at Zonguldak Karaelmas University contain the records of the correspondences circulated between EKI and the related offices in the late 1930s and the 1940s. Although the summary of the correspondences in the *Evrak İrsalat Defterleri*, and the *Gelen Evrak Defteri* give some clues on what kind of subjects the EKI and related offices corresponded, the entire texts are not available. Some of the valuable details in the dissertation originated from the private archives formed by persons living in Zonguldak.

The annual reports of the prime ministry inspection committee and EKI's reports are used in the dissertation to a great extent. Although the reports mainly concentrate on the technical, financial and managerial aspects of the coal mining in the basin, they inform us about the living and the working conditions of the mine workers to a certain extent. These

reports reveal both the official outlook on the labor issues and some statistical data on the workers as well. The local newspapers *Zonguldak* and *Ocak*, some periodicals of the time and Grand National Assembly minutes registers, official statistics and yearbooks constitute other sets of published sources accessed for this dissertation.

There is no doubt that writing a dissertation on the social history of the basin resembles working in the pit alone. Like a hewer who digs, blasts, fortifies, loads in his respective room, the author of this study digs and blasts a small piece of the face and loads and carries out a small part of the memory belonging the real people, living, talking, smiling, retreating, reconciling, organizing, struggling and submitting in their own terms. To reveal their experiences and to situate them as the actors of their lives, it is necessary to advance through the seam.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Industrial Revolution and the Rise and Fall of the Coal Mining Industry

Coal constituted one of the bases of the industrial revolution throughout Europe.<sup>81</sup> The revolution made various industrial branches consumers of coal, both as fuel and raw material in the manufacture of industrial equipment, materials, end products, and in their transportation.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, the monopoly of coal was gradually replaced by new sources of energy towards the middle of the twentieth century. In the mid-twentieth century although the absolute world production of coal continued to increase, the percentage of energy derived from coal continually decreased in comparison with the total energy produced from various inanimate sources.<sup>83</sup> In the new age, beginning after the Second World War, industry and even agriculture for the first time moved decisively beyond the technology of the nineteenth century.<sup>84</sup> The rise of electricity, oil and later atomic energy signaled not only the end of the coal age, but also of the industrial basis of the nineteenth century.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> Donald Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville: A Genealogy of Deindustrialization* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 2.

<sup>82</sup> E.A., Wrigley *Industrial Growth and Population Change a Regional Study of the Coal Field Areas of North West Europe in the Later Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> Carlo M. Cipolla, *The Fontana Economic History of Europe, the Industrial Revolution* (Great Britain: Collins, 1978), p. 11.

<sup>84</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994), p. 265.

<sup>85</sup> For the decline of the coal sector and its impact on coal production and employment opportunities in 1950s and 1960s in Britain , see E.J., Hobsbawm, *Sanayi ve İmparatorluk*, translated by Abdullah Ersoy (Ankara, Dost Kitabevi, 2003), pp. 231-233.

As electricity, oil and atomic energy did in the second part of the twentieth century, coal with new technological innovations gradually brought an end to dominance of "wood age" in the nineteenth century. Two important technological inventions of the late eighteenth century, the steam engine and the coke-fired blast furnace started the coal age. Towards the end of the century, Watt's steam engine made possible the transformation of the chemical energy of coal into mechanical energy. After 1820, when the steam engine was used for rail transportation, the use of coal began on a large scale in widely varied processes of production.<sup>86</sup> Another innovation made coal a crucial material for the rest of the century; with the introduction of coke firing into blast furnaces, for the first time, the cheap production of iron on a very large scale became possible. The use of the steam engine and coke fired blast furnace brought the unprecedented expansion of industrial production in the second half of the nineteenth century. Following these developments, the last quarter of the century witnessed the rise of the steel industry. The steam engine, iron and steel industry together with coal formed the basis of the nineteenth century modern industry. They liberated industrial production from the bounds set by the techniques of the past and raised it into a new realm of high production.<sup>87</sup>

Although the use of coal brought great opportunities for large scale industrial production, difficulties in its transportation partly due to the lack of an available overland transportation web and partly the weightiness and grossness of the coal made use of it expensive. The development of railways in the first half of the nineteenth century facilitated the overland circulation of coal towards the points of consumption and ports. The last quarter of the century

---

<sup>86</sup> Cippola, *The Industrial Revolution*, p.11.

<sup>87</sup> E.A Wrigley, *Industrial Growth and Population Change a Regional Study of the Coal Field Areas of North West Europe in the Later Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 3-5. The use of coal for heating, salt pans firing and iron ore smelting in England went back to the sixteenth century. However, only progress in the techniques of its use in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries gave it predominance over the use of timber as source of fuel. The Newcomen steam engine, Darb's experiments in smelting iron, Watt's conversion of vertical motion into rotary motion and Stephenson's application of steam to transport were all milestones in the use of coal as prime source of energy. For the early use of coal in manufacture and technical innovations which facilitated its widespread use as prime fuel in the different branches of industries, see E.A. Wrigley, "The Supply of Raw Materials in the Industrial Revolution," *The Economic History Review*, 15, no. 1 (1962).

witnessed rise of steamships in long distance sailing in parallel with the increase in volume of the international trade.<sup>88</sup> Railways and steamships, which were also consumers of coal, brought large quantities of coal overland and between the continents.

By the end of the nineteenth century coal had already become a strategic element in the emergence and diffusion of modern industry. The tremendous increase in the total coal production in the world in a century is striking. Around 1800, while the world production of coal amounted to only about fifteen million tons per annum, by 1860s it reached about 132 million tons, and by 1900, about 701 million tons.<sup>89</sup> In 1913 the production reached approximately 1,200 million tons. Three countries appeared to have been the chief producers of coal: the United States, Britain and Germany produced over eighty percent of total coal production in the world and over forty percent in the United States alone.<sup>90</sup> Britain followed the United States, producing nearly one-half of the European output in 1913<sup>91</sup> and exporting surplus coal to Mediterranean and South American markets. With the coal extracted in Belgium, northern France, Bohemia and the Austrian and Polish margins of the Silesian area, ninety percent of the world's coal was produced in the United States, Britain, Central and Western Europe.<sup>92</sup>

The two continents were also the chief homes of world industry. As energy sources had a considerable effect on the location of industry, the fixity of the mines determined locations of the coal consumer industries as well. The high cost of coal transportation encouraged coal-consuming industries, particularly iron and steel complexes to base themselves near the coal fields.<sup>93</sup> The eastern fields of the United States, stretching in a long

---

<sup>88</sup> For the development of railway transport and long distance steamship sailing, see Cipolla, *The Industrial Revolution*, pp. 210-211.

<sup>89</sup> Carlo M. Cipolla, *The Economic History of World Population* (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 52.

<sup>90</sup> A.J. Sargent, *Coal In International Trade* (London: P.S. King and Son Ltd., 1922), p. 9.

<sup>91</sup> W.H.B.Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry between the Wars," *The Economic History Review*, 15, no. 1/2 (1945), p. 3

<sup>92</sup> For geographic dispersion of coal reserves by the 1910s, see Sargent, p. 9. Although China appeared to be one of the countries possessing rich coal deposits and attracted some degree of foreign and native capital, it remained to be marginal in the world trade in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chinese coal industry mainly served demand of domestic markets and of Japan. For the China's coal trade, see T. Wright, "Growth of the Modern Chinese Coal Industry: An Analysis of Supply and Demand 1896-1936," *Modern China*, 7, no.3 (Jul., 1981), pp. 332-343.

<sup>93</sup> Dependence of iron and steel industry on coal brought about tendency to integration of two industries geographically. As a general tendency in the late nineteenth century heavy industries, the iron and steel companies owned one or more mines for their own needs to



belt through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Western Virginia, eastern Kentucky and Tennessee to Alabama became the main basis of American industry.<sup>94</sup> A similar pattern came on the scene in Britain and continental Europe. As the case for British coal fields, the Austrasian coal field belt between Belgium, Germany and France became the heartland of heavy industry.<sup>95</sup>

In the initial decade of the twentieth century the three chief producing countries, the United States, Britain and Germany, provided the greater part of the surplus coal for export.<sup>96</sup> In Europe, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Holland, Baltic Russia and the Scandinavian and Iberian Peninsula constituted deficit countries. Of the two surplus regions, Germany dominated the land trade of Central Europe, and Britain monopolized the Mediterranean markets. For the deficit countries on the western margin of the Continent there was competition, of varying degrees, between Britain and Germany. On the other side of the Atlantic, the surplus from the United States found its chief outlet in eastern Canada. The only other deficit region of much importance was to be found in Brazil and the River Plate countries, which were supplied mainly from Britain.<sup>97</sup>

In parallel with the expansion in world trade, the coal industry showed intense growth and prosperity in between the late nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth centuries. The coal fields began to attract capital of various sorts. The introduction of large scale undertakings aside with the small businessmen brought about an over-expansion and surplus capacity in the sector. Aside with the capital flow, the coal fields began to absorb workers in huge numbers, owing to the labor-intensive nature of coal production. Both the capital and labor

---

lessened the cost of production. For the examples of such vertical integration in Ruhr and South Wales before First World War, see S.F. Hickey, *Workers in Imperial Germany, The Miners of the Ruhr* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p. 17, and Chris Williams, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict The South Wales Coal field, 1898-1947* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), p. 34. For a general evaluation of factors determining location of the industries, see also R. Knowles and J. Waering, *Economic and Social Geography* (n.p.: Madesimplebooks, 1985), pp. 185-197.

<sup>94</sup> Sargent, p. 14.

<sup>95</sup> The Austrasian coal field belt became industrial centers of the northwest Europe in the late nineteenth century. See Wrigley, *Industrial Growth*, pp.38-55.

<sup>96</sup> Sargent, p. 18.

<sup>97</sup> The international route of coal trade before First World War was concentrated in and between North America, Britain and European continent, comprising Atlantic and Mediterranean sea routes and intercontinental ways. For the routes of international coal trade, see *ibid.*, p. 10-11.

movements called for a different sort of state intervention as well. The governments in their respective countries, became one of the important actors in the coal fields, through legal arrangements which determined the conditions of ownership or concession rights and the technical and safety aspects of the mine operations. Labor concentration in the coal fields also attracted the close interest of governments. Organized labor movements, labor disputes and the welfare issues of the mining communities called for the mediation of the government either in oppressive or supportive forms. In short, the rapid development of the coal industry, the extraordinary success and high profits of the time and labor movements set what Court writes were the "standards of what was normal and natural in the minds of many colliery owners, management and royalty owners, played important role among the mineworkers...The same period saw a swift-growth of trade unionism and political consciousness and a market radicalizing of social philosophy of most of their leaders."<sup>98</sup>

While the standards of the actors in coal mining were compatible with an economic environment of industrial growth, they failed in the period of sectoral depression and crisis. The nineteenth century heyday of the coal industry was interrupted in the 1920s. After a short period of revival after the First World War, it fell into a deep crisis in the 1920s and the 1930s. Both the productive and marketing aspects of the industry were subjected to widespread changes.<sup>99</sup> On the demand side, as a worldwide trend, the rate of increase in the demand for coal was dying down. Before 1914, the growth rate of coal consumption in the world market reached about four percent annually. However, its annual growth rate declined 0.7 percent in 1913-1929 and 0.3 percent in 1913-1937.<sup>100</sup>

Various new developments limited the demand for coal in world trade. Three of them were of special importance. In the inter-war years the rate of worldwide economic expansion,

---

<sup>98</sup> W.H.B. Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry between the Wars," *The Economic History Review*, 15, no. 1/2 (1945), p.3

<sup>99</sup> Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry," p.11

<sup>100</sup> Barry Supple, "The Political Economy of Demoralization: The State and the Coalmining Industry in America and Britain between the Wars", *Economic History Review*, New Series, 41 (November, 1988), p. 567.

particularly of heavy industries and transport, was slowing down.<sup>101</sup> This development lessened the demand for coal consuming sectors. The 1929 crisis deepened the adverse conditions. Moreover, the structural changes in the fuel economy led the coal industry to lose its ground. Growing effectiveness in the use of coal enabled coal consumer industries to produce large amount of goods and services with the same or a less consumption of coal.<sup>102</sup> Lastly, rapid growth in the use of substitute fuels such as petroleum, hydro-electricity and fuels began to undermine the predominance of coal in the short run.<sup>103</sup>

From the early 1920s on, depression in the coal industry hit particularly two leading countries, the United States and Britain. In both countries the coal industry underwent great depression and dislocation. Shrinking domestic and export markets for coal brought detrimental outcomes. In Britain the industry, which had employed over one million men and had exported one-third of its output in 1913, faced stagnant demand at home in the inter-war years.<sup>104</sup> In the same years, the American coal industry underwent similar experience. Between 1923 and 1932, the number of mines, employment and hourly wages all declined by roughly forty percent.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, the worldwide slump in coal trade accelerated competition between the coal fields in the United States and between Britain, Germany and Poland in Europe.<sup>106</sup>

During the slump period, the coal industry became the first of the modern "sick industries."<sup>107</sup> Some structural features of the coal industry deepened the sectoral crisis. The chronic tendency of coal mining to produce in surplus capacity hampered the readjustment of

---

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> For instance in the United States the average fuel efficiency of industries and railways, was increased between 1909 and 1929 by approximately 33 percent. Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry" p.11. The same trend appeared in British electricity and gas undertakings, blast furnaces, railways and the industries of Japan as well. In Britain, The Admiralty switched completely to oil after the First World War and oil replaced coal in fuelling new ships. Greater efficiency in the use of coal in electricity generation, in gas and in the iron and steel industries all combined to reduce demand in Britain. For changing fuel economy in Britain, see Williams, p. 29.

<sup>103</sup> Supple, pp. 567-568.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry between the Wars," p.12.

the supply to in elastic demand. This was due to the fact the aggregate demand for coal was relatively inelastic in the short and medium run; however, its supply was flexible.<sup>108</sup> The consumers did not demand more coal than they needed even if they did have the chance to buy coal cheaper than previously. Many coal companies in the crisis period continued their operations in spite of the falling price and profits. The inability of the coal operators to adjust supply in accordance with the falling prices was partly due to the prospect of the recovery and profits. On the other hand, the fragmented nature of the enterprises made their organization on the basis of shared interests difficult.

Although mechanization, reorganization and technical improvements would diminish production costs, they became effective in the long run with further costs. Due to the labor intensive nature of coal mining, wages constituted the majority of the production costs. Hence, the coal operators put the burden of their disadvantage upon the mine workers in the form of wage reduction, lengthening working hours and underemployment. However, where the wage reduction reached its limit, the coal operators were obliged to resort to marketing and cooperation possibilities to increase prices.<sup>109</sup>

The government intervention in industry as a response to sectoral depression was not delayed. The huge numbers of the workers in the mining sector, persistent unemployment, labor dispute on wages and working hours, and the militant response of organized labor called for the mediation of the governments in conflict resolution both in the United States and Britain. In addition, to control competition and price fall the governments attempted to set effective systems of collective control.<sup>110</sup> Although improvements in the 1930s slowed the sectoral depression down to a certain extent, the junction of structural changes in the fuel

---

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Supple, p. 568.

<sup>109</sup> In Britain, wages were reduced in 1921 and 1926-7 and following the 1926 work stoppage, the hours in the working day were lengthened from seven to eight. Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry", p.10. For the wage cuts, deterioration of work relations and the search for market readjustment in the United States, see Supple, pp. 570-573.

economy with the production and marketing mechanisms endemic to the coal mining sector put an end to the industry's nineteenth century golden years. After the Second World War, the fuel and energy economy of the world entered a new era. The coal sector was compelled to share its place with alternative source energy with varying degree in accordance to the energy policies of the countries.

### Some Structural Features of Coal Mining in the Period of Industrial Growth

Coal mining operated under similar industrial principles everywhere in its pre-mechanized era. Fragmented capital structure, over-expansion and surplus-capacity production were characteristics of the industry since the late nineteenth century. In the period between 1880 and 1913, the coal industry saw intense growth and industrial prosperity.<sup>111</sup> In the time of expansion coal production became a profitable business, attracting many businessmen of various capital strength, who sought profits. The industrial growth both accelerated the flow of large scale capital and of small businessman side by side. The juxtaposition of undertakings with different capital strength created a fragmented capital structure in the industry. Aside with larger undertakings, the small ones were able to survive, either by integrating into the subcontracting system or specializing in certain services.

The expanded market of the prewar years and increasing capital expenditure for deep mining fed the tendency of the concentration of production and of capital in the hands of larger undertakings. There appeared a movement of amalgamation of the pits under large undertakings and of vertical integration between the colliery undertakings and coal consuming

---

<sup>110</sup> For the forms of government intervention and their consequences in Britain and the United States, see Supple, pp. 572-586; and Court, *ibid.*, pp. 7-10 and 13-119.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

industries.<sup>112</sup> Albeit the tendency of capital concentration, undertakings remained numerous, dispersed and the average output per mine remained small. The situation did not change in the inter-war years despite the deep sectoral crisis.<sup>113</sup>

The existence of so many mines and firms created intense competition, problems of over-expansion and excessive capacity in the industry. The industry performed at over-capacity as early as 1900 in the United States and early in the twenties in Britain. The situation did not change in the period of deep industrial depression between 1929-1932.<sup>114</sup> Both the marketing and productive nature of the industry brought about fragmentation and over-capacity.

The cyclical nature of the demand in the coal market was one of the feature of the of the industry, since coal storage brought an expense and long storage deteriorated the quality of the coal, the coal consuming industries preferred to purchase it, when necessary. Hence, to secure an adequate supply of coal during the periods of peak demand, the coal undertakings tended to produce excess coal. This created a reciprocal relation between excess capacity and seasonal purchase and peak and dull seasons in coal demand.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, the temporary periods of peak demand encouraged the entry of new businessmen in coal production, in a large numbers, with the prospect of high profits, which led to further expansion and excess production.<sup>116</sup> Due to the cyclical nature of the demand, neither bankruptcy nor

---

<sup>112</sup> For instance, in South Wales, before First World War, there appeared concerns about the concentration whereby a smaller number of companies owned half a dozen or more pits. There was a tendency away from fragmented ownership, with a high number of individual companies owning only one or two pits as well. A similar tendency was noticed in Ruhr as well. In Ruhr in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century the coal production was concentrated in fewer hands. A parallel process of cartelization accompanied concentration. For South Wales, see Williams, pp. 32-34. For the Ruhr area, see Hickey, pp. 15-16.

<sup>113</sup> The situation was obvious in two producer countries. In Britain by 1924 there were 2,481 mines, producing coal as a principal product, belonged to about 1,400 colliery undertakings. Of these, 323 undertakings produced in the year 1923 over 84 percent of the output; however, many of the small undertakings were able to survive. Court, p. 5. In the United States there existed a similar pattern. By 1923 in bituminous coal fields there were about 9,331 mines in production. In 1929, the 17 largest corporations and next 70 biggest firms controlled only about fifty percent of the total production. Supple, pp. 569-570.

<sup>114</sup> Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry," p. 12.

<sup>115</sup> For the reciprocal relations between the over-expansion, excess capacity and seasonal purchase, see George Ward Stocking, "Labor Problems in the American Bituminous Coal Industry," *The Economic Journal*, 37, no. 146 (June, 1927), p. 219.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. p. 216

stagnation ceased the hope of earnings. Coal operators continued their production with the expectation of peak demand and of recovery.

Another feature of the industry was the necessity to keep the mines under operation even in times of crisis or seasonal stagnation. Regardless of their size, colliery operators had to continue production just because abandonment of a pit, even for a while or until the market conditions improved, was a risky option. To reopen an abandoned mine was costly, as underground conditions could deteriorate with water damage, cave-ins or ruined roadways.<sup>117</sup> In the case of a close-down, neither the colliery as the place of production, nor the highly specialized sort of permanent capital investment, such as the colliery shaft, the hoisting machinery, the ventilating, water pumping and haulage machinery, could be transferred for any other industrial use.<sup>118</sup> In particular, expensive apparatuses of modern deep mining entailed continuing production insofar as the profits covered overhead.<sup>119</sup> As the capital was often written down, and physical assets could not be converted to another field of production, the colliery operator remained in production.

The coal operator, who had the chance to approach coal seams with little capital investment as far as the geological conditions permitted, did not prefer to close down the colliery as well. In particular, if the coal reserves lay beneath the surface but not at great depth, the colliery operator entered the seams by means of drift mining. In this case access to the seam by sloping entry or a direct approach to a seam of coal exposed on the side of a hill was possible with low capital investment. Contrary to deep mining, drift mining provided small capital and easy entry in coal mines geologically and in coal enterprise economically.<sup>120</sup> The possibility of high profits, easy access to coal veins with little capital assets facilitated over-

---

<sup>117</sup> M.W.Kirby, *The British Coalmining Industry 1870-1946 A Political and Economic History* (The United States of America: Archon Book, 1977), p.12.

<sup>118</sup> Stocking, p. 221

<sup>119</sup> Kirby, p.12.

<sup>120</sup> Keith Dix, " Work Relations in the Coal Industry: The Handloading Era, 1880-1930, in Andrew Zimbalist ed., *Case Studies on the Labor Process* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979), pp.156-157.

expansion, excess capacity and continual in-flow of the businessmen in the industry. The labor-intensive nature of coal extraction also facilitated the entrance of small businessmen into coal production. Hence the appearance of many coal mines of different sizes and capacities all over the place made the industry over-expanded and a highly competitive one.<sup>121</sup>

The high labor-low machine mix of the production was another feature of the industry, particularly before the 1930s when intense mechanization came. Coal became commercially effective mainly through labor. The coal cutting process and auxiliary underground jobs required numbers of unskilled workers. The labor intensity of the industry brought huge numbers of workers in the production process. Before the First World War in Britain over a million people were employed in and about the mines, and in the United States, about three quarters of a million and in Germany, less than seven hundred thousand.<sup>122</sup> Due to the labor intensity of the industry, labor costs comprise more than half of the total costs.<sup>123</sup> As a contemporary said, "When you sell coal"... "You sell labor."<sup>124</sup> As far as the coal operators could access labor reserves and establish their control over it, they could adjust the number of workers and the amount of production with respect to seasonal fluctuation in demand.<sup>125</sup> As the labor cost was the largest factor in the market price, in the time of crisis, hence, wage cuts and lengthening working hours appeared to be viable solutions for cost reduction and drops in prices.

Although the mechanization of coal extraction would have been another way of cost reduction, the coal operators did not take to mechanization to a great extent until the inter-war years. The geological conditions which determined the extent of mechanization was one

---

<sup>121</sup> Stocking, p. 217

<sup>122</sup> Sargent, p. 19.

<sup>123</sup> In the early 1920s, wages constituted 75 percent of total costs in Britain. Similarly the average was about 60-65 percent in the United States. Supple, p.270.

<sup>124</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 570.

<sup>125</sup> In 1920s, surplus labor in the industry became the normal situation. "The existence of more mines in the industry than have been necessary to meet the consumption requirements for coal has tended to keep in the industry a large number of mines working on a part time basis. More men must be retained in the industry than are necessary to mine the total coal produced." *Ibid.*, p. 222



reason for this. The depth and thickness of the coal seams, the continuity and interruption of layers, the structure and stability of the underground conditions were some geological constraints over mechanization.<sup>126</sup> On the other hand the choice of labor intensive production brought about more opportunities to the coal operators than the mechanized production. The low wage economy of the industry accompanied with the unpredictable market conditions and the fear of being closed down lessened the relative cost advantages of mechanization. Hence, up to the inter-war years, the coal extraction process retained its pick and shovel characteristics.<sup>127</sup>

In the inter-war years both the coal cutting and hauling processes began to be mechanized to a certain extent. Before the First World War mechanical coal cutters, pneumatic picks and mechanical conveyors had been already known and had been introduced in the pits. Their use was extended in the inter-war years. However, the complete mechanization of the coal winning process could become possible only with the spatial concentration of production, which required the integration of cutting, loading and winding into an efficient overall system.<sup>128</sup> The introduction of power loaders which, both cut and loaded played a crucial role in complete mechanization. However, in all countries, power loaders came late, due to the technical difficulties and underground constraints.<sup>129</sup> Practical difficulties in the use of mechanical devices in the production and loading process of coal made the industry dependent on the manual efforts of the worker. Both, conversion from pick mining to

---

<sup>126</sup> For instance, the Kent coal field in Britain did not have the appropriate geological conditions for mechanization. Coal could easily cut by hand or by pneumatic pick, while the unpredictable gradient of the seams and their rapid variation in section made mechanization extremely difficult. See W. Johnson, "Entrepreneurial Efficiency in the British Coal Industry between the Wars: A Second Comment", *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 25, no. 4 (Nov., 1972), p. 667. For the geological constraints over mechanization, also see Stocking, p. 216

<sup>127</sup> For instance, in Britain while machine mining was introduced before 1914, percentage of mechanically cutting coal was only 8% of the whole in 1913. Machinery and power had been used in shafts to take down and bring up workers, to carry coal to the surface, and for ventilation, illumination and such purposes. However, hewing coal on the face, loading it into the tubs and moving coal from the face to the main galleries remained manual which retained the physical effort of worker. Except for fewer numbers of mechanical conveyors, underground transport largely relied on hand-tramming and pony putting. Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry," p. 5. A similar trend was obvious in the United States as well. For the mechanization level of coal mining in the United States, see Stocking, pp. 216-219 and Dix, p.156.

<sup>128</sup> David Greasley, "Economies of Scale in British Coalmining between the Wars," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 46, no. 1 (Feb., 1993), pp. 158-159

<sup>129</sup> Court, *ibid.*, p.20.

mechanical undercutting and from hand loading to power loading was not as rapid as was expected.<sup>130</sup> In the pits where mechanization was introduced, it did not always bring about a positive impact on production efficiency. Geological conditions, the size of the mines, attitudes of workers to machines all determined the rise and fall of efficiency.<sup>131</sup>

The special circumstances of coal mining determined the use of labor in relation to machinery. Along with the increasing ratio of capital invested in coal cutting processes towards the 1930s, the industry kept its high labor-low machine mix. Hence until intense mechanization came, the labor intensive nature of the industry continued to determine the organization of labor process and work relations. The coal mining kept its simple handicraft characteristics until the end of the inter-war decades. However, in parallel with the changes in the productive, technological and marketing aspects of the industry in the inter-war years, there appeared a tendency of a departure from many practices and previous preoccupations on the part of both of the workers and the management.<sup>132</sup>

## Organization of the Labor Process and Work Relations in Coal Mining:

### The Hand Loading Era

The labor intensive nature of the coal mining industry shaped to a great extent the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the labor process. Quantitatively, the heavy reliance on

---

<sup>130</sup> In spite of the technical improvements, all bituminous coal was loaded with shovels by hand in the United States before the 1930s. Concerning total national production of coal, by the 1930s mechanical coal loaders accounted for only ten percent. Similarly, the undercutting operation was not fully mechanized until the 1930s. Degree of mechanization varied from one coal field to another, in accordance to the geological conditions and degree of capital concentration. For the process of mechanization in the United States, see Dix, p.164; and Michael Yarrow, "The Labor process in Coal Mining: Struggle for Control", in Andrew Zimbalist ed., *Case Studies on the Labor Process* (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979), p. 1714. The situation was not different in Britain. Only 26 percent of the coal in the South Wales and 59 percent in total national output were cut mechanically by 1938. See Williams, pp. 34-35.

<sup>131</sup> For instance, the cutting machines were noisy and created hazards. Hearing disabilities for machine runners and their helpers blocked live-saving signals from roof and increased risk of cave-ins. Furthermore cutting machines produced greater quantities of gas and dust which reduced visibility and increased risk of explosion. Furthermore, cutting machines were inappropriate in many seams of where coal strata had a highly faulted geological nature. Worker's fear of losing their jobs lessened their willingness to use of new mechanical devices as well. For different factors effecting relation between efficiency and mechanization in coal mining, see Dix, p.166-167, Williams, p.25 and Johnson, pp. 165-168.

<sup>132</sup> Court, "Problems of the British Coal Industry," p.22.

manual labor entailed the employment of unskilled workers in huge numbers. Although coal freed the production process of many industries from man power, the coal mining industry continued to use man power as its main source of energy in its production process. Qualitatively, the simple handicraft characteristic of the production process called for a large number of unskilled workers, who acquired craft knowledge and skill throughout the work process.

Before the widespread introduction of cutting machines, mechanical loading and haulage systems, the underground labor process operated under similar constraints. The coal extraction process comprised mainly the cutting of coal from the coal face, the loading of the extracted coal to trucks by hand, the hauling of coal from the workplace to the pit mouth, the boring of the tunnels and main galleries and the fortifying of the roof by timbers. Many of the occupational categories required team work. The dangerous and arduous nature of the work, the high-risk working environment required the close cooperation of work-mates. The underground labor process set numbers of small work teams into continuous motion of a cooperative nature. The shared working conditions and team work created strong solidarity and cohesiveness within the underground occupational groups.

Among the work categories, the actual mining activity was of special importance. The coal extraction process was undertaken by the mining crew, composed of a hewer and his helper. The mule drivers, truck carriers and their helpers constituted a second occupational category. They hauled the loaded coal to the pit mouths and brought in supplies to the work sites. The timberman and his helper constituted another work category. They were specialized workers, putting up timbers in the large tunnels and were paid about as well as hewers. The quarry workers who bored the tunnels and main galleries constituted another occupational group with a high degree of specialization. There were also a small number of track layers, carpenters and others. Owing to the lack of mechanization, the dispersed working galleries

and the piece work wage system, there were few foremen. Mostly the master miner of each work category maintained supervision of their teams.<sup>133</sup> Besides, the surface works were maintained mostly by the skilled and semi-skilled artisans who were employed in the workshop of different sort. The blacksmiths, carpenters, repairmen, locomotive drivers, railway track maintenance men were some of the surface workers.<sup>134</sup> Since the need for white-collar skills was limited, there was little middle class employment.<sup>135</sup>

Until the inter-war years the occupational categories, organization of the labor process, and work relations in coal mining maintained their nineteenth century traditional structures with some modification. In a typical mining setting, the actual production process began with the extraction of the coal from the coal face. Coal winning was undertaken by a simple mining crew, composed of a hewer and his helper. The hewer extracted coal by undercutting the coal face from the bottom of the coal seam, drilling holes for blast powder and blasting down a block of coal with explosives. Explosives and picks were the traditional tools of the hewer. Timbering the workplace for roof support, and track laying were auxiliary tasks belonging to the hewer as well. Alongside the hewer, his helper carried out his tools and ensured the supply of timber pit-prop, shoveled the extracted coal to cars and pushed the loaded car from the workplace <sup>136</sup>

In the underground labor process the mining crew constituted the basic unit of work organization. Mining activity was highly a craft occupation.<sup>137</sup> The hewer's job entailed a considerable degree of craft knowledge and experience. The safety of the crew and ability to

---

<sup>133</sup> The occupational categories were typical of the industry before the introduction of extensive mechanization and job fragmentation. For the occupational categories in a typical mine, see Dix, 163; Donald Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.28; Amarjit Kaur, "Hewers and Haulers: A History of Coal Miners and Coal Mining In Malaya," *Modern Asian Studies*, 24, no.1 (Fbr. 1990), pp. 89-90.

<sup>134</sup> In the absence of extensive mechanization the various occupational categories changed relatively little. For the underground and surface tasks, see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.28; Dix, p.163; Kaur, pp. 89-90.

<sup>135</sup> Hickey, p. 20.

<sup>136</sup> Dix portrays in detail the hewer's tasks in five categories which constituted mining cycle. Dix, pp. 160-163. For comparison, also see Hickey, p. 110-111; and Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 28.

<sup>137</sup> For Dix mining was craft occupation with counterparts in other industries of the nineteenth century such as iron molders, iron rollers, glass blowers. Dix, p. 163.

cut coal in a marketable size and quality depended on the hewer's skill. The hewer had to be aware of the changing conditions of the workplace, the unexpected motion behind the coal face and roof, and the features of the coal vein under his work. In an unpredictable condition, the dexterity of hewer both saved the crew's live and maintained the work.<sup>138</sup> The hewer acquired the details of his craft knowledge during an apprenticeship period. The knowledge of mining belonged to the body of the hewer at work in his respective room and he passed his skills and knowledge on to his helper, usually his son or a relative.<sup>139</sup>

The mining crew exercised a considerable degree of autonomy over the work process, in working hours and workplace. Because the crew was paid in accordance to coal per ton it produced, the piece rate system gave a considerable degree of control to the crew over their labor. Before the development of shaft mining which required a lifting system for the transportation of workers and supplies, the mine workers could enter the pit and move in it on foot. The easy entry and exit encouraged the crew members to set their own hours. In the early days of the industry the daily work of the crew had started at day break and had ended at night. As long as they filled enough amount of coal in the cars, they could terminate daily work whenever they wanted.<sup>140</sup> Even in the period when the daily shift system became customary, the mining crews did not easily gave up their control of work hours.<sup>141</sup>

The predominance of the room-and pillar mining system until the early twentieth century facilitated the crew's autonomy as well.<sup>142</sup> In the room-and-pillar mining coal panel

---

<sup>138</sup> Hickey, p. 111

<sup>139</sup> Mining was also an age specific work category. Before becoming hewer, the prospective miner worked in various sort of underground jobs from his early ages on. After a period of time he began to work first as helper then having acquired mining skills, he worked as hewer. For career path in mining in Ruhr coal field, see Hickey, pp. 109-110. By means of the apprenticeship system the hewer could control entry of new workers in the craft by restricting its spread as well. If composition of crew went under the control of management, hewer could resist training the helper whom he didn't choose. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 92. For transfer of mining skills and knowledge also see Dix, p.163

<sup>140</sup> For the single shift tradition and control of the crew on working hours see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 29; and in connection with the type of mine entry, see Dix, pp.156-157.

<sup>141</sup> For instance Reid points out the workers' grievance to the mining company, when a grill was put on the pit mouth to prevent free entry and exit to the mine. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 60.

<sup>142</sup> The depth, thickness and slope of coal seams, the endurance of roof to pressure were some physical factors determining use of this system. Different geological conditions accompanied with the capital strength determined at great extent choice of one or another mining system. In the United States, the geological conditions were suitable to maintain room-and- pillar system. However in the European coal

was divided into numerous rooms. The crews worked in small rooms isolated from each other by coal-pillars. When all the rooms were finished, the pillars were drawn properly and the same operation began in a new coal panel.<sup>143</sup> Through the work period, the hewer developed a proprietary relationship with his room.<sup>144</sup> The safety of room and the effective conduct of the work were the hewer's responsibility. The spatial organization of coal removal in this system required few foremen and freed the crew from constant supervision. The physical dispersion of numerous hewers in isolated rooms prevented the continual supervision of a foreman over work or minute by minute supervision as on a factory shop floor.<sup>145</sup> Unlike a factory worker who labored in a setting designed by his employer, the hewer worked in an environment created by himself. Hence, unlike the factory worker, the hewer became largely his own master.<sup>146</sup>

Until the development of mechanical loading and hauling systems the piece-rate wage system was predominant in the mining activity. In this system the mining crew was paid in accordance to the actual amount of coal which was measured with the number of trucks the crew loaded. Or in some circumstances the crew's performance was waged in accordance to per meter they advanced in the coal vein.<sup>147</sup> Workers of auxiliary jobs who were not involved directly in coal cutting were paid on a time basis. Payment per load system for mining activity was a natural outcome of the conditions where mechanization was limited, the supervision of scattered galleries was difficult and measuring the performance of the worker directly by the product of his labor was possible. Unlike the time basis payment system, within which workers

---

fields, the longwall mining system became predominant in the early twentieth century due to the adverse physical conditions. For the development of both mining systems in different coal fields, see Dix, pp. 158 and 159; Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. 29-30; Hickey, p.164.

<sup>143</sup> For technical aspects of room-and-pillar mining and physical conditions under which workers extracted coal, see Dix, pp. 158-159.

<sup>144</sup> Dix, p.163.

<sup>145</sup> Such autonomy from the supervision of a foreman was attractive for the workers where supervision incorporated in racial discrimination and subjugation. In Appalachian coal fields, for southern blacks coal mining was more attractive than factory work, because in the mines the little degree of white supervision enabled the black workers to escape some of the discrimination. Roland L. Lewis, "From Peasant to Proletarian: The Migration of Southern Blacks to the Central Appalachian Coal fields," *The Journal of Southern History*, 55, no. 1 (Feb., 1989), p.91.

<sup>146</sup> For the hewer's autonomy in comparison with factory worker, see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. 29 and Hickey, p. 117.

rented their capacity to work and came under strict supervision, in the piece-rate system the hewer sold the product of his labor which could be measured.<sup>148</sup> As the hewer earned as much as he cut, the system encouraged the hewer to extract more and more coal until he exhausted his daily energy.

The lack of supervision and autonomy of the crews did not create problems for the employers. The mine operator established his firm control over the labor, through the process of measurement of output in terms of its quality and quantity. As a general practice, the loaded trucks were counted and registered under the control of employer's officers and total wages were realized at the end of this calculation process. The process of measurement was open to manipulation and was a constant source of dispute among the officers and the workers. The officers' arbitrary measures, such as discounting trucks which contained rocks or were not full, created bitter resentment.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, the crew was not paid for the auxiliary tasks they performed in the work place. As a result, the paid per load system pushed the hewers to take risks or to neglect preventive measures such as the proper timbering of the roof. Hence, pressure to save time for coal winning led to fatal accidents.<sup>150</sup>

While the hewer was master of his work, the exchange value of his labor, that was of coal he cut, was subject to continual bargaining and was a matter of contention between him and his employer. Since the rate of payment per truck or ton was determined before or after the work in accordance to the price of coal in the market, payment rates were subject to change. The close relation between wages and selling prices made wages vulnerable to the

---

<sup>147</sup> Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 29

<sup>148</sup> Yarrow, p. 183.

<sup>149</sup> For the wage disputes and arbitrary power of officials over truck system see Hickey, 162. Engels described the truck system as a means of "plundering" of workers, and of oppression. The overseer had absolute power on wage system. When the tubs were not perfectly full, the workers received no wages. If tubs contained more than a specified quantity of dust owing to the nature of the seam under work the worker lost his whole wage and was fined besides. Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, edited with a foreword by Victor Kiernan. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England; New York, N.Y., USA: Penguin Books, 1987), pp.255-256.

<sup>150</sup> The fatality rate in the coal mining industry made it one of the most dangerous fields of work. Although the employers tended to see the carelessness of the mine workers as the main reason for the accidents, the wage system itself encouraged the workers to give secondary importance to safety issues. They even cut coal from the tangles of the coal-pillar and invited roof fall and cave in. For the reasons of accidents in coal mining, see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.55 Hickey, pp. 119-121.

changing market conditions. In the period of recession, the hewer had to accept what was offered. In the period of expansion he came under pressure to work overtime.<sup>151</sup> The very nature of pay bargaining system both led to constant negotiation and conflict and to mistrust towards the lower mine officers. Wage disputes were hence deep rooted and endemic in various coal fields.

The autonomous nature of the labor process, the spatial organization of mining activity and the piece work system provided mining undertakings to benefit various sort of means in solving the problem of labor management and the recruitment process at low costs. The heavy reliance of the industry on manual work force and its dependency on workers imported from various regions to the locality of coal reserves complicated the problem of labor recruitment. Dispatching labor agents to distant regions with offers of work at high wages was a practice to which the mining enterprises resorted commonly.<sup>152</sup> Beside labor agents, the mining enterprises charged their engineers, trustee workers and foremen with the supply of work force. Unemployed laborers also applied to the mining companies for jobs. Among them, the subcontracting system appeared to be the most effective system in solving both the problems of recruitment and the management aspects of labor simultaneously.

The same system provided mine operators the opportunity to the use of contract labor either under the control of internal contractors, such as headmen, or the gang bosses of the undertaking or under the control of an independent sub-contractor. The workers were responsible to their immediate employer, pledging to work for certain periods of time, varying between some weeks to some years, in return they obtained wages and some provisioning. The system of contract saved mining enterprises to a great extent from problems of recruitment and organization of the labor process. The mining enterprises paid contractors in

---

<sup>151</sup> For the vulnerability of the wages to the cyclical marketing conditions, see Hickey, p. 148.

<sup>152</sup> In Appalachian coal fields, during the First World War, the companies responded to the competition for labor by sending labor agents to the Southern States. The labor agents who received money per recruiters made arrangements with local jailers to empty the cells of those prisoners who agreed to work in the mines. Lewis, p. 83 For similar practice in Ruhr see, Hickey, p.25.



accordance to the amount of coal they extracted and the contractors in turn recruited, supervised and paid the crews.<sup>153</sup> As long as the employers obtained cheap coal with low production costs, they left problems of labor management to the mechanisms of the payment system and the authority of contractors over their employees.

The contractor's interpersonal ties with his laborers enabled him both to recruit plenty of workers and to establish his authority over them during the work period. Most of the contractors had personal ties with local communities in nearby regions, or belonged to certain networks based on kinship, ethnicity and such commonality, so that they had easy access to labor reserves. The contractor's ability to access different sources of labor reserves enabled him to attain adequate numbers of workers. In this system the mine workers sold their labor not to the mining enterprise but to the contractor, whom they respected and trusted. Community ties fostered the personal authority of the contractor over his workers. Besides, most of the contractors came from among the experienced workers, having a respected degree of craft knowledge as well. In the workplace their authority was derived from both their craft knowledge and their control over the payment system. They bargained with the mine owner on the payment rate, determined the wages and were perceived by the workers as their representative. They constituted a second power, they had much more authority over the workers whom they paid than the employees of the coal mining enterprise.<sup>154</sup>

The over-fluidity of the labor market brought the problem of recruitment, which was an adverse effect particularly in the period of peak demand and market expansion. Particularly when the competition increased in the coal market, or there existed acute labor shortage, free movement of the mine workers brought important difficulties. In such periods the restriction of

---

<sup>153</sup> See operation of the contract system in different coal fields in Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.40; Anthony F.C. Wallace, *St. Clair, a Nineteenth Century Coal Town's Experience with Disaster Prone Industry* (Iteca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), p.81; and Amarjit Kaur, "Hewers and Haulers: A History of Coal Miners and Coal Mining In Malaya," *Modern Asian Studies*, 24, no.1 (Feb. 1990), p.94.

<sup>154</sup> In some instances, the contractors' excessive authority led tension between the contractor and the mining enterprise. In the Aubin basin, the system of extraction by contractors who have four or five workers under their direction did not permit the company to exercise rigorous supervision or to be informed of the morality of each of its men. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 34

free movement became one of the important targets of the mining operators. Various practices were put into place to bind labor to certain undertakings. Under such practices the mine worker could not work for whomever he wished and could not leave the job by his will. Such practices mostly created unfree wage labor under the direct control of the undertakings or of a subcontractor.<sup>155</sup>

To restrict the free movement of labor, various sorts of mechanisms were put into practice. The contractors, who played an important role in the labor market through their personal ties with their followers, were functional in the restriction of the free movement of workers as well. Having pledged to work for a mine owner or a contractor, the mine worker could not leave his employer, otherwise he might be coerced by legal means such as imprisonment<sup>156</sup> or punishment by the employer, such as work in non-desired work places.<sup>157</sup> Regardless of whether he was a contractor or mine operator, the employer could bind the mine worker at certain pits through delaying payment, or provided small loans and advance to them. In return the worker was forced to work under the will of creditor-employer.<sup>158</sup>

Debt-bond practice was another mechanism that compelled the workers to work in certain pits. The employer who provided accommodation and food to the mine workers also deducted their expense from the wages, paid wages in kind or compelled them to buy foodstuffs from his shop, company store or designated vendors.<sup>159</sup> Regardless of the origin of the employer, whether he was a sub-contractor, or manager of a larger mining company,

---

<sup>155</sup> For instance in Malaya Chinese employees were worked under contract system. The contractor provided them accommodation in communal wooden house, and at night he locked them up in this house. The contractor himself also stayed with his workers at this house. Kaur, p. 93.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid. For instance, when the mine worker breached the terms of annual contract in the northeastern coal mines of Britain, he was punished by imprisonment. The law dating 1823 which arranged labor contract with non pecuniary punishment was in force until 1872. Hobsbawm, *Sanayi ve İmparatorluk*, pp.112-114

<sup>157</sup> Engels, p. 256.

<sup>158</sup> For instance, in the north of England it was custom that the employers advanced the miners small sums to be worked out afterwards, thus binding the debtor-worker to themselves. Another custom was of keeping the payment of wages one week behind-hand, binding the worker to their work. Engels, p.256. For the regional variations in debt and bond relations, see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. 33, and 62; Kaur, pp. 92-93.

<sup>159</sup> It was no surprise that most of the contractors were at the same time shopkeepers and tavern keepers. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 55; Kaur, p. 94

provisioning became a means to increase the commitment of the worker to the employer, which in return restricted the worker's freedom to leave the job. Resembling unequal reciprocity in the master-servant relationship, the employer was charged with the total support of the workers, providing food, housing, and a small cash wage. In return, the worker was expected to be entirely at the disposal of the employer. In this relationship the worker became unfree labor, under the full authority of the employer.<sup>160</sup>

The regime of labor control in the coal mining put into use different mechanisms with different degrees of coercion and consent, in accordance to the changing needs of the mining enterprise. As the technical, mechanical, and marketing aspects of the coal mining industry changed, the coal mining undertakings changed their policy of labor control and developed different mechanisms in labor management. In parallel to the rise of a mine community, the development of class identity and organized labor movement among the mine workers compelled the mining undertakings to reorganize the labor aspects of the production process in conformity with the changing conditions. In parallel with the expansion of the coal market, development of deep mining techniques, the introduction of mechanization, and the rationalization of the work process, albeit unevenly, the traditional means in organization of labor market and in supervision of labor force, intermingled with the modern techniques of labor management.

With the expansion of coal market, the old single shift system was replaced quietly by the two or three successive shift system in various coal fields.<sup>161</sup> Similarly changes in the mining systems brought changes in the spatial organization of mining crews. The introduction of longwall mining systems in most of the European coal fields discounted room-and-pillar mining which had provided a great degree of autonomy to the crew. In longwall, numerous hewers worked at one face together and under the direct supervision of foremen. Hence, the

---

<sup>160</sup> For the master servant relationship and overlapping of servant and employee status, see Corrigan, pp.438-440.

craft tradition of the hewer began to be discounted and his control over the pace of his work was diminished where the longwall system was applied.<sup>162</sup>

The traditional division of labor in underground jobs began to be modified in varying degree in accordance to the level of mechanization. Although the impact of mechanization was highly varied in different coal fields and in different pits at the same coal field in accordance to the geological conditions and capital strength, the mechanization of coal cutting and hauling processes disintegrated the old division of labor.<sup>163</sup> The change in work relations materialized slowly and unevenly in the inter-war periods, under the pressure of sectoral depression, intense labor disputes and mechanization. However, a more fundamental restructuring of the production process came when mechanical coal loading equipment began to be used, eliminating loading by hand. This undermined the piece rate wage system and crew autonomy.<sup>164</sup>

In parallel with the rise of the large scale mining undertakings under the impact of industrial prosperity, there appeared new techniques on labor control as well. Alongside the traditional techniques of labor management, the mining undertakings began to restructure their authority at the recruitment, supervision and managerial levels. The subcontracting system was not eliminated totally but with the rise of a stable and permanent mining community, the colliery companies began to control the labor market more easily than before. In this process the role and influence of the intermediaries over the recruitment and supervision aspects of labor were gradually diminished.<sup>165</sup>

---

<sup>161</sup> Williams, p. 35, Hickey, p.131.

<sup>162</sup> For the technical and labor aspects of the longwall mining system, see Ibid. pp.159-160.

<sup>163</sup> For instance, as a response to the introduction of cutting machines, development of air powered and electric drills in the United State's bituminous coal fields some customary tasks of hewer was divided in several jobs. Dix, p.164.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, p. 169.

<sup>165</sup> The mine workers' perception of subcontractors as their representative was even replaced by perceiving them as exploiters. For instance mine workers began to challenge the authority of contractors who hired them both in and out of the workplace. Many brought contractors to court for failure to pay agreed upon wages. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.53. For similar response of workers, see also Adrian Shubert, *The Road to Revolution in Spain: The Coal Miners of Austrias 1860-1934* (University of Illinois Press, 1987), p.58. For the elimination of subcontractors, see also Reid, p.43.

The decline of subcontractors in the labor market was indispensable to the rise of a permanent mining community under the spatial control of the mining undertakings. Yet the alternative labor sources, such as unorganized, non-unionized workers, were not abandoned. They were functional particularly when the organized labor force went on strikes and work stoppages. On the other hand, the labor market gradually detached from its early labor sources and became physically confined in the company villages. The rise of company villages enabled the companies to set their firm control over the labor aspects of the industry. The free time of the workers came under the control of the companies. In this process the early master servant relations between the employers and the mine workers was replaced by paternalist management techniques. However, the same mechanisms of control also led the rise of a militant class and labor unionism in the coal fields. As the nature of the workforce at work place and daily life changed, it became a larger, more rooted and more closely knit working community.

#### The Coal Mining Community, "Labor of Division" and Sources of Solidarity

There were striking similarities between mining settlements of different types in different societies, at different stages of economic development.<sup>166</sup> Coal mining settlements were no exception. As the case in all mining activities, the location of coal mining industry was determined not by the availability of labor force or accessibility to markets, but by the location of coal reserves. Since the mines were fixed in location, the coal mining undertakings had to import their labor forces from various distances and various demographic sorts.<sup>167</sup> In the early days of the industrial expansion, the rural inhabitants in the immediate vicinity constituted the

---

<sup>166</sup> M.I.A. Bulmer, " Sociological Models of the Mining Community," *The Sociological Review*, Volume. 23 (February, 1975), p. 61.

<sup>167</sup> Edgar T. Thompson, "Mines and Plantations and the Movements of Peoples," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 37, no.4 (Jan., 1932), p. 604.

natural reserve work force.<sup>168</sup> However, continuous industrial growth in the coal fields brought about further population movements predominantly from rural areas to the expanding mining settlements. The labor intensive nature of the industry led to an influx of workers from populations of different regions, countries and continents. The nineteenth century population growth and failure of the agricultural means to provide sufficient livelihood pushed some of the surplus labor in agriculture to the coal fields.<sup>169</sup> In the time of industrial expansion, the coal fields became the destination of people moving in search of new job opportunities. In the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the gradual settlement of the people near the mines, there appeared mono-industrial mining communities, composed of indigenous groups and immigrants from various ethnic and regional origins.<sup>170</sup>

The labor intensive nature of labor process and need for large numbers of workers made unskilled rural immigrant labor force compatible to the needs of the coal mining industry. Most of them were originated from the agricultural communities near the coal fields or rural migrants, searching for a livelihood.<sup>171</sup> Some of them were small land owners, tenant farmers or sharecroppers in their respective locality,<sup>172</sup> some others were landless poor who had lost their lands or chance of livelihood in the homelands.<sup>173</sup> The rural laborers who kept their attachment to the land supplied the mine operators with seasonal and cheap labor in return for

---

<sup>168</sup> The existence of a peasant community nearby the coal fields did not always quarantined labor supply. When the great foreign firms, for instance, introduced in the Donbas coal fields of the Russia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century they faced with labor shortage due to the reluctance of the peasants to work in mines. Local familiarity with primitive coal mining made many rural inhabitants of the region fearful of entering the mines. Susan P. McCaffray, "Origins of Labor Policy in the Russian Coal and Steel Industry, 1874-1900, *The Journal of Economic History*, 47, no.4 (Dec., 1987), p. 957.

<sup>169</sup>For the population growth in the late nineteenth century in imperial Germany which led influx of the people to Ruhr area, see Hickey, pp.3-4.

<sup>170</sup> Migration movements of the nineteenth century were no doubt largely labor migrations. In the period of capitalist expansion, labor began to flow from regions where people were underemployed or in deprivation to new industrial and agricultural centers. Population growth in coal fields was indispensable part of the nineteenth century's migration waves. For the relation between capitalist expansion and labor migration, see Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 361-378.

<sup>171</sup> There had been mining communities before the nineteenth century in the regions where coal had been in use for household purpose or for various manufactures. In England first the villeins than in seventeenth century on contracted laborers had been employed in the mines. See Raymond Turner, "English Coal Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The American Historical Review*, 27, no.1 (October, 1921), p.12.

<sup>172</sup> The first generation of miners in Aubin basin for instance, came mostly from the local peasantry. The mining companies recruited only a few miners from outside of the region. Despite disruptions in production, there were minimal efforts to establish a permanent labor force. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. 27. Similarly in Asturias coal basin, until the First World War, the native farmers constituted majority of the labor force. Shubert, p. 38

small earnings supplemental to farming activities or clearing their debts. Most of the mine workers from the first generation saw mine work a temporary phase. They developed flexible work strategies between mining and farming. Instead of permanent settlements near the mines, some of them kept their ties with their home/land, mostly left their families behind and established a cyclical work pattern and some others settled with the hope of returning.

Meanwhile, the increasing reliance of the industry on migratory labor force both from the peasant communities of the nearby regions and from distant areas, led to a high degree of labor turnover. However, the cyclical market conditions of coal mining made seasonal or migratory workers compatible to the needs of the industry. It enabled the industry employ workers at low wages as well. This was compatible with the cyclical work pattern of the rural workers as well. In the slack periods, when work became irregular or wages declined the rural laborers returned to homes. Or they worked in agriculture during the summer months and in the off seasons they returned to the mining.<sup>174</sup> The symbiotic relations between mining and agriculture provided advantages to both coal operators and the rural laborers. The workers who allocated their time between farming and mining both secured their subsistence, and demanded lower wages, shouldered provisioning and accommodation costs and solved labor disputes through informal ties. In return, the coal operators obtained cheap labor and had the chance to increase or decrease the numbers of workers in accordance to the immediate needs of the production.

The manual nature of the work process in the mines provided the rural laborers to keep their traditional working habits. Some similarities between mining and farming facilitated adaptation for rural laborers of mining works. Both the farming and coal mining had seasonal cycles with alternate periods of intensive work and rest. More, unlike the time based jobs,

---

<sup>173</sup> For instance, the rural rooted Irish population of St. Clair Town in the anthracite district of Pennsylvania migrated from countryside due to the famine. Wallace, p.137.

<sup>174</sup> Lewis, p. 87.

miners and farmers received income by quantity they produced and hence managed the working hours on the basis of the quantity of product. As an outcome of product based work, both the mine workers and the farmers had autonomy on their labor and work place. As coal mining involved little direct supervision before the intense mechanization, the rural originated mine workers were able to keep their autonomy.<sup>175</sup>

While the seasonal recruitment met the labor demand of the coal mining in its early days, as the coal market expanded, part time labor force alone became quite inadequate to meet the increasing demand for coal and so for the work force. Industrial growth in coal mining both altered the size of capital concentration and nature of the labor power simultaneously. When the large scale companies entered the coal mining sector, they found themselves in a chronically labor deficient environment. To attract and bind new workers they began to offer benefits like mutual aid funds or inexpensive housing and social provisions. Most coal mining companies began to establish new settlements in the form of company villages for their workers.<sup>176</sup>

In some areas, the process of detachment of the rural workers from the land facilitated the rise of a permanent labor force.<sup>177</sup> In some cases the companies bought the nearby farming areas to establish new industrial settings. The agricultural areas became either sites of industrial development or dormitories for people who made their living from industry.<sup>178</sup> Some of the rural migrants lost the opportunity to purchase farmland or to work as farm

---

<sup>175</sup> For the similarities between work patterns in mining and farming, see *ibid.*, pp. 90-91. For a similar comparison between mining and plantation in terms of their locality, dependency on migrant labor and worldwide market place of their product, see also Thompson, p.604.

<sup>176</sup> St. Clair in Pennsylvania and Decazeville in Aubin basin and Bochum in Ruhr were only few examples of such company villages owing their existence largely to coal mining communities. For the rise of coal mining communities in mentioned towns, see Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p.23 and pp.38-48 ; Wallace, pp.78-94; and Hickey, pp. 51-67. For a demographic analysis of coal fields of North West Europe, see Wrigley, *Industrial Growth and Population Change*, pp.56-67.

<sup>177</sup> The peasant miners of Decazeville generally performed underground jobs which required little experience and skills. With time, the rural pursuits of the coal mine labor began to make the transition in the proto-industrial phase of coal mining in these countries. Most of the peasant miners left their farming and the succeeding generations became a full-time industrial labor force within two generations. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. ,27-53.

<sup>178</sup>Wrigley, *Industrial Growth and Population Change*, p.60



laborers when they were not employed in the mines.<sup>179</sup> Or in the bad harvest times and major crises in agricultural production, large amounts of land were converted to industrial use and former peasants transferred to mining. In addition, low wages diminished the possibility to transfer incomes derived from mining to agriculture, such as buying new land.<sup>180</sup> The expansion of employment opportunities also encouraged the rural laborers to bring their relatives or families for permanent settlement. In one way or another, the former migratory laborer of various sort led to further population flow. Within the temporary labor force, a permanent working community developed gradually and as long as settlement opportunities were improved by the companies, some of the mining laborers became permanent industrial workers.<sup>181</sup>

From the late nineteenth century to the inter-war years of the twentieth century, a well rooted, permanent mining community ascended around the coal fields. However, the transformation of a rural-rooted, part-time and or migratory population into a permanent and close knitted working class was neither linear, nor an inevitable one. It was in the nature of the mining industry to require a constant infusion of labor from different social and cultural roots.<sup>182</sup> As long as the expansion in coal industry accelerated the demand for labor, the permanent and temporary labor forces juxtaposed in changing percentages, sometimes replaced one another in accordance to the needs of the industry in particular circumstances.

---

<sup>179</sup> Lewis, p. 87

<sup>180</sup> Shubert, p.32

<sup>181</sup> In Aubin basin in the late 1860s, earlier conditions of the mining economy changed as the basin became exporter of coal rather than supplier of the local iron industry. The companies needed more in permanent and full time professional workers than before. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, pp. 27 and 52. Similarly in Asturias coal basin, the First World War changed nature of the workforce, the rural- native and part time farmers began to lose ground with the entrance of non-native, full-time immigrants. Both the sons of immigrants and of native farmers became part of permanent workforce in the inter-war years. Shubert, p. 38

<sup>182</sup> For instance, in the late nineteenth century, over twenty languages and idioms were spoken in Ruhr. Hickey, p.33. In the South Wales, along with the English born migrants, there were Irish, Italian, Spanish and Jewish communities. Williams, p. 101. "Racial" diversities were more visible in the United States. For instance, along with the white communities, the Southern blacks constituted the labor force of the central Appalachian coal fields in the late nineteenth century. Lewis. Coalfields in the United States were also center of attraction for the European labor force. British, Irish, German, French families were the first settlers of the St. Clair, a company town in Pennsylvania. Wallace, pp. 124 -130

In some instances, aside from the indigenous working population, the inflow of the temporary labor force gained speed.<sup>183</sup>

It is obvious that the high turnover rates, easy replacement of the manual labor force within itself by different demographic groups and temporary character of the work force inhibited the growth of organized labor movements and strong trade unionism.<sup>184</sup> Particularly when the social and cultural diversities of the working population were reproduced in the workplace and in the settlements, such diversities operated as instrument of "labor of division." When the heterogeneity of the workforce in terms of their diverse social and cultural roots gradually was articulated in the organization of labor process, the differences became fixed. Different work categories intermingled among the workers with different demographic or ethnic origin. While some of them engaged in underground jobs, others worked on the surface. Or some demographic groups captured supervisory position, some others remained in low status positions. In the course of time the ethnically disparate segments came to be ranged hierarchically in the labor process with respect to one another. They were allocated in different ranks on the scale of labor market, some of them occupied well paid, prestigious work categories, and the others less paid, disregarded ones.<sup>185</sup>

The ethnically segmented labor market became one of the most effective devices in the regime of labor control. The hierarchical work relations between different occupational groups in the labor process were marked, hence, fixed in reference to ethnic, religious, racial or regional indices. Such culturally inscribed distinctions functioned to set off occupational categories from one another, hence, isolated the higher status from the competition of lower

---

<sup>183</sup> Around 1909 aside with the indigenous working population, many Spanish workers arrived in Aubin basin. They demand fewer things from company, living apart from the town's population, in crowd, unfurnished rooms. There was extensive use of low waged migrant labor during the inter-war period. In 1920s one- third of the labor force in the mines were foreign. Reid, *The Miners of Decazeville*, p. 120.

<sup>184</sup> Williams, p. 3

<sup>185</sup> For the formation of segmented labor market in relation with so called cultural, social and ethnic diversities of the working mass, see Wolf, pp. 379-383.

segments.<sup>186</sup> The dichotomies such as migrant versus native, black versus white, permanent versus temporary was constructed and reconstructed continually to meet diverse needs of capital.<sup>187</sup> Hence, the culturally marked dichotomies converted tensions within the hierarchical work relations to the ethnical, regional or religious one.

Meanwhile, the different segments of the work force were segregated in their social life from each other through social policy measures. While the culturally marked higher occupational groups received better social services of the companies, the lower ranks received worse living and working conditions. The colliery undertakings followed distinct social policies towards distinct social and occupational strata of the mining communities. While the high number of unskilled, temporary and single workers accommodated in the company owned barracks, dormitories or unhealthy lodges, skilled and semi-skilled workers were accommodated in company houses and pensions.<sup>188</sup> Even when the companies built large company villages or quarters, the workers were assigned to the houses in accordance to their occupational status and to their social and cultural marks.<sup>189</sup>

Providing social services to mining communities in a hierarchical order was part of the paternalist techniques of labor control. Most of the mining companies applied such techniques in parallel with the increasing need in the labor force. The original rationale of industrial

---

<sup>186</sup> For instance, English and Welsh took jobs that were more skilled when they arrived to St Clair. And with time they became contract miners and operators. On the other hand, the Irish workers constituted unskilled workers. Most of them stayed as laborer through all their lives, not moving up in status as they gained experience. Ethnicity and status differences between contract miners and mine laborers formed a single, deepening line of cleavage between Irish and non-Irish workers. Wallace, pp.136-137. In the Appalachian coalfields black miners encountered racial discrimination in the workplace. Supervision was almost exclusively a white preserve and maintenance and machine operator positions were generally restricted to whites. Afro Americans did find ready acceptance in the general labor classifications inside the mines such as coal loaders, pick miners and laborers. Lewis, p. 97

<sup>187</sup> As a typical example, before First World War, distinction of status and function among workers in the mines of Asturias coal field in Spain was based on the distinction between nativeness and immigrant. The immigrants most of whom were transient and unskilled, worked on the surface and did not move to the higher job categories. On the other hand native workers constituted more stable and skilled labor force. Basic line of division ascended not on the job categories but on native Austrian and immigrant miners. Shubert, p.49.

<sup>188</sup> Increase in number of workers inevitably paved way an acute housing shortage in the coal fields. Overcrowded homes and homelessness were widespread. For the housing problems in Ruhr, see Hickey, p. 31-51.

<sup>189</sup> This spatial segmentation in the company villages was more visible in the coalfields of non western geographies, where foreign capital was at rule. For instance in Malaya, The English managerial and technician cadres lived on the slopes in spacious bungalows. They received separate recreational facilities such as magnificent clubhouse, billiards, table tennis, lawn tennis, dancing, and swimming pool. The English, Indian and Chinese movies were screened on alternate days. Kaur, p.89. The same discriminatory space management was intact in many coal fields. For instance the immigrants lived in colonies separated from one another on the basis of ethnic and regional differences between workers. It is obvious that the spatial segregation helped employers to preserve their authority from serious challenge. Hickey, p. 189

paternalism arose as a response to the shortage of skilled labor. In order to attract workers and encourage them to be permanent and reliable workforce, companies provided various social services. Housing, mutual benefits and pension funds, stores, schools and religious centers were among the most common social facilities offered to them.<sup>190</sup> The reliance of coal mining on huge numbers of unskilled workers compelled the companies to satisfy provisioning requirements of their workers. In time, as the scale of companies and need in labor increased the palliative solutions were replaced by substantial provisioning policies and the rise of company villages.

Company villages were the most important single device in restricting the free movement of the labor force, shaping them in accordance to the needs of the work, and guaranteeing the reproduction of the labor force. They served to create and manipulate the effective hierarchical relations between workers and employers in daily life. First, through social provisioning the companies re-presented themselves not as the oppressor of the workers, but as the protectors of workers in dealings with the heavy living and working conditions. Social provisions of the companies, health and insurance services, donation and social services all served to create a loyalty towards the company as well. Second, by means of a disciplinary network the companies intended to construct workers habits and their daily lives between houses with small gardens, dormitories, kitchens, company recreation centers and pits. Third, although such social facilities created consent to work, they were easily replaced by repression. The threat of firing and so depriving from social services of the company functioned in preventing workers from disobedience. However, as paternalist outlook defined the workers as malleable and easily shaped child it failed to see the very agency of

---

<sup>190</sup> Reid, Donald. "Industrial Paternalism: Discourse and Practice in Nineteenth- Century French Mining and Metallurgy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 27, no.4 (Oct. 1985),p. 82

the workers whose working class identity was shaped in the very spaces of both workplace and of community.

In spite of the ethnic and regional segmentation and fluid character of the mining community, it constituted a distinct group of working class as a whole, characterized both by the dangerous and arduous working conditions and by their strong solidary working class character. Likewise the mining industry in general appeared to be one of the strike-prone industries.<sup>191</sup> As a result, the coal miners around the world represent the aristocracy of militant labor.<sup>192</sup> The radical nature of the mining community has been explained in reference to various factors such as the mining communities constitute an isolated mass and specialized workforce or; the nature of the underground working conditions and social conditions of the community make them a separatist group in the working class in general.<sup>193</sup>

There is no doubt that various factors led to a strong solidarism and radicalization among the mine workers in general. The social structure of the mining community and the structure of mining as an industrial activity with its work relations and division of labor process constituted main source of solidarity, class identity and militancy. Taking into account the diversities between the mining communities in different regions, countries and time period, an ideal-typical scheme of social structure of the traditional mining community should be helpful for analytical purposes.

The physical isolation of mining settlements is one of the feature of the mining community which reduces contact with the rest of the society and create an occupationally a homogenous community compared to the heterogeneity of the whole society. Similarly, as the mining community owes its existence to the mining activity, the mining becomes the dominant local industry in its respective locality. The new generations become dependant on mining

---

<sup>191</sup> Bulmer, pp. 64 and 67.

<sup>192</sup> Yarrow, p.170.

<sup>193</sup> For the theories explain the militant characteristic of the mine workers and criticisms on such theories, see Shubert, pp. 23-26; and Bulmer, pp .67-84.

jobs and the community becomes a mono-industrial one. Along with the dominance of the mining in the lives of the people, the mining companies dominate the social, economic and cultural life of the community in the company villages.<sup>194</sup> Hence, the members of the mining community become more dependent on the fate of the mining industry and the policies of the mining companies in every field of their lives. The work place and social space of the community become interwoven around the mining itself.

The nature of the work force is another source of solidarity and militancy. The dangerous work conditions, high accident rates, uncertainty in wages, manual character of the work process and organization of work on crew basis create a strong occupational identity, solidarity and sense of common faith.<sup>195</sup> Furthermore, apart from the low number of white collar workers, composed of managerial, technical and supervisory staff, the rest of the mining community constitutes manual working class. This characteristic further strengthens the solidarity and class identity. Hence the mine workers become to represent traditional proletarian workers.<sup>196</sup> Occupational homogeneity and isolated settlement bring few opportunities to new generations for upward social mobility and geographical mobility. Living in the isolated and in itself homogenous settlements further strengthens the sense of community identity. The daily lives and worries of the families, common social activities reproduce the occupational identity of the community in the social sphere of the life. In such a community the sons follow their fathers in the mines and daughters become the wives of miners. Family continuity in the mining community operates as a norm.<sup>197</sup> The solidarity of the community hence transmits to the new generation with a shared history of living and working in one place over a long period of time.

---

<sup>194</sup> Bulmer, p. 85.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid, pp. 70-73 and p. 86. Also see Hickey, pp.144-157 and pp. 162-163.

<sup>196</sup> Shubert, p.23

<sup>197</sup> Bulmer, pp.85-87

Despite some observable regularities in coal mining communities and some common underlying features, there are differing patterns of behavior, different reactions to industrial settings and different strategies in labor organizations. In this vein, the conditions of mining do not always produce industrial and political militancy.<sup>198</sup> Along with certain uniformities, there are great variations in patterns of settlements, degrees of homogeneity or social and geographical isolation of the community, ways of protests, frequency of strike activity and strength of labor organization among different mining communities. Different socio-cultural factors operate in different ways in different places and at different times. A study on any mining community should take into account the interaction between the some structural industrial features of coal mining and the social, political, cultural and economic dynamics of the community in question in its historicity. A study on the history of the Ereğli Zonguldak coal basin provides an opportunity to compare and contrast the industry community interaction in a special historical moment of a country, Turkey. The following chapters will evaluated the history of the Ereğli Zonguldak coal basin through centering the state, the mining community and the mining companies in a complex set of relations determined under the specific economic, politic and socio-cultural dynamics of the single-party era of Turkey and the Second World War period.

---

<sup>198</sup> For instance, as Bulmer points out in reference to the studies on mining communities in Britain, mining areas of North- East England traditionally more conservative than those of Scotland and South Wales. The strike history of different coalfields in Britain shows diversities as well. Bulmer, p. 71

## CHAPTER 2

### THE EREĞLİ-ZONGULDAK COAL BASIN UNDER EXPLOITATION

The Legacy of the State Monopsony and the Forced Labor Regime under the Dilaver Paşa  
Regulation: 1848-1882

By the 1920s, the coal mining industry had already been active for seventy years. Although the production conditions of the basin had been destroyed under the impact of the First World War and of the National Struggle, the basin retained to a great extent its characteristic feature of the previous decades in terms of its capital and labor composition. The early Republican era of the Ereğli coal basin cannot be evaluated accurately without considering the role played by the Ottoman state in the early decades of the coal mining. The productive and marketing aspects of coal mining were determined by the state as early as the initial years of the coal extraction in the basin. Two factors called for early state involvement, once was the *miri* (state-owned land) status of the basin and other was the establishment of monopson market relations between the coal mining operators and the state. Both provided the Ottoman state structured the conditions of coal mining in accordance with the state's own needs. Hence the basin took its first shape under the state control and early conditions of coal mining retained some characteristics with small modification after the disintegration of the empire. A close look at the early conditions that called for state intervention will allow us to follow the traces from the early Republican era back to the initial years of the basin's history.



The *miri* (state-owned public property) status of the basin regulated the state's relation with the mine operators and mining activities in the basin from the late 1840. In the initial years, due to the lack of a sufficient industrial base in the Empire, the state's interest in coal mining was limited and capital flow was small-scale.<sup>199</sup> The state granted the right of coal mining to operators via mining licenses, in return for an annual payment.<sup>200</sup> Because the revenue deriving from sources called *mukataas* (tax-farming units) was collected by the Privy Purse, the revenue of the mines was given under the control of the Privy Purse.

Under this system the mine operators carried out mining in the status of *mültezim* (tax-farmer) under the management of the Privy Purse.<sup>201</sup> By 1850, the state set up a monopson market, and granted the Naval Ministry the right to purchase all of the coal extracted in the basin. Under this condition, the mine operators became contractors of the Naval Ministry. The mine operators run the mines as creditors of the state. They were paid by Navy in return for the amount they sold it.<sup>202</sup> The status of the mine operators did not change when the first mine regulation was put into practice in 1861. The 1861 regulation developed a concession system between the mine operators and the minerals they sought to exploit.<sup>203</sup> However, the Ereğli coal basin continued to be administered under specific conditions shaped in the initial years of the coal extraction. The contractor status of the mine operators was further regulated and reinforced by the Dilaver Paşa regulation of 1867.<sup>204</sup>

---

<sup>199</sup> Kömür Kumpanyası (Coal Company) was the first private enterprise in the basin. Established by the British bankers of Galata, it exercised its right to exploit the mines between 1849 and 1851. Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası: Uzun Mehmet'ten Bugüne Kadar* (İstanbul: Hüsniyatıat Matbaası, 1934), p. 21.

<sup>200</sup> The Kömür Kumpanyası was granted the right to exploit the mines for an annual payment of 30,000 piasters. Ahmet Naim, *Kömür Havzası*, p. 21

<sup>201</sup> Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik* (TTK: Ankara, 1994), p. 47.

<sup>202</sup> The system created many creditor/ debtor contractors who could not either receive money from the state in return for the coal they sold, or produce enough coal they promised. For the credit relations between the mine operators and the state, see " Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no.11 (24 March, 1341 ( 1925), p.18.

<sup>203</sup> For the 1861 mine regulation and concession system, see Mustafa Nuri Anıl and Nejdît Merey, *Türkiye'de Maden Mevzuatı 1* (İstanbul: Tan Matbaası , 1942), pp. 5-11.

<sup>204</sup> The conditions of mining in the coal basin were determined under specific regulations. The mine operators called *madenci* (miner) had to receive *imal ruhsat tezkeresi* (mining license) from the government in order to operate a mine. For the status of mine operators, see " Ereğli-Zonguldak Havza-i Fahmiyesinde Kömür İstihsalı," *Meslek*, no. 11 (24 February, 1341) (1925), p. 10 For the contract system in mine operation in the basin before and after the Dilaver Paşa Regulation, see also Anıl and Merey 1, pp. 9-10.

The first serious interest of the state in coal mining began in the 1850s with the outbreak of the Crimean War (1854-1856). During the war, the needs of the Ottoman, French and British navies in coal were supplied primarily by the basin.<sup>205</sup> After a short period of disinterest, by the mid-1860s, coal extraction gained considerable importance for the state's own needs once again. With the increasing use of steamships in the Ottoman navy and newly emerging state-owned factories, the basin came under the close consideration of the state. Due to the disorganization and low production levels which were unable to meet the growing needs of the navy, in 1865 the administration of the basin was granted to the Ministry of the Navy.<sup>206</sup>

The introduction of the Naval Ministry brought about long lasting changes to the basin. In the period between 1865 and 1882, the state largely structured the production and labor aspects of the coal mining in accordance to its own needs. As a response to the increasing needs of the state for coal, the coal operators were compelled to sell their total amount of the coal to the Ottoman navy at a pre-determined price from 1850.<sup>207</sup> In this period the mine operators maintained coal extraction as the contractors of the Naval Ministry, operating the pits on its behalf. The government supplied picks, shovels, baskets, timber and other requirements and mules for transportation to the operators at fixed price. Supply of the labor force was the state's responsibility as well.<sup>208</sup> Throughout the era of state monopsony, the Naval Ministry established a military order over the basin.<sup>209</sup>

As the basin served primarily the state's coal needs, the Ottoman government arranged the labor market via legal instruments. In order to guarantee the extraction of a

---

<sup>205</sup> Significant improvements in the basin had been carried out with the outbreak of the Crimean War. In the 1850s, the Ottoman government brought in the Barclay brothers from England to survey the mine area and to establish the necessary infrastructure for efficient coal extraction. They improved transportation facilities, constructed narrow gauge railroads in two districts of the basin, Kozlu and Üzülmüş, opened new pits and used new techniques in supporting the ceilings in the coal galleries. Ahmet Ali Özeken, *Türkiye Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi, Birinci Kısım* (İstanbul: İ.Ü. İktisat Fakültesi, 1955), pp. 23-24.

<sup>206</sup> Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 24-25; Ahmet Naim, *Kömür Havzası*, p. 33.

<sup>207</sup> Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 8.

<sup>208</sup> For the supply of equipment by the government, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Havza-i Fahmiyesinde Kömür İstihali," *Meslek*, no.11 (24 February, 1341) (1925), p.10.

certain amount of coal, the state had to solve the problem of the labor supply. The government resorted to its long tradition by solving the problem by imposing a forced labor regime over the male inhabitants of the nearby villages.<sup>210</sup> In May 1867, the government charged Dilaver Paşa, the mine director and chief official (*kaymakam*) of Ereğli province (*sancak*), to establish guidelines for setting up standards in the boring and reinforcement of galleries, the rights and duties of mine operators, and lastly the conditions of the labor force in the mines. Henceforth, this regulation became known in Ottoman labor history and the history of the Ottoman-Turkish mine legislation as the Dilaver Paşa Regulation (*Dilaver Paşa Nizamnamesi*).<sup>211</sup>

Actually, there had existed a number of mine workers in the basin since the 1850s. The mine operators had employed a numbers the Croat and Montenegrin quarry workers, Ottoman soldiers and local villagers.<sup>212</sup> However, the nearby villages of the basin could not provide a sufficient number of men, due to the unhealthy and dangerous working conditions combined with the privileged position of agricultural activity as a livelihood for the villagers. As observed in the initial decades of the coalfields elsewhere, this rural labor force worked in the pits seasonally, only as long as they needed supplementary income. When coal gained importance for the Naval Ministry, the lack of abundant and sufficiently qualified labor force appeared as one of the primary obstacles in the coal production.

---

<sup>209</sup> Meslek described this period as *bilvasita devlet işletmesi devri* (era of direct state enterprise) under the military rule of the Naval Ministry. For the supply of equipment by the government, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 15 (24 March, 1341-1925), p. 18.

<sup>210</sup> In fact, the forced labor regime had long been imposed over the villagers, living nearby the mineral deposits under the exploitation of the state. Because the mines were crucial for the military needs, and provided important revenue to the state treasury, the state strictly regulated the conditions of exploitation by imperial edicts. Labor was provided from the villages of the areas in which mineral deposits were exploited. The communities of those areas were exempted from certain taxes and were differentiated from the rest of the *Reaya* (tax paying subjects). Most of them were from local Christian communities. Mining communities belonged to specific administrative units with special juridical regulations. Governors and judges were not able to interfere in their trials. The superintendent of mines (*maden emini*) solved the administrative and judicial problems of the community, so that the mine workers were not allowed to leave the work site to attend trials elsewhere. Ahmet Refik, *Osmanlı Devrinde Türkiye Madenleri (967-1200)* (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), p. v.

<sup>211</sup> For the articles of the Dilaver Paşa Regulation, see Anıl and Merey, Vol.1, pp. 89-109.

<sup>212</sup> The Croatian and Montenegrin quarry workers began to work in the basin from the late 1840s. With the entrance of Croatian and Montenegrin workers, different Slavic languages began to circulate in the basin and the presence of these workers was to have long lasting effects. The existence of Montenegrin, Croatian and Bulgarian workers continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. They were recruited by emigration agencies in İstanbul. Some of them resided permanently and captured high positions, became either foreman or subcontractor. Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908. Reactions to European Economic Penetration* (New York: NYU Press, 1983), p. 57. On the other hand, the entrance of the local population in the mines dates from the 1850s. In the course of time they steadily gained mining experience and techniques, although most of them engaged in mining not as a job, but as a source of additional income. Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 24-25. There were also numbers of solders employed in the mines under the special military regulations. Erol Çatma, *Asker İşçiler* (İstanbul: Ceylan Yayıncılık, 1998), p. 76.

As the basin began to serve the Ottoman Navy, the heavy reliance on manual labor compelled the state to solve the problem of the labor supply. For this purpose, the Dilaver Pasha regulation imposed forced labor on the villagers in the fourteen *kazas* (districts) of Ereğli.<sup>213</sup> All males between thirteen and fifty years of age were obliged to perform certain underground jobs in the mines and in return they were exempted from military service. The equation of the working in the mines with military service indicates the original rationale behind the forced labor regime.<sup>214</sup> Just as the basin primarily served the state's needs, the villagers also served the state as its subjects when they worked in the mines. However, since the state was responsible for the provisioning and other requirements of its subjects under a particular service, the regulation provided for the protection of the workers by imposing certain duties on the mine operators, such as regular pay schedules, limited work hours, medical care, dormitories for workers, holidays, measures against dismissal without cause and against profiteering by shopkeepers selling provisions to miners.<sup>215</sup> Despite the protective measures, since the exchange of labor between the state and indigenous laborers as conditioned under the rules of the forced labor regime, it was not a free exchange of labor, but a coerced one. However, since the master-servant relation between the state and the indigenous laborers was installed in a paternalist context the Dilaver Paşa regulation looked like progressive labor legislation rather than a coercive one.<sup>216</sup>

The forced nature of the labor regime entailed strict rules in the recruitment process under the supervision of a local representative of the state, who was local headman. The

---

<sup>213</sup> The fourteen villages are listed by Erol Çatma as Viranşehir (Eskipazar), Ulus, Amasra, Oniki Divan (Bartın), Zerzene (Perşembe), Gecenoç (Koçanaz), Yenice, Eflani, Devrek, Akçaşır (Akçakoca), Karasu, Aktaş, Tefen, Benderli (Ereğli) Taraklı Borlu (Safranbolu), Çatma, p. 81.

<sup>214</sup> This perception of government was not specific to the basin's workers. The Ottoman state in general regarded workers as a kind of soldier in the factories or workplaces, which were established primarily to meet the needs of the Ministry of War. Yavuz Selim Karakışla "The Emergence of the Ottoman Industrial Working Class 1839-1923," *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839-1950*, eds. Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher (London: Tauris, 1995), p. 20.

<sup>215</sup> For the protective articles of the Regulation, see Anıl and Meray 2, pp. 91-103. To what extent the protective measures of the regulation changed the living and working conditions of the workers is not clear. However, a report in 1875 from an engineer attached to the Department of Mines and a proposal of French investors in 1880 observed some implementations of the regulation. Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 93-95

<sup>216</sup> Most of the writers evaluate the Dilaver Paşa Regulation as a progressive legislation. However it was the same regulation which imposed forced labor on the villagers of the surrounding villages. Similarly while they appreciating the regulation in terms of its requirements on the improvement of working conditions, they can not explain why the misery of the workers continued after the regulation. For the critics of state-

regulation established rules of labor recruitment for underground jobs.<sup>217</sup> It imposed sole authority on the village headman in the organization of the whole recruitment process. At the beginning of each month, the village headman organized the lists of workers who would go to certain pits to replace the group which had ended its working period. The villagers were obliged to work in the pits rotationally, twelve days in the mines and twelve days in the village, with three days allotted for travel time in exchanges.<sup>218</sup> From the rotational work, while obtaining coal for its needs with low cost labor, the government would keep domestic stability and the continuation of the prevailing agricultural system.<sup>219</sup> The *muhtar* (headman) of each village was to oversee the whole process of providing the roster and dispatching the workers to the mines to which they were assigned and distributing their wages. When necessary, the gendarmes and village headman would capture and punish fugitives and bring the villagers forcefully to the mines.

The regulation organized the underground labor process and differentiated the jobs in three basic occupational categories. To restrict the free movement of the workers between the mines favorable for them, the workers were obliged to work only in the pits to which they were assigned except for the *kazmaciyan* (hewers). Accordingly, hewers were exempted from the obligatory labor system, but negotiated individually with the mine owner for a suitable wage according to their qualifications. However, *küfeciyan* (basketmen), who carried the coal cut by the hewers, and the *kiraciyan*, who furnished the animals to work the pumps and to carry coal from pit mouth to certain centers, were under the obligation of working at the pits to which they were assigned.<sup>220</sup> The actual coal cutting, loading and hauling processes were assigned to the indigenous labor force and the entrance of the laborers to such jobs from the outside of the

---

centrist perspective on the basin's history and of the existing literature see Quataert, "Masallar, Öyküler, Gerçekler Zonguldak Kömür Ocakları," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 139 (Temmuz, 200), pp.59-61.

<sup>217</sup> For the rules in recruitment process, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 93-95.

<sup>218</sup> Quataert and Duman reveal the memoirs of a coal miner, Ethem Çavuş, who began to work in the Zonguldak coal basin during the late nineteenth century. Ethem Çavuş's memoirs illustrate living and working conditions in the basin. For the system of rotation, see Donald Quataert and Yüksel Duman, "A Coal Miner's Life during the Late Ottoman Empire," *ILWCH*, no. 60 (Fall 2001), p. 154.

<sup>219</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 56.

basin's villages was strictly forbidden. Hence, the forced labor system concentrated on the indigenous labor force in the actual coal extraction process and some of the underground jobs.

As time passed, the forced labor regime loosened up and it was abandoned when the mines were transferred from the authority of the Naval Ministry to first the Ministry of Public Works (*Nafia Nezareti*) in 1908.<sup>221</sup> However, its importance was derived from its long lasting effect on the labor history of the basin. The forced labor regime brought about a hybrid labor force which retained its rural roots from the late nineteenth century up to now, through developing a rotational work pattern between the mines and villages. In addition, the attachment of certain underground jobs to the villagers of the basin led to a regionally segmented labor market, where laboring groups from particular districts outside of the basin concentrated in the surface jobs and auxiliary work categories in the pits.<sup>222</sup> Thus non-local Ottoman workers constituted the full time, permanent, and mostly auxiliary underground or surface labor force. In the course of time, the division of labor and job specialization on a regional basis became permanent practice.

The segments of the labor market multiplexed with the introduction of workers from the Balkans and after the entry of the foreign companies, foreign personnel. The foremen and small numbers of the supervisory cadres were composed of Croats, Bulgarians and Montenegrins. Some of the foreign workers resided permanently at the mines. Their daily wages were higher than those of the local workers and most of them occupied high positions such as chief engineer or chief foreman.<sup>223</sup> On the other hand, the European personnel of the

---

<sup>220</sup> Anil and Merey, Vol. 2, p. 93.

<sup>221</sup> In general the abolition of the forced labor regime was dated 1921 with Article 151. However, its abolition came just after the 1908 revolution. As a practice of the Naval Ministry's administration, the forced labor regime was perceived as a military service to the state. The abolition of the Forced labor Regime can be considered as the part of the process with in which the administrative aspect of the basin was "demilitarized" so the labor aspect. For the abolition of the forced labor practice in 1908, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Havza-ı Fahmiyesinde Kömür istihsali," *Meslek*, no. 10 (24 February 1341-1925); and see Anil and Merey, 2, p. 89.

<sup>222</sup> The workers in auxiliary underground jobs and some surface jobs were originated from particularly the northeastern provinces of the Black Sea region, such as Trabzon, Rize, and Artvin and of the eastern Anatolia. Quataert, *Disintegration*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>223</sup> Quataert and Duman, p. 172; and Quataert, *Disintegration*, pp. 57-58.

companies constituted managerial cadres and engineers. From the late nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century the ethnic and regional segments in the hierarchy of labor process was kept and reproduced.

### The Legacy of Foreign Capital in the Basin: The Local Mine Operators and the Ereğli Company: 1882-1920

There is no doubt that the abolition of the state's monopsony over the coal market in 1882 constituted another breaking point in the history of the basin. The 1882 decision opened the path for the flow of large-scale capital, including capital of foreign origin. By the late 1870s, the Naval Ministry became unable to pay for the coal it purchased. The worsened situation and increasing pressure of the mine operators on the government led to the 1882 decision that granted the mine operators the right to sell forty percent of the coal and ninety percent of the coal powder on the free market.<sup>224</sup> The decision made coal production a profitable enterprise for the mine operators. After 1882 the government gradually increased the share of the coal to be sold by the mine operators on the free market and then abolished the state's purchasing share totally, with the condition of retaining the right to buy certain amounts of coal when necessary.<sup>225</sup>

By the 1880s, the capital structure of the basin changed considerably, when the individual operators and small-scale enterprises began to be absorbed by newly established Ottoman companies.<sup>226</sup> From the 1880s onwards, the Ottoman state supported private Ottoman capital in the basin in the form of tax reductions on export duties and customs duties

---

<sup>224</sup> Özek, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 12.

<sup>225</sup> "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 15 (24 March, 1341) (1925), p. 18.

<sup>226</sup> The İnsaniye, İnamiye, Eseyan-Karamanyan and Gürcü companies were the first companies in the basin to be formed by the Ottoman Muslim and Christian entrepreneurs. For the establishment of the companies, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, p. 41. For Karamanyan and Gürcü companies, see also Özek, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, pp. 26-27.

exemptions.<sup>227</sup> Until the entrance of French capital to the basin, the 390 mines <sup>228</sup> were exploited solely by Ottoman entrepreneurs.<sup>229</sup> However, the local operators could not retain their dominance as the 1882 decision also whetted the interest of foreign capital.

In 1896, a French company, the *Société d'Heraclee* (Ereğli Company) obtained the concession of the construction, administration and exploitation of a port and quay at Zonguldak. It also gained the right to build junction railroads to serve the mines and to exploit industrially all coal mines that the Company would have at its disposal, under the conditions determined by the imperial decrees of concession and by the laws and regulations of the Empire.<sup>230</sup> The entry of the Ereğli Company marks another breaking point in the history of the basin. For, as Quataert writes, "[t]his became the most important single venture of foreign capital in the Ottoman Empire to exploit mineral sources until the Mesopotamian oil fields were opened up."<sup>231</sup> The Company joined the basin with the greatest amount of capital and other small-scale operators were unable to compete against it. It acquired pits run by individual operators and those operated by the state in addition to abandoned pits.<sup>232</sup> It also pressured the existing companies by using its control of transportation facilities.

Around the turn of the century the Company began to concentrate a good many pits under its control and in the following years it established its monopoly over coal production. With time, the Company constructed a major infrastructure in the region; two coal-washing factories, a repair workshop, a coke and briquette factory.<sup>233</sup> The construction of a port in Zonguldak was the most important investment which brought rapid development to the basin.

---

<sup>227</sup> The 1882 decision in Quataert's words indicates "government reluctance to allow foreign corporate exploitation of the fields and its desire to keep coal mining in a less dangerous if also less efficient hand." Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 47.

<sup>228</sup> While *Meslek* gives the number of mines under exploitation as 390, in the Kastamonu Year Book of 1321(1906) their numbers between 1880s and 1890s, just before the entry of the Ereğli company, varied in between 73 and 97. Compare "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 15 (24 March, 1341) (1925), p.18; and *Kastamonu Vilayet Salnamesi*, 1321 (Annual of Kastamonu Province, 1903), p. 335.

<sup>229</sup> Around 1893, just before the entrance of the large-scale foreign capital, thirty-six percent of the operators in the basin were Muslim Turks and sixty-four percent of them were local Christians. Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 48; Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik* (TTK: Ankara, 1994), pp. 100.

<sup>230</sup> For the firman of concession, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 46-47; and, pp. 49-52.

<sup>231</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 41.

<sup>232</sup> Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, p. 54.

<sup>233</sup> Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, pp. 31 and 32



At the turn of the nineteenth century, coal production increased considerably and it became the most important resource of the Ottoman Empire in both volume and in value.<sup>234</sup> The Ereğli Company had an important share in total coal output. Between 1902 and 1907, it accounted for seventy-nine and seventy-seven percent of the total coal output of the basin, respectively.<sup>235</sup>

Entry of the Ereğli Company invited harsh rivalry between the Company and Ottoman mine operators. Although there was a tendency toward concentration of mines under the Ereğli Company, the small-scale undertakings survived either in rivalry with the Ereğli Company or as its subcontractors. Some of the small-scale companies that did not resist the pressure of the Ereğli Company retreated from the rivalry, leaving its pits to the Ereğli Company.<sup>236</sup> Nevertheless, the rivalry did not end. Throughout the initial decade of the twentieth century the French company was subjected to the hostility from the Ottoman regime and of local rivals within and outside the state apparatus.<sup>237</sup> The local entrepreneurs sought to exclude all foreign mining enterprises and they had some success with the support of the Ottoman government. The government tried to limit the further involvement of foreign capital in the mines and to increase its control over the mines via regulations, legislation and other means.<sup>238</sup> In the 1900s the government issued an order to prohibit the issuance or renewal of any mineral exploitation permits to foreigners until the promulgation of a new law. However,

---

<sup>234</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century coal constituted one-quarter to one-third of the total annual mineral production. The tendency continued in the initial years of the 1900s. Coal received a 44.4 percent share of the total revenues obtained from mining. For the proportion of coal extraction in the total annual mineral production, see A.Gündüz Ökçün, *İktisat Tarihi Yazıları* (Sermaye Piyasası Kurulu Yayınları: Ankara, 1997), p. 123; Jemal Bey, "Mines," in E. G. Mears, *Modern Turkey* (New York, n.p., 1924), p. 325; and Eldem, *Tetkik*, p. 43.

<sup>235</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 49. In addition, for the domestic purchaser of the company's coal, see *ibid.*, p.50.

<sup>236</sup> For this rivalry and the withdraw of the Eseyan Karamanyan company, see Sina Çıladır, *Zonguldak Havzasında İşçi Hareketlerinin Tarihi 1848-1940* (Ankara:Yeraltı Maden/İş Yayınları, n.d. ), p. 85.

<sup>237</sup> For instance, the Sarıcazadeler Company, which was established in 1900, by Ragıp Paşa from the Abdülhamid II's court, was one of the most serious rivals of the French Company. Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 65-66; and Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 35.

<sup>238</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century the government seemed to establish its control on the conditions of mine operations through organizing its branches in the sub-fields of the basin. It established offices in Kozlu, Çatalağzı, Alacaagzı, Amasra, Zonguldak and Kilimli with a large staff under the authority of the Naval Ministry. For the staff of the local branches see *Kastamonu Vilayet Salnamesi*, 1310 (Yearbook of Kastamonu Province, 1893). By means of the local branches the central office tried to control the Ereğli Company and the interference of the central office to the affairs of company seem to have acquired a harsh tone after the 1908 revolution. To see the government's effort to establish its control over the Ereğli Company's mining operations by means of its local branches, see Attila Erden Aytekin, *Workers of The Ereğli-Zonguldak Coal Basin, 1848-1922* (Master's thesis, Bilkent University, 2001), p. 12.

under European pressure in 1906 the government was forced to issue new laws more favorable to foreigners.<sup>239</sup>

The fluctuations in the share of foreign and native capital in the initial decade of the twentieth century indicate continual rivalry in the control of mining in the Ereğli basin. The increase in the number of coal operators inevitably invited a harsh rivalry between them. Until 1907 foreign shares steadily increased. However, after the 1908 revolution it declined in favor of the native capital considerably.<sup>240</sup> This might have been the outcome of the hostile attitude of the new government against the existence of foreign company to the detriment of the native entrepreneurs. During the spring of 1909, the newly elected parliamentarians from the Kastamonu region protested “against the ruination of Ottoman mine operators by the company.”<sup>241</sup> The hostility of the deputies from the region no doubt reflected the ongoing struggle in the region between the French company and the Ottoman capitalists for control of the mines. This struggle was accompanied by the labor unrest against the Ereğli Company. The strike waves of 1908 intensified popular hostility against the Ereğli Company in the following years.<sup>242</sup> Popular hostility was expressed in the form of crime as well. The company constantly faced robbery attacks on its mines. Such crimes against property were frequent in the basin and were directed only at foreign capital.<sup>243</sup>

The 1908 revolution brought substantial administrative changes to the basin. The administration of the mines were transferred from the authority of the Naval Ministry to first the Ministry of Public Works (*Nafia Nezareti*), and then the Ministry of Commerce, Agriculture and Mines (*Ticaret, Ziraat ve Maadin Nezareti*).<sup>244</sup> The abolition of the Naval Ministry's

---

<sup>239</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 52.

<sup>240</sup> Between 1903 and 1904 the share of foreign capital was approximately eighty-nine percent. However it declined to fifty-one percent in 1910 and forty-six percent in 1911. The share of Ottoman Muslim and Christian entrepreneurs increased in the 1910s to the detriment of the Ereğli Company. Ökçün, pp. 125 and 171.

<sup>241</sup> Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 54.

<sup>242</sup> For the 1908 strikes in the basin, see Sina Çılladır, *Zonguldak Havzasındaki İşçi Hareketleri ve İşçi Örgütleri 1908-1993*, (Karadeniz Ereğlisi:İlke Yayınları), pp. 3-4; and Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 64-66.

<sup>243</sup> See Aytakin, p. 14.

<sup>244</sup> The mine administration was reorganized as well. Its name was converted from the *Maden-i Hümayun Nazırlığı* (Department of Imperial Mines) to the *Maden Umum Müdürlüğü* (General Directorate of Mines). Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 15.

administration was a most important change, which brought "demilitarization" of the basin's administration in terms of labor management and management of mining activities. The changes were the outcome of the pressures of the mine operators, who complained about the disciplinary and harsh administration of the Naval Ministry's personnel.<sup>245</sup> After the Young Turk revolution, the personnel structure of the mine administration underwent thorough change and civil counterparts replaced the military officials of the Naval Ministry. The government's efforts to increase control over the operation of the mines led to a highly centralized organization of the mine administration.<sup>246</sup>

Despite the hostile attitude towards the Ereğli Company it managed to increase its power over the mines. On 5 March 1912, under pressure from the Ottoman Bank, the government granted major concessions to the company by which the company was relieved of almost all obligations to the Ottoman government.<sup>247</sup> Until the outbreak of the First World War, the company struggled with German, Russian and Italian companies that sought to control the basin.<sup>248</sup> Besides the rivalry between them, from the entry of the Ereğli Company to the outbreak of the war, the foreign capital in general managed to control more than 200 mines of the basin to the detriment of the Ottoman mine operators.<sup>249</sup>

The struggle between the foreign companies struggle to control the basin ceased with the outbreak of the First World War. The Ereğli Company had to retreat from the basin and the

---

<sup>245</sup> Hüseyin Fehmi (İmer), who appointed by the government to manage the basin on behalf of the government, stated that, due to the pressure of the mine operators, who complained about disciplinary and harsh administration of the Naval Ministry's personnel, and despite his unwillingness, he was appointed to the position general director with a wide range of powers. Despite his unwillingness, he was appointed to the position general director with a wide range of powers. Yunt, Kerim, ed. *Seçkin Türk Ormancısı Hüseyin Fehmi İmer Hayatı Hatıraları* (1871-1960) (İstanbul: Baha, 1973), p. 44.

<sup>246</sup> For the changes, see Ertekin. His study reveals the changes from the Maaş Defteri (salary register) of 1325. Accordingly, nearly all high and middle officials were assigned to their posts after July 1908 and a Number of employees who were removed from their offices were expelled from civil service. The following examples best reflected the increase in centralization; "the local branches always had to ask for the approval of the center even for the smallest construction work, smallest spending, employment of a single worker or granting their employees leaves of short periods. Every branch sent regular monthly detailed reports on spending and coal production of the sub-region under their responsibility," Aytakin, p. 15.

<sup>247</sup> Such as, to link railways via tunnels, to pay the government's share of eight percent from the port's income. For other details, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 78-80.

<sup>248</sup> Efforts of foreign capital to enter the basin came on the scene as early as 1900s. For instance, Abacıoğlu, who bought the right of exploitation of the Sarıcazadeler mines in Kozlu, respectively cooperated with British, Belgium and lastly German companies. Therefore the German billionaire Hügo Stinnes acquired the right to exploit the preceding pits of Ragıp Paşa. For the presence of foreign capital in the basin throughout the 1910s, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 64-71.

<sup>249</sup> *Meslek* described the period between 1903 and 1915 as "ecnebilerin hakimiyet devri" (the period of foreign capital dominance) " Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 15 (24 March, 1341) (1925), p.18.

basin was left to the administration of a military commission, called the *Harp Kömür Merkezi* (War Coal Center). The German-controlled War Coal Center administered the basin until the defeat of Germany in the war,<sup>250</sup> when German capital withdrew from the basin, selling its share to an Italian firm. In 1920, French troops occupied the basin and took control of the strategic Zonguldak port. They deployed military troops along the coasts of Kozlu, Kilimli and Kapuz and Ereğli's Bababurnu. The fifteen-month French occupation ended in June 1921. The Grand National Assembly government under the rule of the new political elite who had triumphed in the National Struggle took control of the basin. As an outcome of the National Struggle period and the population exchange clause of the Lausanne Treaty, the local Christian mine operators left the basin. Until the mid-1920s, the coal mining enterprise was carried under the dominance of the Ereğli Company in struggle with the local Muslim operators, who sought to take over a share of the mines left by the departed mine operators.

The period of the National Struggle brought about first intervention of the new political elite who sought to capture the leadership of the National Struggle and to legitimize their leadership with a nationalist/populist discourse. In this process, the basin came on the agenda as an area exploited by the Ereğli Company, under the French occupation. The basin under foreign dominance provided a suitable ground for the articulation of the nationalist populist discourse.

#### The Period of National Struggle and the Populist Intervention of the Grand National Assembly into the Conditions of Labor: 1921

In 1920 and 1921, the Ankara government made its first forays into controlling the basin by enacting three laws in the Grand National Assembly. The laws were enacted under

---

<sup>250</sup> During this period, the German capital in the basin initiated new investments and replaced the French capital. When the Russian fleet bombarded the Zonguldak port in 1915, coal production decreased immediately from one million tons to lower than 200,000 tons. Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi* (TTK: Ankara, 1994), p. 78.

the extraordinary conditions of the National Struggle period, as a reaction partly to the existence of foreign companies in cooperation with the allied powers<sup>251</sup> and partly to the alleged exploitation of Muslim Turkish workers mainly by foreign capital. The laws were, at the same time, the first labor laws of the newly establishing state, aiming at improving the living and working conditions of the mine workers in the basin. With the pro-labor provisions of the laws, the new government desired to show its sympathy towards the most oppressed sections of society, which was well represented by the mine workers. In fact, the nationalist and populist implications of the laws prevailed over the benefits they promised the workers. First, the laws did not cover the workers outside of the basin. The regional character of these pro-labor laws proves their symbolic importance and conditional interest of the new government towards workers at all. The laws gave the state more control over the foreign originated capital, presented as exploiting labor of the Muslim Turkish people of the basin. On the other hand, in spite of the pro labor contents, the laws also provided the government to prevent the development of a worker movement and of independent labor organization in the basin. The contents of the laws and the related debates in the Grand National Assembly show the state's early vision on the different dimensions of the labor question. The new laws regulated relations of state with labor in a paternalist model.<sup>252</sup>

The first law, Law No. 11, legislated on 15 August 1920, imposed an additional export tax (*ihracat resmi*) on supplied coal of three liras from washed coal and two liras from unwashed coal per ton.<sup>253</sup> In general, the debates leading up to the ratification of the laws

---

<sup>251</sup> The extraordinary conditions of the National Struggle period laid the ground for suspicion about foreign capital. However, this did not bring a hostile attitude towards the foreign companies. For instance in 1920, Celaleddin Arif Bey, the National Assembly's second president, sold his license of the Ereğli mines to Italians while Turkey was at war with the Italian state. After long discussions, in a session headed by Mustafa Kemal Paşa, Celaleddin Arif Bey was acquitted and it was declared that his transaction was an ordinary commercial activity. Quoted in Yahya Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisat Tarihi* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994), p. 192.

<sup>252</sup> For a general evaluation of the literature on these laws with their social, economic and political implications, see Makal, *Türkiye'de Tek Partili Dönemde*, pp. 320-328. In general the laws are discussed as pro labor intervention of the Grand National Assembly to the worse living and working conditions of the mine workers. However, the protectionist side of the paternalism once again veils its social control and discipline dimension.

<sup>253</sup> Yunt, pp. 58-9. Until that time, Zonguldak- Ereğli coal had not been subjected to export taxes, simply because it had served primarily the needs of İstanbul. Hüseyin Fehmi İmer noticed his role in finding source of additional income to national struggle forces, suggesting imposing additional tax to per tone of extracted coal in the basin. The coal operators seem to have removed their loss by reflecting the burden of the additional tax on the coal purchasers. In his memoirs, İmer did not imply any hostility between the nationalist body and the foreign capital at the basin. İmer was dismissed from his post in 11 May 1921. What cause his dismissal was not clear in his memoirs.

indicated the nationalist vision of the political elite in reference to the foreign originated capital and worse labor conditions in the basin.<sup>254</sup> In the debates the deputies underlines that an export tax would affect directly the coal mining companies of the foreign capital in the basin and the allies at Istanbul, who were the primary purchasers of the basin's coal. It would also provide an additional income to the Ankara government, which was in need of revenues.<sup>255</sup> The labor issue in the basin was also discussed in the Assembly. The companies were accused of being indifferent to the living conditions of the Muslim workers. During the discussion, although some deputies suggested a supplementary article which would bring an additional tax that would then be applied to workers' health care and compensation payments, the proposal was refused on the pretext that it was not directly related to the content of the export tax.

The following laws in 1921 were to regulate the labor conditions in the basin in favor of the workers. Law No. 114, the *Zonguldak ve Ereğli Havza-i Fahmiyesinde Mevcut Kömür Tozlarının Amele Menafi-i Umumiyesine Olarak Furuhtuna Dair Kanun* (Law on selling the coal powder of the Zonguldak and Ereğli coal basin for the general interests of the workers) was passed on 28 April 1921. It provided benefits to the mine workers from the revenue of the coal powder produced in the basin. However, the powder issue led to heated debates between the deputies.<sup>256</sup> A great deal of the debate focused on whether ownership of the coal powder belonged to the state, the mine operators, or the workers. The minister of economy, Mahmut Celal Bey, defended the proposal in reference to the ethnic/ religious identity of the workers, most of whom were Muslim Turks, describing them as a destitute, hungry and indigent mass. He declared that the National Assembly was the protector of the poor and that generosity towards the poor belonged to Islamic law judgments. Other defenders of the

---

<sup>254</sup> For the debates on labor conditions and necessity to keep workers safety and health, see *ibid.*, pp. 240 and 246-247.

<sup>255</sup> For this nationalist sensitivity behind the law, see the discussions held in the Grand National Assembly; the Republic of Turkey, TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 3, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1 (Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1981), pp. 238-248.

<sup>256</sup> For the discussions on Law No. 114, see Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, Cilt 10, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 2 (Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1958), pp. 25-32.

proposal described the workers not as men earning wages by their labor, but as poor in need of the protection of the National Assembly. One of the deputies against the bill, Emin Bey, accused Mahmut Celal Bey of “bolshevism” and others attracted attention to the fact that it was not only the basin's workers, but also all people of the country who suffered due to the war. In the end, the proposal was presented not as a threat to the mine operators and companies, but as a gesture to the poor workers of the basin, who would be able to obtain a small amount of aid from this additional source of income.

Law No. 151, the *Ereğli Havza-i Fahmiyyesi Maden Amelesinin Hukukuna Mûteallik Kanun* (Law concerning the rights of mine workers of the Ereğli coal basin) was the first comprehensive law of the National Assembly on labor issues that defined the worker as a legal personality. It was enacted on 10 September 1921, just after the withdrawal of the French troops from the basin.<sup>257</sup> Aimed at protecting the workers' rights against capital, the law consisted of fifteen articles, imposing certain duties on the coal operators, readjusting, in detail, the living, and working conditions of the mine workers. The law banned the forced labor regime of the Dilaver Paşa regulation. It forbade the employment of boys under eighteen in underground jobs. It also restricted working hours to eight hours a day and imposed double pay for extra work. The law required the formation of a commission of three persons who would represent the mine operators, workers and the Ministry of Economy.

The task of the commission was to determine a minimum wage level for the workers. The law also imposed several requirements on mine operators, such as building dormitories and baths for the workers, keeping regular records of their employees, paying compensation to the relatives of workers killed in accidents or to workers who lost their personal property during work, providing medical care and ensuring the medical treatment of the injured free of

---

<sup>257</sup> In preparing the proposal of Law No. 151, Mahmut Celal Bey, minister of economy, corresponded to Hüseyin Fehmi Bey, director of the Ereğli Mines, requesting a report on labor capital relations in the basin. Although the preliminary study on such a law was handled in mid-1920, the law was enacted with a one-year delay, in mid-1921. For these correspondences between 16 August 1336 and 14 September 1336, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 114-115,

charge. The mine operators were also obliged to open schools for the young workers and to provide teachers. Article 4 of the law regulated the establishment of the *Amele Birliđi* reserve and aid fund. It was to be financed by the mine operators and workers every month with one percent of total wages. The *Amele Birliđi* was to be granted the authority to inspect the records of the mine operators and protect the rights of the workers or their relatives in court when workers were victims of accidents.

The heated debates in the general council of the Assembly illustrate the early vision of the political elite's on labor question. In the debates, some of the deputies underlined the necessity of a labor law which would cover not only the coal mining labor, but also all of the workers. Some others considered the obligations imposed on the mine operators to be too much, and would decrease the competitive edge of the Zonguldak coal in the domestic market. The minister of economy, Mahmut Celal Bey, replied to the objections, citing the foreign origin of the capital in corporation with the occupying powers in Istanbul, and the exploitation of the Muslim/Turkish workers.<sup>258</sup> Debates focused on whether government intervention in organizing a worker's association in the name of the *Amele Birliđi* was proper or not signaled existence of alternative views. However, the deputies who defended state intervention on the grounds of the potential threat an unsupervised or unconfined labor force rose prevailed against those critical to the state intervention.<sup>259</sup> Accordingly, a state controlled workers' association would prevent the maltreatment of mine operators by protecting workers' rights as well. The state was once again positioned as the protector and supervisor of the workers, who allegedly could not defend themselves because of their profound ignorance. The same ignorance would make them potential threat to the social order. The deputies described the workers as passive objects who would be manipulated easily by certain ideologies or the mine operators or companies of foreign capital.

---

<sup>258</sup> For Mahmut Celal Bey's answer, see Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, Cilt 10, Devre 1, p. 214.



Promulgation of Law No. 151 did not bring quick implementation. In fact, the new government did not develop a new outlook on the workers, but desired to reform working conditions as an instrument of controlling foreign capital and labor unrest in the basin. Two years delay in the establishment of the *Amele Birliđi*, and its immediate establishment just after the three serious strikes in the basin prove the government's intention of control rather than supporting the worker's cause. The *Amele Birliđi* was established as a response to a strike wave, organized by the basin's workers in July 1923. The workers demanded their rights, some of which had been granted by Law No. 151, but not implemented properly. The arbitrarily imposed fines, long working hours, slow level of wages based on the unjust piecework system, and the employment of foreign subjects in the skilled, and so well paid, positions were some other complaints of the workers.<sup>260</sup> The wide variety of the participants from different occupational categories indicates the workers' ability to use work stoppage as an instrument of their demands. Lead by the transportation workers, the strikes spread rapidly among the underground workers and the coal washery workers.

The 1923 strikes of the Istanbul Trolley Workers seem to have influenced the workers of the Zonguldak basin. The strikers imposed their demands on specifically the Eređli Company, which dominated the basin. The strikes also drew the attention of a worker's association. After the last strike, Rasim řakir from the *Türkiye Umum Amele Birliđi-TUAB* (Turkey general workers association)<sup>261</sup> tried to establish a branch of TUAB among the mine workers at Zonguldak. However, he failed in his objectives.<sup>262</sup> Both the strike wave and the attempts to organize mine workers in a more permanent manner alarmed the government.

---

<sup>259</sup> Kastamonu deputy Abdulkadir Kemali Bey pointed out the potential threat if the government did not control the fifteen thousand workers of the basin. See, *ibid.*, p. 212.

<sup>260</sup> For the 1923's strikes in the basin, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası* and Turgut Etingü, *Kömür Havzasında İlk Grev* (İstanbul: Koza Yayınları), pp. 78-98.

<sup>261</sup> For the establishment and abolition of the TUAB, see Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar (1908-1925)* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1978), pp. 339-341. For TUAB's activities in Zonguldak, see Sina Çıladı, *Zonguldak Havzasında İşçi Hareketlerinin Tarihi 1848/1940* (Ankara: Yeralı Maden/iş Yayınları, 1977), pp. 136-141.

<sup>262</sup> Booklet printed by the TUAB, summarized the activities of the association between 20 December 1338(1922) and 1 April 1340(1924), points out the TUAB's attempts to organize Zonguldak mine workers. Accordingly, the TUAB representative went Zonguldak on the invitation by the Zonguldak mine workers. However, due to the pressures from the Zonguldak provincial government and the Mine Office, the

In December 1923, the government established the *Amele Birliđi* on the grounds of the fourth article of Law No. 151.<sup>263</sup> Although the government sided with the workers' cause in the strikes, due to the foreign origin of the mining companies, it preferred to control the workers' resistance in a social security establishment under the authority of the state.

Until the foundation in the basin of the first labor unions in 1946, the *Amele Birliđi* played its part in bringing the state's paternalist policies to the workers, providing them with a social security system, solving disputes among the workers and the mine operators, and determining minimum wages with the representatives of the mine operators and functioning as a workers' representative organization. By organizing the *Amele Birliđi*, the state sought to provide a social security system to the mine workers and a mechanism of control over the mine operators, most of whom represented foreign capital. The revenues of the fund came both from one percent of wages to be paid by the workers and their employers, and from fines imposed on workers who were caught stealing coal, damaging the working materials and other such destructive behavior.<sup>264</sup> Albeit a social security organization, it covered a limited number of workers. Although the goal was to provide the mine workers and their families with social and economic aid, the *Amele Birliđi* served only the men who worked without interruption at least ninety days a year and lived in the mine area. The rotational workers, who constituted the great majority of the work force, were not eligible because they worked fifteen days at a time and lived in villages with their families.<sup>265</sup>

---

representative could not achieve progress in organizing the mine workers despite of their awareness of their conditions and their desire to challenge the existing situation on behalf of the workers. TUAB's attempts seem to have been hindered by the official bodies who were scared of an independent labor organization and so a militant labor movement. For the details, see Mete Tunçay, *1923 Amele Birliđi* (İstanbul: BDS, 1989), pp. 152-154

<sup>263</sup> Although some sources argue that the actual establishment of the fund could have been possible only with the promulgation of the *İhtiyat ve Teavün Sandıkları Talimatnamesi* (Regulation on reserve and aid funds: No. 2608, 22 July 1923), the *Yevmiye Defteri* (pay list) of 1338 in the Karaelmas University Archive suggests that the mandatory contributions of the workers to the *Amele Birliđi Teavün Sandığı*, in the form a one percent wage deduction was in force as early as 1922. Aytekin, p. 13.

<sup>264</sup> Sina Çiladır, "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında İşçi Hareketi ve Sendikacılık," *Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 3 (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p. 558.

<sup>265</sup> It is known that the workers who were not members of the fund were called *cüzdansız amele* (worker without file/papers). They and their families did not receive aid from fund. For the conditions of benefiting the fund, see T.C. Çalışma Ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, *Ereğli Kömür Havzası Amele Birliđi Biriktirme ve Yardımlaşma Sandığı* (Ankara: Varan Matbaacılık, 1998), pp. 65-68.

The establishment of the *Amele Birliđi* also aimed at limiting the ability of the workers to create independent forms of expression and organization. The association was not an autonomous establishment but directly linked to the Ministry of Economy.<sup>266</sup> Likewise, in a short time, the state abolished an independent organization, the *Kahya Teşkilatı* (Steward Association), which had organized the workers who loaded extracted coal from the shores between Eređli and Çatalađzı coast to the ships via boats and barges. In 1924 the *Havza-i Fahmiyye Deniz Amaleleri Cemiyeti* (the coal basin marine workers association) replaced the abolished *Kahya Teşkilatı*. Like the *Amele Birliđi*, the Marine Workers Association was put under the authority of the general directorate of the coal basin (*Havza-i Fahmiyye Umum Müdürlüğü*). After the 1923 strikes, law and order was established under the control of the *Amele Birliđi*. The state left labor problems of the basin on the hands of the coal mining undertakings and the *Amele Birliđi* until the mid-1930s.

#### The Departure of the Local Christian Mine Operators: 1920-1923

Before the Balkan wars, the share of the Ottoman subjects in coal production increased considerably. Between 1908 and 1911 the share of Muslim Turkish coal operators was 21.35 percent and Christian subjects was 26.34 percent. However, in the same period, the share of the Eređli Company declined in 52.01 percent.<sup>267</sup> There is no available data which indicates the fluctuations in the share of different actors in total coal production between 1912 and 1920. However, the considerable position of the Christian entrepreneurs was hit in the period of the National Struggle. The 1920s witnessed an immediate change in the composition of capital by removal of the local Greek mine operators as the result of the National Struggle

---

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>267</sup> It should be noted that the share of the Eređli Company must have been higher than these figures, for some mines that were formally operated by Ottoman subjects were, in reality, controlled by the Eređli Company. However, the total share of the Ottoman subjects cannot be undervalued in respect to the share of the Eređli Company. For the figures, see Ökçün, pp. 125 and 171.

period and the population exchange clause of the Lausanne Treaty. A comparison between local Muslim and Christian coal operators before and after the National Struggle gives a clear idea of the immediate change in the capital composition of the basin. The total number of the local Christian merchants registered with the Zonguldak Chamber of Commerce and Industry between 1919 and 1922, was 240, including mine operators.<sup>268</sup>

Between 1921 and 1922, most of the local Greek and Armenian mine operators left the basin.<sup>269</sup> The local Greeks had constituted the wealthy social strata of Zonguldak province. They also constituted part of the skilled mine labor, including foremen, technicians, engineers and craftsmen such as blacksmiths, builders, carpenters, stonecutters and bricklayers. They left an important amount of real estate behind. Their migration changed the profiles of the tradesmen and small scale mine entrepreneurs who remained. The correspondences between the Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Dahiliye Vekili*), the Zonguldak Provincial Governor (*Zonguldak valisi*) and the Zonguldak Province Settlement Employee (*Zonguldak Vilayeti İskan Memuru*) give an idea about the wealth of a number of the local Greeks.<sup>270</sup> The table below documents real estate in Zonguldak and its three districts Devrek, Bartın and Ereğli, which were left by the local Greeks.<sup>271</sup>

---

<sup>268</sup> Among the best known mines owned by the local Christian operators were the no. 63 mine of Rombaki and Panalopos, and Boyacıoğlu Anesti, Sarrafim, and last the İhsaniye pits at Kozlu. Zonguldak Sanayi Odası, p. 60.

<sup>269</sup> Throughout the National Struggle, the nationalist forces deported the local Greek males between fifteen and fifty from Ereğli and Zonguldak to areas in inner Anatolia, such as Kastamonu and Bolu. Some of the local Greek and Armenian mine operators might have left the basin by deportation. Some others who tried to stay in could not save themselves from deportation. For instance, a local Greek mine operators who donated money for the construction of Zonguldak Hospital in 1920, Boyacıoğlu, was deported from Zonguldak because of his selling cannon balls to Greek military forces. See Ali Sarıkoyuncu, *Milli Mücadele'de Zonguldak Havzası* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992), pp. 218-221.

<sup>270</sup> See 6/2/1926, Catalog no. [PMRA 272..0.0.12 / 47.88.4]

<sup>271</sup> The table was prepared by the Zonguldak provincial government for the Ministry of Internal Affairs. See correspondence Fî 4 Şubat 1926, Dahiliye Vekalet-i Celilesine in, Ibid.

Table 1. Real Estate Left by Greek Exchangees

Kazası (District)	Kabil-i iskan olup icara verilen (hired dwelling which are suitable for inhabitation)		Beher haneye dörder nüfustan kaç alienin iskan edilebileceği (Number of families with four people per house)	Tarla ( Land)	Bahçe ve arsa (garden and lot)	Hane inşası suretiyle (By building house)		İzahat (Explanations)
	Hane (House)	Dükkan (Shop)	Aile (Family)	Dönüm (1000 Squire Meters)	Kıt'a (Portion)	Zürra' hane (farm stead)	Sanatkar hane (work shop)	
Zonguldak	50	16	13	200	28	2	15	Demirci, dülger, marangoz, taşçı, duvarcı (Blacksmith, builder, carpenter, stonecutter, bricklayer)
Ereğli	29	30	7	395	19	5	5	"
Bartın	40	14	10	174	22	1	5	"
Devrek	0	0	0	160	0	1	0	Şehir harici (exterior of the district)
Toplam (Total)	119	60	30	926	69	9	25	

Source: Zonguldakta iskana elverişli hane ve muhacirin hakkındaki raporun taktimi, 6/2/1926, Catalog no. [PMRA, 272..0.0/ 12 47.88.4]

There are no data available on the total number of the local Greeks who lived in the basin before the population exchange. However, the table below gives an idea about the population composition of Zonguldak and its districts around 1918 (1334). According to the 1918 population figures, Greeks comprised approximately 2.5 percent of the total population of Zonguldak province with its districts. Comparing the amount of the real estate the Greeks left with their percentage in the total population of the district, the wealth of 2.5 percent becomes obvious. The 1918 statistics <sup>272</sup> show the local Christians and the population of Zonguldak district as such:

Table 2. Population Figures of Zonguldak in 1918

Kazalar (Districts)	Türk ve Müslüman (Turkish and Muslim)		Rum (Greek)		Ermeni (Armenian)		Yekunu Umumi (General Sum)
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Zonguldak	15,330	13,007	680	420	400	356	30,193
Ereğli	21,036	19,531	530	470*	25*	102	41,794
Bartın	39,880	34,094	310	236	165	115	74,800
Devrek	26,118	27,052	250	155	300	374	54,249
Yekuni Umumi (General Sum)	102,364	90,684	1,770	1,171*	990*	947	201,036

Source: Abdullah Cemal, *Türkiyenin Sıhhi İktimai Coğrafyası: Zonguldak* (Ankara: Öğüt Matbaası, 1922), p. 17.

<sup>272</sup> While checking the accuracy of the figures, the Numbers that I marked with "\*" seem to be incompatible to the general sum columns. When we add the Numbers horizontally and vertically, only the horizontal sum column comes out wrong. However, there was not a great difference between the actual sum and the marked figures.

Comparing these numbers to the figures of the 1927 population census, for instance, the Christian population comprised only 0.22 percent of the total population of the province.<sup>273</sup> Considering the resident foreigners, including the French and Italian personnel with their families who were hired by the mining companies, it seems the local Christian communities disappeared totally.

The status of the mines left by the departing owners was determined as required by the population exchange agreement between Greece and Turkey and the Dilaver Paşa regulation. Articles No. 2 and 14 of population exchange agreement regulated the status of properties belonging to the exchangees of both countries. In accordance to the related articles, the mines left by the Greek exchangees passed to the Turkish state.<sup>274</sup> Furthermore, with respect to the Dilaver Paşa regulation, pits not operated throughout a period of three months without valid reason were counted as abandoned. Concessions of coal extraction were declared invalid and the right to operate pits was passed to the government's possession. In reference to the Mine Regulation, the pits left by the local Greeks were operated provisionally by the *Zonguldak Defterdarlığı* (Provincial Treasury of Zonguldak) in the name of the Ministry of Finance.<sup>275</sup>

By 1923, one of the actors was eliminated from the coal mining industry. The pits left by the local Christian communities of the basin were either operated by the contractors under the authority of the Basin Head Office or transferred to some of the Muslim-Turkish entrepreneurs. The Yearbook of Turkish Commerce dated 1924-1925 (1340-1341), projects the composition of the capital after the removal of the Greek and Armenian entrepreneurs.<sup>276</sup>

---

<sup>273</sup> See T.C. Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *28 Teşrinievvel 1927, Umumi Nüfus Tahriri III, Mufasssal Neticeler* (Ankara: Başvekalet Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1929), p. 62.

<sup>274</sup> For the related articles of the Population Exchange Agreement and their implementation in regards to the abandoned mines of the exchangees, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 1, pp. 160 and 161, and Vol. 2, pp. 202-204.

<sup>275</sup> For the status of the abandoned pits in the Ereğli coal basin, see also Hüseyin Fehmi İmer, *Ereğli Maden Kömürü Havzası Tarihçesi* (Zonguldak: Ali Rıza İncealemdaroğlu Matbaası, 1944), pp. 39-40.

<sup>276</sup> See *Türk Ticaret Salnamesi, Birinci Sene, 340-341* (İstanbul: Ebbüziya Matbaası, 1341). The same source manifests the replacement of the Christian tradesmen and artisans by Muslim Turks. Compare list of the tradesmen and artisans to the lists of those before 1922. See Zonguldak Sanayi Odası, pp. 56-59.

Muslim Turkish miners, some of whom had already operated mines before the Republican era, began to operate some mines previously under the control of the local Christian operators.<sup>277</sup>

By the mid-1920s, large-scale foreign companies such as the Ereğli Company made up of French capital continued their existence in the basin. The Ereğli Company maintained its monopoly to a certain extent, controlling the Zonguldak port, railways and mines. Furthermore, the addition of two coal-washing factories expanded its market share in washed coal and gave it a privileged position among its rivals. The Sarıcazadeler Company, financed by Italian capital, operated valuable mines at Kozlu, Kandilli and Alacaağzı. Along with them was the *Maadin-i Osmanlı Anonim Şirketi* (Ottoman mine joint stock company) which had run İnağzı pits, which however interrupted its operations for a while.

The period between 1920 and 1925 saw a recovery of the previous positions for the coal mining enterprises. In 1920 total coal production in the basin hardly exceeded its 1914 level. However from 1920 to 1925 the total coal production increased from 560,000 tons to 958,000 tons.<sup>278</sup> In the initial years of the 1920s the Republican state left the production conditions totally to the hands of the internal actors of the basin. The period between 1920 and 1925 was a formative period for the Republican state and the leading political cadres were engaged primarily in the consolidation of the newly established political rule and elimination of the political opponents. Besides, through the 1920s the Republican government had no clearly defined conception of a coal policy neither had been in such necessity due to lack of a sufficient industrial base and transportation facilities in the country.

---

<sup>277</sup> Among them Süleyman Sırrı Bey, Mehmet Maksut Bey, Müftüzade İbrahim Hakkı, Çakalzade Mehmet Efendi, Bekir Sıtkı Bey can be counted. In the early 1920s, Mehmet Arif Bey, Cafer Efendi, Kemal and Naci Bey, Nuhzade Mehmet Bey, and Rifat Kamil Bey were among the prominent Muslim Turkish miners. Madenci Sabri Bey, Kasapzade Kazım Bey, and the descendants of Halil Paşa and Mehmet Bey were some of the mine operators who ran the most lucrative mines of the basin. For the names of Turkish Muslim mine operators in 1924-25, see *Türk Ticaret Salnamesi*; and to compare the names to the names of the Muslim Turkish miners between the years 1919-1922, see *Zonguldak Sanayi Odası*, p. 56 and p. 113.

<sup>278</sup> In 1913, the total coal production was 826, 8 tons. It fell down to 651,52 tons in 1914. For the figures of annual coal production in 1910s, see Eldem, *Tetkik*, pp. 99 and 101. For the figures between 1920 and 1925, see TC. Ekonomi Bakanlığı Neşriyatı, *Türkiye Madenleri ve Kömürleri* (Ankara: n.p., 1935), p. 33.

## From the Rights of Muslim Workers to the Rights of Turkish Mine Operators: 1924-1925

In 1924 and 1925, a nationalist populist discourse began to articulate in a small circle who advocated the improvement of the conditions of Muslim mine operators in respect to the dominant position of the foreign capital. This critical circle legitimized their arguments on the grounds of the national economy policy, calling on the government for the protection of the Turkish coal operators through the state's regulatory intervention. The state's indifference to the production conditions and the government's lack of policy towards the basin's wealth became subjects of criticism from both the deputies of Zonguldak and small scale Muslim mine operators. In addition, one journal, *Meslek* (Profession) published a series of articles on the conditions of coal mining in the basin.<sup>279</sup>

Actually, what made the coal basin part of the national economy discourse was strongly related to dominant position of the foreign mine operators, namely the Ereğli Company to the detriment of the native mine operators. The national economy advocates saw the mines as a part of the national patrimony, offering the exploitation of the mines for the benefits of the country and its native capital. The relation of the mineral resources to the land, which was the territorial embodiment of the "nation," made mineral resources at the same time the "wealth of the nation." In this respect, the pro-nationalists of the time easily criticized the foreign dominance over the basin from the interest of the national community. As a result, the relation between mineral resources and territory easily merged the specific needs of the small-scale mine operators with the national interests. In that sense, the dominance of the Ereğli Company over the basin was criticized on the grounds that the wealth of the mines should be

---

<sup>279</sup>The publication of *Meslek* began in 1925. Its publication lasted thirty-three issue. It represented the corporatist solutions to the economic, political and social problems of Turkish society. In its various issues it argued the development of professional corporations which mediated between the state and society. It was critical about the liberal economic and political models, declaring the inefficiency of the parliamentary democratic system with its political parties. The anti-liberal, state centrist and corporatist ideas of the party well represented the ideas of the corporatist intellectual circle of the time. Although it gave some place to the problems of the working class, and it used class as an analytical category in understanding society, it did not offer a socialist or Marxist model. It rather articulated the National Economy doctrine with a strong state and a strong and self sufficient, independent and national economy. In this regard, *Meslek's* articles on the Zonguldak coal basin served the idea of a national economy, paternalist state-worker relations and the improvement of national capital in corporation with the state. For the stance of *Meslek*, see *Türkiye'de Dergiler -Ansiklopediler* (1849-1984) (İstanbul, Gelişim Yayınları, 1984), pp. 33-34.



transferred to national actors who could compete against the dominant position of the Ereğli Company with the government support.

A journalist of the time Akagündüz,<sup>280</sup> wrote his impressions in series of pamphlets, one of which was published in 1925 under the title of "*Can Damarlarımıza Dair Kırk Milyon Liramızı Çalıyorlar!*" (On our vital veins they steal our forty million liras!).<sup>281</sup> He likened the Ereğli Company to an extravagant heir who exploited Turkish wealth and manpower. It was like a snake coiling up over "our national wealth."<sup>282</sup> Accordingly, under such hardships, the Zonguldak-Ereğli mines appeared not to be a coal basin, but a land of chaos and one could not find a Turk concerned with the coal who did not suffer from this chaos.<sup>283</sup> The basin was subjected, thus, to two main threats: the elimination of the Turkish entrepreneurs and the monopolistic position of the foreign companies.<sup>284</sup>

The small-scale native mine operators had already articulated their interests in a national economy discourse as early as 1924, calling for state support against the dominance of the foreign capital. A report of 1924 submitted by the Muslim Turkish mine operators to the Turkish Grand National Assembly portrays tough competition between the Turkish mine operators and the foreign capital.<sup>285</sup> The Muslim mine operators voiced their opinions on a bill of law which would modify the Mine Regulation in favor of large scale Turkish and foreign capital. In the report the mine operators strongly criticized the government's policies on the basin. They underlined the uneven conditions of competition between them and the foreign companies and pointed out the government's blindness towards the monopoly position of the

---

<sup>280</sup> Aka Gündüz was also representative of the worker group in the İzmir Economy Congress of 1923. For his official relations with the labor issue of the time, see Tunçay, *Amele Birliği*, pp. 35.

<sup>281</sup> The full name of the pamphlet is Akagündüz, *Milli ve İktisadi Tetkikler Can Damarlarımıza Dair İkinci Tetkik Kırk Milyon Liramızı Çalıyorlar. Zonguldak Ereğli Havza-i Fahmiyyesine ve Türk Madencileriyle Madencilerin Düşer Oldukları Feci' sui Kasıdlardan Bir Kısımına Aid Tetkiklerin İkinci Kısmı* ( n.p., Yenigün Matbaası, 1341).

<sup>282</sup> Ibid., p. 13-14. The similar nationalist criticism was prevalent among the mine workers as well. For instance in a conversation made in 1930s, a retired mine worker, Ethem Çavuş, likened the company to a leech on the nation's body, draining its wealth. Donald Quataert and Yüksel Duman, p. 155.

<sup>283</sup> See Akagündüz, p. 3.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>285</sup> The report was submitted on December 1340, under the title of "*İstismar Kanunu Lahiyası Münasebetiyle Ereğli Ma'den Kömürü Havzasındaki Madencilerin Muta'alatı ve Temenniyatı*" (With regard to the proposal on law of mine exploitation the evaluations and wishes of the miners from the Ereğli coal basin)

Ereğli Company and an Italian company, which operated more than half of the pits in the basin. Both companies seem to have given no way to the entry of a powerful rival. According to the report, the rest of the mines, which either were operated directly by the state via the Mine Administration Office or by private operators, were not powerful enough to compete with the foreign companies.

The report noted how easily private mine operators and contractors could lose their mining permits because of the intolerant policies of the Mine Administration Office.<sup>286</sup> Since mines required continual expenditure for maintaining the production, the small-scale mine operators cannot keep their mines under the challenge of the foreign companies. Thus they easily lost their market position. To remove such obstacles they requested the government formulate protective measures which would enforce the position of the Turkish mine operators. They legitimized their urgent requirements such as a washing factory, to be constructed by the state, in return for the basin's financial contribution to the National Struggle in the form of export tax. A state-financed washing factory would put an end to the dependency of the small operators on the washing infrastructure of the Ereğli Company. The Ereğli Company's monopoly on the railway and Zonguldak port brought further dependency of the private mine operators. Clearly they asked the government for protectionist measurements such as protecting the basin's coal in the internal market against the competitive power of exported coal, for instance, by forcing government establishments to purchase the basin's coal.

The report was submitted to criticize the bill on Mine Regulation, which aimed at centralizing coal production on the part of the state or Turkish dominated private capital. The bill suggested the redrawing of the production divisions in the basin. The divisions would either be operated directly by the state or by joint stock coal companies to be formed with at least a fifty-one percent share of Turkish capital. In this case, small-scale coal operators would be

liquidated under the joint stock companies. The miners clearly wanted the government to find a balance between private and public interests without violating rights and benefits of its own citizens. Furthermore, they reminded their suspicion about foreign companies and the Greek origin Turkish citizens living in Istanbul. For them, the dominant position of Turkish capital in the joint stock companies would not prevent the domination of the foreign capital, since the Ereğli Company and Italian company could easily manipulate a fifty-one percent share of Turkish citizens through cooperating with Greek origin Turkish citizens in Istanbul.

In 1925, another channel, the *Meslek*, echoed criticism of the small mine operators, criticizing the government's support of and sympathy towards the Ereğli Company. *Meslek* devoted some of its issues between February and April 1925 to the mining conditions in the basin and the native mine operators in ruins. In its March issues, the *Meslek* rightly underlined some characteristics of the coal mining, such as the adequacy of small capital for the running of the mines as far as the mechanization was not required. Comparing the Ereğli Company with the small mine operators *Meslek* stated that both the foreign companies and the small mine operators ran the mines with similar traditional methods, primarily based on the intense use of the unskilled labor force. As the Ereğli Company did not transfer its profits to investment in the basin and not improve the mining conditions, the government should have prevented its reaping of the national wealth. Instead of backing foreign companies, who did not add any value to the basin, the Turkish mine operators should have been supported.<sup>287</sup>

The *Meslek*'s recommendations about a national mining policy are important since by 1925, the model it defined was to be implemented systematically in the basin. Both in its 10 March and 24 March issues, *Meslek* recommended the "nationalization" of the basin and

---

<sup>286</sup> Accordingly, when the mine operators failed to implement the technical and scientific requirements of the Mine Regulation in the pits, or when they stopped operating their mines for a period of three months then they quickly lost their permits. In this case, the mines passed under the possession of the Mine Administration Office. Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> The subheading of the article well illustrated *Meslek*'s national economy orientation; "Türkiye Maden Siyasetimizde Milli iktisadımızı Korumacı ve Kurtarmacı Bir Sistem Takib Edilsun" (A system which protect and save our national economy shall be followed in the mining policy of Turkey) . For the sub heading and the arguments, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 13 (10 March 1925), p. 4 . For the similar arguments, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Havza-i Fahmiyesinde Kömür İstihşali," *Meslek*, no. 11 (24 February 1341-1925), p.10, and "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 15 (24 March 1925), pp. 18-19.

strengthening of the national capital.<sup>288</sup> In its 31 March issue, after criticizing the sympathy of the trade minister towards the Ereğli Company and his despising of the native mine operators due to their backward mining, *Meslek* pointed out the necessity of formulating an economic policy towards the capital composition of the basin. Opposing the dominant position of the foreign capital in the basin, it advocated a program which would strengthen the native mine operators against the foreign capital and would create a favorable conditions in which the native capital was able to compete with the foreign one in an equal strength. <sup>289</sup> Although *Meslek* seems to have supported a solution in cooperative sort with the foreign capital, it did not refrain from criticizing the Ereğli Company which continued to employ non-Turkish personnel and did not use Turkish in its correspondences.<sup>290</sup> Another recommendation of *Meslek*, which would be exercised just after 1925, was the entry of a national capital and organization of the small-scale Turkish operators under the protective power of such a national bank.<sup>291</sup>

The call for state intervention in the capital composition of the coal mining enterprise gave its immediate fruit in the period between 1925 and 1934. By 1925 the path for the nationalization of the basin was opened through the first Turkification of its capital structure to a certain extent, then the full nationalization of the basin under state's ownership. The period between 1925 and 1934 can be classified as a sub-period of the nationalization

---

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> "Zonguldak-Ereğli Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. (31 March, 1925), p. 11.

<sup>290</sup> In the article, *Meslek* criticized the government in reference with the critical speech of Yusuf Akçora Bey in the session of Grand National Assembly, dated 17 March 1341. In his speech, Yusuf Akçora Bey criticized Minister of Public Works (*Nafia Vekili*) who declared on 12 June 1340 (1924) that all the companies would have to replace non-Turkish personnel with Turkish one. Both the *Meslek's* and Yusuf Akçora's criticisms echoed the implementations of the national economy policies of the Union and Progress Government in 1910s. Requirement of writing all commercial correspondences in Turkish was one of the best-known arrangements of national economy policy. Actually, the nationalist criticisms on the government's indifference in the uneven position of the Muslim Turkish mine operators in the basin called for a national economy policy towards the basin. For the speech of Yusuf Akçora Bey, see Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 15, Devre 11, İctima Senesi 11* (Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1976), p. 554. For the 1916 arrangement which required writing of all commercial correspondence in Turkish in the period of the Union and Progress Government see Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), p.60. A similar law would be enacted in the 1926. For the 1926 arrangement see, *Ayhan Aktar, Varlık Vergisi ve Türkleştirme Politikaları* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000), p.117.

<sup>291</sup> "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 13 (10 March 1925), p. 4 .

process which gained speed after the First and Second Five-Year Industrial Plans of the government.

### CHAPTER 3

#### RESTRUCTURING COAL MINING AS A POLITICAL INDUSTRY UNDER STATE INTERVENTION: 1925-1940

##### The Road to Full State Ownership of the Ereğli- Zonguldak Coal Basin

As the British Economic historian W.H.B. Court observed, coal mining is a political industry and this aspect of its history is dealt with wherever it serves to illuminate the role of the state.<sup>292</sup> In general the economic importance of coal for the nineteenth century modern industry, and hence for the regional, national or international markets called for early state interest in mining. Moreover, the labor intensive nature of the industry made coalfields densely populated areas and source of labor disputes. Labor aspects of the industry also invited the state's intervention in the working conditions and welfare of the mining communities.

A study of this particular industry in an exceptional economic and political period of the Turkey can illuminate the microcosm of complex relations between the state, entrepreneurs and labor force. The early Republican era of the Zonguldak coal basin can not be understood without considering the part played by the state. After 1925 the Republican state's energy

---

<sup>292</sup> Court's observation on coal mining as a political industry is cited in M.W.B. Kirby, *The British Coal Mining Industry 1870-1946* (Great Britain: The Macmillan Press, 1977), p. 1. The state's close interest in coal mining began in the nineteenth century. State intervention in the mining industry has grown significantly, culminating in the First and the Second World Wars. After the Second World War, nationalization of the mining industry under full state ownership came on the agenda. See Donald Reid, *Decazeville*, pp. 6-7.

policy evolved in two stages.<sup>293</sup> In the period between 1925 and 1934 it tried to create favorable conditions for the growth of large scale national capital in the basin. The late 1920s and the early 1930s saw early attempts at nationalizing the basin through backing large scale national capital. The growing involvement of the state in the basin first transformed its capital structure and then brought about the full nationalization of the basin under the pressure of the Second World War. Effective readjustment of the production conditions in the basin were to appear on the agenda of the state in the 1930s.

Until the mid-1930s the government refrained from direct involvement, preferring instead to support the national private capital in the basin through modifying certain articles of the Mine Regulation. As a result, large-scale Turkish capital entered the basin as a strong counterpart of the foreign companies. However, this did not bring the removal of the foreign capital. The foreign companies retained their majority position, monopolizing approximately seventy percent of the total coal production. On the other hand, they were compelled to accept the existence of the state-supported semi-official enterprise in the basin, İş Bankası. The state's policies towards the Zonguldak coal basin in the second part of the 1920s illustrated the National Economy policies in the sectoral context. There is no doubt that the National Economy policy of the Republican ruling elite was in continuity with the economy policies and official economy doctrine of the ruling elite of the 1910s, that is the Union and Progress governments.<sup>294</sup> In this line the state preferred to support the national capital through granting certain privileges. However, the state support of the national capital was a selective one. Mostly the national companies in close relation with the ruling circles reached opportunities from the government thanks to this very relation. The entry of İş Bankası in the coal sector

---

<sup>293</sup> Özen breaks up classifies the government's economic policies towards the basin in two-sub period. He characterizes the period between 1926 and 1937 as the period which preceded the government's direct entrepreneurship. The period beginning with 1937 witnessed state direct ownership. Although 1937 was a critical year that the government bought the Ereğli Company, the industrial plans of 1934 and 1936 signaled the government's changing view on the basin. So, to start the second stage by 1934 seems to be more meaningful. See Özen, *Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>294</sup> Boratav points out this continuity. For him, although 1923 represented a departure from the previous political system, it was not a breaking point in the economy policies and economy doctrine of the previous decade. From this perspective the period between 1923 and

with state support should be evaluated as an outcome of the state's general economic policies of the time.<sup>295</sup>

The second stage began in the mid-1930s, when the state first began consider its energy policy in relation to the coal industry. In the 1930s, the state's search to create a coal industry in the service of the state's initiated industrialization and expanding railway network brought about profound changes to the history of Zonguldak coal basin. Once the rapid economic development via state initiated industrialization became the main target of the government, the energy sector was based primarily on coal and so the Zonguldak basin acquired new importance in the eyes of the political cadres. Not only coal but also other minerals of the country, such as iron, lignite, copper and petroleum were taken into the consideration of the elite.

In this period the basin's future was conditioned by the statist industrial policies shaped by the 1934 and particularly of the 1936 Five-Year Industrial Plans. The First and Second Five-Year Plans reshaped the government's policy towards the coal industry. The new policy of the state on the basin was to bring first the nationalization of the French Ereğli Company in 1937 and then, under the pressure of the Second World War, the nationalization of the basin under the full ownership of the state in 1940. With the full state ownership, the remaining Italian and last private national capital left their place to Ereğli Coal Exploitation (*Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi*), a limited liability company of *Etibank* (a state organization for mining and electricity production) .

---

1929 bore characteristic features of the period between 1908 and 1922 in terms of economy policies. Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2002* (Ankara, İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2004), pp.39-40

<sup>295</sup> Boratav also points out the support of the state to İş Bankası in the context of National Economy policies. The interwoven relations between the directorate of İş Bankası and the government is another point Boratav emphasis. Ibid., p.41-



## The Entry of İş Bankası and the Provincial Nationalization of the Capital Composition: 1926-1933

The Republican state's interest in the capital composition of the basin reflected first in the legislative arrangements in mine legislation. The proposal discussed by the mine operators in 1924 was enacted, with certain modifications as Law No. 608 passed on 14 April, 1925 (1341). It modified Articles No. 45, 46, 61 and 71 of the Mine Regulation.<sup>296</sup> Particularly the amendment of Article No. 45 provided legal grounds for the entry of large scale Turkish companies in the basin. The article primarily arranged the conditions of operating the mines under direct control of the state. Until the 1925 amendment, the mines which were abandoned (*metruk ocaklar*), or newly discovered and available to mining (*mekşuf ocaklar*), and the pits those operation license had been abrogated (*ihaleleri münfesi ocaklar*) had been auction to contractors who would operate the mines on behalf of the Mine Directorship.<sup>297</sup> However the 1925 amendment facilitated the transfer of state controlled mines to national capital. Accordingly the mines described above were to be run directly by government or by a corporation of the government and Turkish operators or by Turkish joint stock companies with at least a fifty-one percent share of Turkish capital, within which the government received a dividend.<sup>298</sup>

The amendment clearly gave opportunity to the national capital in the run of the state-operating mines. It also gave small scale Turkish operators the chance to run state controlled mines, and so satisfied the demands of the complainant operators to a certain extent. But it primarily favored entrance of the large scale Turkish companies. Although it opened door for

---

<sup>296</sup> The article No. 46 redefines the category of *madeni mekşufe*, the pits which are not run for 15 years are recognized as discovered and available pits and pass to state. Article No. 61 redefines mine operators' duties submitting permanent residency for official correspondences and lastly Article No. 71 impose mine operators training of Turkish technicians, who hired foreign technicians due to lack of a Turkish counterpart. See Anil and Merey, Vol. 1, pp. 41, 55 and 59.

<sup>297</sup> For the discussions on Law No. 608 held in the Grand National Assembly, see Turkish Republic, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 17, Devre 2, İktima Senesi 2* (Ankara, TBMM Matbaası), pp. 101-102, and pp. 251-253.

<sup>298</sup> For article No. 45 and its amendments, see Anil and Merey, Vol.1, p.41.

<sup>299</sup> To compare content of Article No. 45 before and after the Law No. 608, see Anil and Merey, Vol. 1, pp. 40-41.

the foreign capital, it restricted share of foreign capital to forty-one percent.<sup>299</sup> The further amendment of the same article in 1929 by Law No. 1465 abrogated the condition of forming a Turkish joint stock company with at least a fifty-one percent share of Turkish capital in favor of the foreign capital, by the reason of discouraging the entry of foreign capital.<sup>300</sup> However, it abolished the rights of corporate exploitation of the pits by private coal operators with the state as well. With the 1929 amendment the government sought to eliminate small scale enterprises and replace them with large scale companies which would be more productive than the small operators.

It is striking that the 1925 amendment, which facilitated the entry of large-scale Turkish capital to the mining sector, came on the scene in the same period as the project of establishing an iron and steel industry in Turkey. In 1925 Professor Granigg from the Leoben Mining School of Austria was invited to Turkey to survey the lignite, iron ores, and waterfalls for electricity power plants.<sup>301</sup> He was also charged to research feasibility of establishing an iron and steel industry in Turkey. He carried on his investigation throughout 1925 and 1926. In his report he recommended the establishment of an iron and steel industry as the cornerstone of the Turkish industrial development and military defense.<sup>302</sup> Following Granigg's recommendation, in 1926, the president of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal Pasha announced a project to establish an iron industry and the need for improving the production conditions of the Ereğli coal.<sup>303</sup>

In the same year, the government demonstrated its intention to establish an iron industry by passing Law No. 786 *Demir Sanayiinin Tesisine Dair Kanun* (Law on the establishment of an iron industry). However, because the government had not set aside

---

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Granigg's 1925 report, 3/11/1925, Catalog no.: [PMRA, 030..10.0.0/175... 2086]

<sup>302</sup> For an evaluation of Granigg's suggestion of establishment of an iron industry, see also Afetinan, *Devletçilik İlkesi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Birinci Sanayi Planı 1933* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1972), p.48.

<sup>303</sup> See Mustafa Kemal's opening speech of the Grand National Assembly in November 1926. The speech is quoted in Afetinan, p. 103.

money for geological research and the establishment of an institution in pursuit of the project, the law was not realized.<sup>304</sup> Following the 1925 amendment and geological research for the establishment of an iron and steel industry, in 1926 a new actor, İş Bankası, with its joint stock companies, entered the basin.<sup>305</sup>

There is no clear connection supported by the primary documents of the time between entry of the İş Bankası to coal mining and the project of establishing the iron and steel industry. However, there would be a close connection between the increasing the interest of government in the basin's capital composition, which would be effective on the prospective iron industry. Similarly, concerning the state's early attempts in development of the railroad lines from 1924 on, the coal became one of the most important strategic products for the increasing number of new railroad lines which were ran mostly by the national companies.<sup>306</sup> The running of the coal mines by a semi-official large-scale Turkish capital would save both the iron industry and the railroad sector from the caprices of the private and more importantly of foreign capital. The capital composition of İş Bankası made it something more than a representative of national capital. Most of its shareholders were politicians or deputies of the Grand National Assembly. Furthermore, its mission of taking an active role in the commercial, industrial and financial fields of the Turkish economy and its harmonious relations with the government made its status a semi-official one.<sup>307</sup> By the entrance of İş Bankası, the scattered pits under the control of the small-scale and unproductive enterprises would be amalgamated

---

<sup>304</sup> Law No. 786 was enacted on 17 March 1926. However, in 1926, another expert, Dr. Luenius from Luxembourg, was invited to Turkey for an investigation on the condition of establishing an iron industry in Turkey. Although he assessed iron ore and examined the quality of Zonguldak coal for an iron industry, he left the country without submitting a report. For the full text of Law No. 786 and the investigations carried by the local and foreign experts, see Kemalettin Apak, Cevdet Aydınelli, Mehmet Akın and Hüsametdin Toros, *Türkiye Devlet Sanayi ve Maadin İşletmeleri* (İzmit: Selüloz Basımevi, 1952), pp. 111-113. Also compare Hüsametdin Toros, *Türkiye Sanayii "Devlet İşletmeleri,"* Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Güven Basımevi, 1954), pp. 42-44.

<sup>305</sup> For İş Bankası 's joint companies in the Zonguldak basin, see *Kömür Havzasında Türkiye İş Bankası 1926-1937* (n.p.: Devlet Basımevi, 1937); *Türkiye İş Bankası On Yılı 1924-1934* (n.p.: Devlet Matbaası, 1934); *Türkiye İş Bankası 26 Ağustos 1924 Kuruluşu, Çalışmaları, Eserleri* (Ankara, n.p., 1942)

<sup>306</sup> The first state attempts which would facilitate the nationalization of the railroads began with legislative regulations. On 22 April 1924, Law No. 506 was enacted to centralize the management of the railway sector under a state office. The same law enabled the state to grant the concession of operating certain lines to national companies. There was a parallel increase in the interest of the state in both railway transportation and coal mining. For the state's concerns in railways and its attempts to nationalize the railway sector via national companies in the 1920s, see Suavi Aydın, "Türkiye'nin Demiryolu Serüvenine Muhtasar Bir Bakış", *Kebikeç*, 11 (2001), pp.65-69.

and the prospective iron and steel industry would be integrated vertically under a national enterprise. Whatever the prime motive behind the entrance of İş Bankası into coal mining was, this entry marked a turning point in the history of the basin, indicating the government sought to encourage and expand national capital in the basin.<sup>308</sup>

There is no doubt that the encouragement of İş Bankası in the coal mining sector was the extension of the national economy policies of the early Republican elite who sought to reconstruct the economy in the service of the private national capital. The aim was to organize economy on the axis of private enterprise and to transfer capital gains to national actors.<sup>309</sup> In order to sustain the accumulation of capital gains in the hand of national enterprises, the government made certain arrangements, providing inducements and privileges to the national enterprises. While the 1925 and 1929 amendments on the Mine Regulation provided the proper grounds for the entry of the national capital to the mining sector, in order to sustain capital gains, it gave priority to the entry of large scale national capital rather than supporting the already existing small scale coal mining enterprises.

In 1926, the İş Bankası established two coal companies in the basin. The first, on 27 June 1926, was the *Kozlu İstismar Merkezi Madeni* (Kozlu Exploitation Center, later Kömür-İş), and then the *Türk-İş, Maden Kömür İşleri Anonim Şirketi* (Türk-İş- mine coal enterprise joint stock company) followed on 1 July 1926. The *Kozlu İstismar Merkezi Madeni* formed a partnership with a forty-nine percent capital share of the Ereğli Company, and on 1 April 1929 took the name *Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, Kömür-İş* (Kozlu coal enterprise Turkish joint stock company). Another national bank, *Türkiye Sanayi ve Maadin Bankası* (Turkish Industry and Mine Bank) also played a role in the basin, buying a ten percent share of

---

<sup>307</sup> For the status of the İş Bankası and its interwoven relations with the governing elite of the time, see Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, *Türkiye İş Bankası Tarihi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2001)

<sup>308</sup> Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 57.

<sup>309</sup> The national economy policies, implemented in between 1923 and 1929 were compatible with the national economy policies of the Union and Progress government of the 1910s. The Union and Progress government had also formulated its economy policies in the line of national economy, and had sought to create Muslim Turkish entrepreneurs throughout legal arrangements, regulations in the service of the Muslim Turkish capital. For the national economy policies in the context of İş Bankası, see Kocabaşoğlu, pp. 18-19; and for the national economy policies of the Union and Progress, see Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918* (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982).

the *Kilimli Kömür Madenleri Türk Anonim Şirketi* (Kilimli coal mines Turkish joint stock company) and in 1927, buying ten percent share of the *Kireçlik Kömür Madenleri Türk Anonim Şirketi* (Kireçlik coal mines Turkish joint stock company).<sup>310</sup> Both companies were established with the joint capital of private Turkish mine operators. However, the 1929 amendment enabled İş Bankası to get hold of Kilimli A.Ş., and then in 1935, the Kireçlik mines.<sup>311</sup>

Between 1926-1935, İş Bankası expanded its mining area, running pits in the Zonguldak, Kozlu, Kilimli and Kireçlik production districts.<sup>312</sup> In a short time it became one of the most important coal operators in the basin. In 1927 the companies of İş Bankası extracted 14.9 percent of the total coal production and this share increased to 37.25 percent in 1936.<sup>313</sup> In a short time, the companies widened their area of mining thanks to the revisions of the Mine Regulation in 1925 and 1929. The revised Article No. 45 of the Mine Regulation facilitated the transfer to Turkish companies of abandoned pits and pits which were newly discovered or the mining permits which had been abrogated.

Pits that belonged to the emigrated local Christians and the pits of those who had left the basin or escaped or went missing constituted the main area of production for the İş Bankası companies. The 1925 revision of the Mine Regulation and a number of governmental decrees facilitated the transfer of the abandoned pits to İş Bankası. A petition of complaint submitted by Dimitrios Panapolis on 6 March 1928 and related correspondences between the government offices, illustrate how the abandoned pits of the local Christians were transferred to Muslim miners or the companies of Turkish capital.<sup>314</sup> Panapolis telegraphed his complaint to Prime Minister İsmet (İnönü) Pasha, informing him about how half a share of pit number 63

---

<sup>310</sup> For the other partnerships of the *Türkiye Sanayii ve Maadin Bankası*, see Kemalettin Apak et al, *Türkiye'de Devlet Sanayi ve Maadinin İşletmeleri* (İzmit: Selüloz Basımevi, 1952), pp. 28-33. Comparing the İş Bankası, as an official bank the *Türkiye Sanayii ve Maadin Bankası* joint coal enterprise at the same year with İş Bankası, however unlike it, the bank did not expand its activities. It contended with small shares.

<sup>311</sup> For the transfer of the mines belonging to *Türkiye Sanayi ve Maadin Bankası* and small mine operators, see Kocabaşoğlu, pp. 293-294.

<sup>312</sup> For the founders and shareholders of the companies which were later bought by İş Bankası and other coal companies, see Hamit Tahsin and Remzi Saka, *Sermaye Hareketi* (İstanbul: Amedi Matbaası, 1930), pp. 400-410.

<sup>313</sup> See Özek, *Bir Deneme*, p. 59.

<sup>314</sup> For the Dimitrios Panapolis's complaint and related correspondences, see 16/9/1925, Catalog no. [PMRA:30.18.1.1 /15.58.1.]; and 28/3/1928, Catalog no. [PMRA: 30..10.0.0 / 1402:1.0].

had been illegally transferred on 13 December 1922 (1338) to Muhammed Arif, one of the Muslim mine operators. He accused Muhammed Arif of having prepared a fake proxy on the name of Panapolis, which transferred the right of operating pit 63 to himself. Panapolis objected to Muhammed Arif's rights on the pit. The pit should have been given in the status of abandoned pit and thus should have been operated not by private persons but by the Mine Administration Office.

However, the response to this complaint shows that a governmental decree which prohibited the transfer of the abandoned pits to private persons had come into force one day after Muhammed Arif's acquisition of half a share of pit 63. Thus the governmental decree of 14 December 1922 could not make Muhammed Arif's vested interests null and void. In the correspondences, Panapolis's objection was interpreted on the grounds of Article No. 61 of the Mine Regulation.<sup>315</sup> It was also rejected as required by decree of the Council of Minister on 30 September, 1925 (1341). The decree abolished the mining permits of operators who had gone missing or departed from the basin or fled to foreign countries or İstanbul. In accordance with the decree, the mines that belonged to such persons were designated discovered and available (*maadini mekşufe*) and were transferred to the state.<sup>316</sup>

Panapolis reason for calling the attention of the government official in 1928 to an incident in 1922 is another striking point. On 7 February 1928 the İş Bankası company, Kömür-İş, and Muhammed Arif Bey had contracted for the transfer of Muhammed Arif Bey's share of pit 63 to the company. Up to 1928 the pit had been run by Kömür-İş on behalf of the government's share and Muhammed Arif Bey. By Muhammed Arif's sale of his share, the company received the whole right to run one of the most important pits in the basin.<sup>317</sup> Panapolis seems to have been enraged at Muhammed Arif's unjust profits from this sale. The

---

<sup>315</sup> For Article No. 61 of Mine Regulation, see Anıl and Merey, Vol.1, pp. 55-57. The article required mine operators to notify a permanent residence for official communication and to appoint a director with a permanent residence near the pit.

<sup>316</sup> For the decree of 30 December, 1925, see *Tagayyüp, Müfarakat veya Firar Edenler Uhdesindeki Maadin İmtiyaz Hisse ve Hukukunun Fesih ve İptali Hakkında Karamame* Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, p. 204.

<sup>317</sup> For this contract, see İmer, *Ereğli Maden Kömürü Havzası*, pp. 40-41.

story of this former mine operator, Panapolis, illustrates the process by which capital structure of the basin was nationalized by means of state intervention.

The entrance of İş Bankası brought about a new balance in the composition of mining capital. In this balance, there existed a strong tendency towards the concentration of the mines in the hands of the companies which forced the small entrepreneurs to leave the area. An exchange written in 1927 between the Ministry of Economy and the Mine Administration Office reflects conditions of production in the basin after the entrance of the Bank.<sup>318</sup> The report stated that the balance between the different actors of the capital appeared to be in favor of large scale capital and detrimental to the small enterprises. Accordingly, while the companies were supported by certain banks, small entrepreneurs could not receive loans when they needed them.<sup>319</sup> Against the powerful position of the foreign companies, the report of 1927 offered strategies to strengthen the Turkish companies. Accordingly, all the production areas were divided between the concessionaires. The national companies did not have the chance to expand into new production fields. In such circumstances it would be better to improve their capital strength. However, to confine the large scale capital of the national banks or private entrepreneurs in the basin would be unproductive since the investment would begin to profit approximately after ten to fifteen years. Consequently, to maintain the existence of Turkish capital, it was recommended that the Turkish companies be supported financially by the state.<sup>320</sup>

A study written in 1930 verifies the competitive strength of the large scale companies against the newcomers and existing Turkish entrepreneurs. Accordingly, new mine operators

---

<sup>318</sup> Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü Archive, Report No: 1272, *İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye*, 1927. The exchange illustrates the government's basic concerns about the basin. The question-answer format of the report concentrated on the composition of the capital, the condition of the coal production, the nationality of the personnel who were employed in the large scale companies and the conditions of the mine workers. Content of the exchange proves of the state's interest in monitoring conditions of the coal production and capital conditions and its systematic effort for compilation of data about the commercial activities in that place.

<sup>319</sup> The Ottoman Bank was the creditor of the Ereğli Company, İş Bankası was the creditor of its joint stock mining companies, the Turkish Industry and Mine Bank was the creditor of the Kilimli Company and last the Banca Commerciale Italiana was the creditor of the Italian Türk Kömür Madenleri Anonim Şirketi. All these banks gave loans only to the companies they supported. Ibid, p. 30.

<sup>320</sup> Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü Archive, Report no: 1272, p. 45.

who sought to enter coal production had to face the competitive power of the companies. Among them, the Ereğli Company continued to threat small operators. To maintain its nearly monopolistic position, the Company seriously challenged any new entrepreneur who tried to enter the coal mining enterprise.<sup>321</sup> Furthermore the collaboration of the İş Bankası companies and the Ereğli Company created unfavorable conditions for the small entrepreneurs. When cooperation served their mutual benefits, the companies did not hesitate to share their infrastructures and even they established Kömür-İş as a joint stock company. With this corporation the Kozlu mines were run by two partners until the Kömür-İş bought all pits and installations of the Ereğli Company in Kozlu in 1930s.

In the late 1920s the government sought to support both large scale national and foreign capital in the coal mining. Hence, neither the existence of İş Bankası nor the government policies were in hostility towards the foreign counterparts. In this respect, the *Sanayii Teşvik Kanunu* (Industrial Inducement Code) provided encouragement to the mining companies regardless of their capital origin.<sup>322</sup> The mining companies, specifically the companies of İş Bankası improved their infrastructure and mining technology thanks to the exemptions the law provided. The *Kilimli Kömür Madenleri Türk Anonim Şirketi* (Kilimli Mines Turkish Joint Stock Company) formed by the joint shares of the private mine operators, was another company which utilized exemptions.<sup>323</sup> The Italian *Türk Kömür Madenleri A.Ş.* (Turkish Coal Mines Joint Stock Company) was another company that applied to the Ministry of Economy for the exemption license of the law.<sup>324</sup> Since it did not fit all of the criteria of the

---

<sup>321</sup> Hamit Tahsin and Remzi Saka, who occupied posts in the Ministry of Economy in 1930, underlined the aggressive competition of the Ereğli Company and its challenge to the new entrepreneurs. See Tahsin and Saka, p. 150.

<sup>322</sup> The coal mining companies utilized the opportunities that the law brought. They were exempted from certain taxes, such as the tax on building property (*müsakkafat vergisi*), the land tax (*arazi vergisi*), income tax (*gelir vergisi*), and certain license duties and such. Furthermore, the mining companies were to be free from custom duties when they had to import certain goods which were not manufactured or available in the country. For the opportunities the law provided to the mining companies, see İmer, *Ereğli Maden Kömürü Havzası*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>323</sup> See *İktisat Vekaleti Mecmuası* No. 12 (n.p.: Sanayii Nefise Matbaası, 1929), p. 346. The same source gives a list of various companies which benefited as of 1929 from the exemptions of the *Sanayii Teşvik Kanunu*.

<sup>324</sup> For the correspondences between Finance and Public Works Office and the Council of State, see 23/6/1928, Catalog no.: [PMRA, 30..10.0.07/174.205..7.]

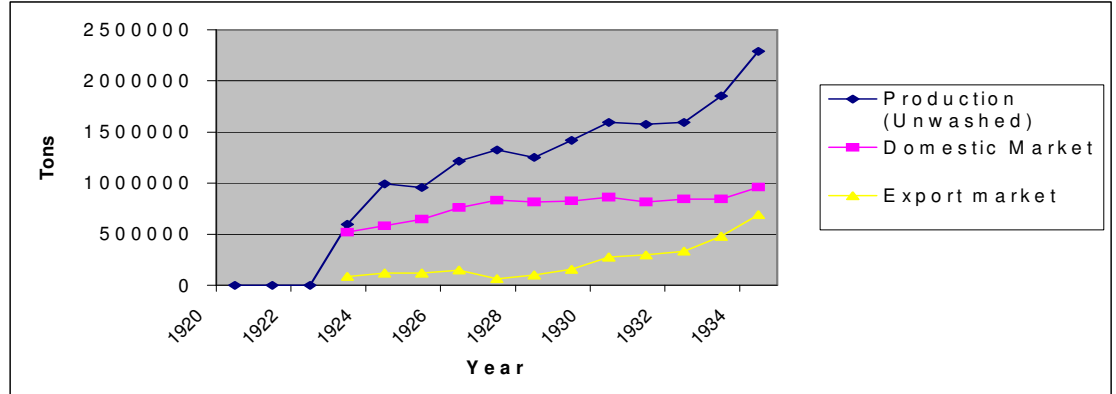


law, the law was modified by Addenda No. 1316 on 3 July 1928 (*müzeyyel kanun*).<sup>325</sup> Thanks to the addenda, the Italian company and the similar ones utilized the inducement of the law.

The state's intervention in coal production throughout İş Bankası companies brought the entrepreneurial rationalization of coal production to a certain extent.<sup>326</sup> The amalgamation of the scattered pits under the İş Bankası companies constituted an important step towards the rationalization.<sup>327</sup> By amalgamation, unproductive mines run by insufficient capital changed hands. By 1931 the Ereğli Company, the Türk Kömür Madenleri Company of Italian capital and the İş Bankası companies comprised approximately ninety percent of the total coal. Moreover, the dominant position of the foreign companies in total coal supply continued despite of the existence of the İş Bankası as the largest national enterprise in the basin.<sup>328</sup> This indicates that the project of the large scale companies to eliminate the small scale enterprises achieved at great extent at the beginning of the 1930s.

After 1925 coal production increased steadily. The annual coal production which reached the pre-World War I level in 1925 exceeded it in the following years.

Table 3. Annual Coal Production and Supply between 1920 and 1934. Source: TC. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, Madenlerimiz



1938-1939 (Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyat Müdürlüğü, 1940). For 1923-1938 figures see, p. 100. For the figures between 1920-1923, see TC. Ekonomi Bakanlığı Neşriyatı, *Türkiye Madenleri ve Kömürleri* (Ankara: n.p., 1935), p. 33.

<sup>325</sup> The application of the Italian company was evaluated by the Council of the State on the grounds that, because it was not possible to give the same exemption license to the dispersed pits, even if they belonged to the same company, separate exemption license were required for each pit. This process would take along time. To handle this, an addendum was prepared in 1928. With it, scattered pits under the same mine operator in a particular production field were defined as one mine, thus, they received the same exemption license for utilizing the law for *Sanayii Teşvik Kanunu*. For the addendum, see Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, *Sicilli Kavanini* 4 (1927-1928), p. 391.

<sup>326</sup> Özeke, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p 64.

<sup>327</sup> The bank's companies' pioneering of technical improvement seems to have brought dynamism to the basin. For the lists and construction dates of electric stations and washing factories belonging to different companies, see Zonguldak Sanayi Odası, pp. 163 and 167.

<sup>328</sup> Ahmet Naim lists the name of companies and private mine operators with their shares in the total amount of coal supplied to the domestic and international markets. See Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 90-95.

The transportation sector and various industrial plants such as cement and sugar factories and some of the Mediterranean countries and foreign trading ships were the consumers of Zonguldak coal.<sup>329</sup> Concerning the supply market, between 1927 and 1933 while the quantity of coal bought by the internal consumers remained nearly constant, the quantity of coal exported gradually increased. The figures of coal supply to the internal market indicate a stagnant internal demand for coal. On the other hand, increase in export quantities, particularly in 1933 and 1934 was the outcome of the government's export inducements.<sup>330</sup> In those years, coal mining enterprises received further incentives from the government. In order to encourage coal production and to increase its utilization as an export item, in 1933 and 1934, the government reduced customs duties and paid a bonus for extra amounts of exported coal.<sup>331</sup> The large scale companies of the basin with their export license could now directly sell the coal that they extracted in the domestic and international markets.<sup>332</sup>

It is striking that, in the period between 1925 and 1934, while the coal mining industry in the world suffered badly from the sectoral crisis, there were not such crisis in the Turkish coal mining sector. As a worldwide situation in the coal markets, coal prices were in constant decline in parallel with the slow down in the worldwide economic expansion in inter-war years, and declining demand in coal due to the economic crisis on the one hand and growing fuel efficiency of coal consuming industries and the rapid growth in the use of substitute fuels on the other hand. The nineteenth century industrial growth had led the expansion of the coal market. In return, the coal mining industry had experienced over-expansion and surplus

---

<sup>329</sup> *Devlet Demiryolları* (State railways), *Şark Demiryolları* (East Railways), *Şirketi Hayriye* (a steamer company in Bosphorus route) and *Haliç Vapurları* (Haliç Steamship Company) were the main consumers of the Ereğli coal. For the list of consumers see *ibid.*, pp. 95-97; and *Cumhuriyetin On Yılında*, pp. 178.

<sup>330</sup> The government's encouragement policies followed recommendation of certain association. For instance, in the 1930 Industry Congress of the *Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti* (National Economy and Saving Association), the Zonguldak coal basin came on the agenda in the context of utilizing coal as an export item and source of fuel in transportation. The reporters of the congress called on the government to reduce export duties and transportation taxes, and to encourage domestic consumption of coal. *Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti, Sanayi Kongresi Raporlar- Kararlar-Zabitlar*, Zonguldak Raporu (Ankara: Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti Yayını, 1930), pp. 450-453.

<sup>331</sup> In 1933 by governmental decree, export duties on the coal were reduced for the companies exporting more than the total amount they had exported in 1932. In 1934, by another governmental decree, the coal exporters received a bonus for each ton which exceeded the amount of previous year. For the government's export inducement of coal in 1933 and 1934, see Sadrettin Enver, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzamız* (n.p.: Etibank Yayınından, 1945), pp. 51-52.

<sup>332</sup>For the list of the coal exporters, see *Türkiye Ekonomisi Bakımından Kömür* (Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyatı, 1937).

capacity. However when the sector fell into crisis in the inter war years, the surplus capacity of the production could not be controlled due to the fragmented structure of ownership in the coal mining enterprises and lack of cooperative adjustment among them coal mining enterprises under a highly competitive market situation. Hence, despite the demand inelasticity, the continual coal supply decreased the coal prices and the profits.

However, in Turkey in the same period the coal sector was running in the opposite direction. Regardless of their national origin, the four large scale companies, namely Türk-İş and Kömür İş of İş Bankası, the Ereğli Company and Italian Türk-Kömür managed to structure the productive and marketing aspects of the mining in favor of their cooperate interests. By eliminating small scale enterprises and preventing the entry of new actors in the sector, they protected the industry from the over-expansion, surplus capacity and competition, which would bring about the decline of coal prices. They were able to develop both a corporate domination over the coal production and also to develop a cartel position in the internal market. As the table above indicates, the lack of industrial growth and limited capacity of the coal consuming transportation sector also created a stagnant coal market in the national economy. However, the productive and marketing aspects of the national coal sector which were in favor of the large scale companies began to contradict the state's new concerns by the mid-1930s. The new situation invited a new form of state intervention which would result in the full nationalization of the basin.

#### The Five-Year Industrial Plans and the Basin Under Reconsideration

The increasing interest of the state in the coal industry can be explained by its new economic objectives. In the 1930s, rapid economic development through planned industrialization became the main target of the state's economic policies. The state started to make direct investment in major industrial branches as entrepreneur. The main aim was to

establish or upgrade industrial production units, which had not been done due to the lack of capital in private hands. The most important single factor was surely the project of establishing an iron and steel industry, which would be the prime motor of the country's industrial development. Coal enjoyed a near monopoly as the source of fuel and power in the industrial sectors in which the state was intent to get involved. As a result of state involvement in industrial production, the public enterprises would become the primary consumers of coal.<sup>333</sup> In addition, the military factories and the expanding railway network under state ownership also made coal crucial. Last, as coal became a profitable export item, the state realized its value as a source of foreign exchange. To increase the utilization of coal in the domestic market, the state also encouraged its use as fuel for heating. These objectives compelled the governments to formulate a new policy for the coal industry.<sup>334</sup>

The government's new outlook on the coal industry appeared first in relation to the iron and steel plants it intended to establish. The First and particularly the Second Five-Year Industrial Plans of the 1930s revealed the crucial importance of coal as a raw material and fuel in the steel, iron and chemical industries. The First Five-Year Industrial Plan, which focused on exploiting the above ground resources of the country, recommended the establishment of an iron industry in Karabük and a semi-coke factory in Zonguldak.<sup>335</sup> İş Bankası was charged with the foundation of the semi-coke factory. In 1934, it began its construction and just after one year, the factory began to operate.

Before the First Five-Year Industrial Plan, the government charged certain groups of foreign specialists with investigating the conditions for establishing new industrial branches in Turkey. The investigations were carried out by a group of Soviet and then American

---

<sup>333</sup> For the industrial sectors and state owned factories dependent on coal, see Özenek, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, pp. 58-61.

<sup>334</sup> For the factors determining the state's coal policy, see *ibid.*, pp. 51-63.

<sup>335</sup> The aim was to set up industrial plants which would enable the country to utilize its regional agricultural products and natural resources, hence to ensure the production of basic imported goods such as sugar, textiles and paper. In this sense, the plan projected the establishment of industrial units which would mainly produce consumer goods such as cellulose, textiles, chemical products, bottles-glass and ceramics. For the strategy of the First Five-Year Industrial Plan and the sectors it concerned, see Afetinan, *Devletçilik İlkesi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Birinci Beş Yıllık Sanayi Planı 1933* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1972), pp. 15-16.

specialists.<sup>336</sup> Both groups assessed the Zonguldak coal field in the context of providing coke and fuel to the country's prospective chemical, iron and steel industries. The Soviet specialists submitted their reports in 1932. Among them, N. Yuşkeviç evaluated Zonguldak coal deposits in relation to finding favorable locations for the establishments of the iron and chemical industries.<sup>337</sup> He recommended the establishment of a chemical industry near the coal beds and steel and iron factories. Tefen and Karabük appear in the report as the most favorable locations for such an establishment. The villagers of the basin were described as favorable labor force with their own housing and provisioning capabilities.<sup>338</sup>

Unlike Yuşkeviç, the American specialists recommended Ereğli as the best location for an iron and steel industry as it was near the coal mines, which would facilitate the transportation of coal at low costs via short railway line between Zonguldak and Ereğli and/or by the sea route.<sup>339</sup> The American specialists emphasized the importance of the coal not only for a possible steel and iron industry, but also for maritime and railway transportation and exportation. However, they underlined the high-selling price of the Zonguldak coal on the domestic market, due to the high production and transportation costs. To make Zonguldak coal attractive for the domestic market they recommended the reduction of production costs through the reorganization of the conditions of coal production in the basin. The specialists recommended serious geological research of the coal deposits in the basin, the revision of the Mine Regulation, the modification of the mining techniques, the improvement of the

---

<sup>336</sup> In between 1930-1933 different cliques among the political elite of the time contested the limits and methods of the "etatist" economic policies. The investigations of the Soviet and American specialists coincided with this critical period. The Soviet group was invited in 1932 by the Minister of Economy Mustafa Şeref (Özkan). While its investigation was underway Mustafa Şeref resigned his post. Just after the appointment of general director of İş Bankası Mahmut Celal Bey (Bayar) to the Ministry of Economy, he invited a group of American specialists to Turkey. The invitation of different groups for similar purposes implies contesting perspectives on the extent of the etatist policies. For the debates on the etatist economic policies and timing of the Soviet and American investigations in the early 1930s, see İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin, *Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiye'de Devletçiliğin Oluşumu* (Ankara: Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi, 1982), pp. 155-175.

<sup>337</sup> Accordingly, one possibility was to construct such plants near the location of the iron beds, which would, however, increase the transportation cost of Zonguldak coal. For that reason, Yuşkeviç suggested constructing the iron and steel units near the Zonguldak coal beds, so that the coal from the mines to the iron and steel plants could be transported at low cost. For the N. Yuşkeviç's report, see *Sovyet Mühendisleri Tarafından Verilen Raporlar*, pp. 21-30.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>339</sup> Walker D. Hines et al., p. 135; and for the details, also, see pp. 362-389.

transportation facilities and the reorganization of the mine administration in the basin, which would however reduce production costs in the long run.<sup>340</sup>

As evaluations of the American specialists signaled, through the 1930s, the government's new concerns in the coal sector entailed more intensive involvement of the state in the sector. As long as the state became the main consumer of coal, it could not leave production and market mechanisms in the hands of the prime producers in the basin. However, the production and market conditions of the coal mining sector, which had been already structured under the firm control of the four big mining companies, began to clash with the government's vested interests. To supply cheap and abundant coal to the respective iron and steel industry and the newly establishing industrial settings and expanding railways under state control, the state began to seek the reasons behind the high coal prices in the domestic market and the low rates of production in spite of the rich coal reserves.

As one of the prominent figure of the *Kadro* circle, Vedat Nedim (Tör) stated in 1934 that coal prices were deliberately kept high as the result of the cooperative effort between the Ereğli Company, the Kömür -İş, Türk-İş and Türk Kömür Madenleri companies.<sup>341</sup> The four companies dominated coal production, providing ninety percent of the total coal. Through establishing a sales bureau, the coal companies deliberately kept prices high to maximize their profits.<sup>342</sup> Since the government's protective measures imposed high custom duties on imported coal, the four companies did not suffer from the competition of foreign coal, and hence, easily established their monopoly on the domestic coal prices.<sup>343</sup>

---

<sup>340</sup> For recommendations of the American specialists, see *ibid.*, pp. 362-366; and pp. 402-416.

<sup>341</sup> Vedat Nedim Tör, "Kömürde Devletçilik," *Kadro* 3, No. 25 (İkinci Kanun 1934) in Tıpkı Basım A.İ.T.A., Van, no. 34, Ankara 1980, p. 14. For the replies to these accusations, see the document 17/7/1935, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..10.0.0 /174.205..14]. However it was not signed. So source of the replies is unknown.

<sup>342</sup> A similar cartel was established among the cement factories to determine prices and conditions of cement sales in the domestic market. In 1933, the government interfered to regulate cement prices through certain legal arrangements. See Emre Dölen and Murat Koraltürk, *İlk Çimento Fabrikamızın Öyküsü 1910-2004* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2004), pp. 85-86.

<sup>343</sup> Tör, p. 14.

A similar claim appears in a report submitted to the government in 1935 by Reşit Gencer, the general director of Etibank.<sup>344</sup> As Gencer argued, the high price of Zonguldak coal made coal sales in the domestic market a profitable enterprise. In this market situation even small-scale coal operators found favorable profit margins.<sup>345</sup> The coal mining operators, thus, did not prefer to export coal despite the export inducements. The favorable market conditions ensured the survival of the coal enterprises with traditional production conditions with a high labor-low machine ratio. The high coal prices and profit margins saved the coal mining companies to search for reducing production costs through the mechanization of the production process, new capital investment in the mines and improvement of the transport facilities.<sup>346</sup>

In general, the high production and transportation cost in the coal sector was discussed by the related associations in the context of cost reduction by means of the state's assistance. However, mechanization as a means of cost reduction did not come on the agenda.<sup>347</sup> Unlike the tendency of mechanization which appeared in the inter-war years coal mining albeit unevenly, through Europe, Britain and the United State, in Turkey the coal mining companies did not show such an inclination. Along with the geological constraints, the choice of labor intensive production brought about more opportunities to the companies than the relative cost advantages of mechanization owing to the low wage economy in the basin. Since the Zonguldak workers in the actual production process received wages considerably

---

<sup>344</sup> For the Reşit Gencer's report, see 20/6/1935, Catalog no.[PMRA, 030..10.0.0/ 174..205..13]

<sup>345</sup> Gencer's report, p. 2s

<sup>346</sup> Actually, the high selling price of the Zonguldak coal in relation to the production and transportation costs had been the subject of debate in the late 1920s as well. In 1924, for instance, Zonguldak deputy Halil Bey submitted a proposal to the government, arguing protectionist measures for Zonguldak coal such as reducing transportation costs through granting a monopoly of coal transport to the *Seyr-i Sefayin Idaresi* (state owned maritime administration). For Halil Bey's verbal proposal, see 12/1/1924, Catalog no. [PMRA 030..10.0.0/6..35..8.] Similarly a report prepared by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the chamber's 1926-1928 activities noted the disadvantageous market position of the Zonguldak coal in comparison with that of the imported coal owing to the high transportation costs and non-protectionist custom duties. H. Avni, *Istanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası 1926-1927-1928 Seneleri Faaliyet ve Muamelatına Ait Umumi Rapor* (Istanbul: Istanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Neşriyatı, 1934), pp. 447-448.

<sup>347</sup> In 1933, similar concerns were noticed in the reports of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry and of the Ali İktisat Meclisi (the Great Council of Economy, an official council established in 1927 to provide recommendations on economic issues). See "Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası 1933 Kongresi Madencilik Komisyonu Raporu," pp.1-7, in *Istanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası, 1933 Oda Kongresi Raporlar ve Kararları* (Istanbul: Matbaacılık ve Neşriyat Türk Anonim Şirketi, 1933). See also T.C. Ali İktisat Meclisi, *Madenlerimizden En İyi Surette İstifade Şekli Nedir Neşriyat Serisi A. No.14* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1933), pp. 431-434.

lower than their counterparts in Europe and the United States, there was no wage pressure over the production costs as observed in the other coal fields.<sup>348</sup> The part time nature of the Zonguldak miners further saved the mining companies a great deal from the cost of social provisioning such as housing and nourishment. Hence, by the mid-1930s, despite some improvements in the hauling process, the coal production in the Zonguldak mines retained its pick and shovel characteristics.

It is obvious that the existing production and particularly market situation of the early 1930s in the coal sector was compatible with the vested interests of the companies. In these conditions, the coal mining companies had no rational reason to either reduce costs and hence the market price of the coal or to improve production conditions via mechanization. As far as they blocked over-expansion, surplus capacity and competition, just as demand was inelastic to price drop, there was no reason to decrease coal prices in the domestic market. Similarly despite of the export inducements, the coal mining companies showed less interest in exportation than the government expected.

By the mid-1930s, the existing situation in the coal market began to clash with the state's industrialization project. Industrial growth via state initiative would create further demand for coal. But both high price and stagnant production rates would impede the attainment of cheap and abundant coal in the service of the coal consuming sectors under the state ownership. At this point to reorganize production and marketing aspects of the coal mining industry via legal and institutional devices to be inevitable for the state.

### The Entry of Etibank As a Public Enterprise and the Nationalization of the Ereğli Company

---

<sup>348</sup> In various coalfields in Europe and Britain in between 1929 and 1925, wages comprised sixty to forty percent, varying in accordance to the countries, albeit a tendency of decline due to the sectoral crisis. For the wage figures, see Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1944 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*, p.136.



The specialists who were charged with investigating the conditions of coal mining in Zonguldak called for the state's intervention in the basin. Professor Granigg was invited once again to Turkey in 1934 to investigate the feasibility of establishing an iron and steel industry in Turkey. Having completed his research Granigg mainly recommended the rationalization of conditions of coal mining through the concentration of the scattered mining enterprises and coal sale under the authority of a collective body. As the American specialists recommended, the amalgamation of the coal enterprises appeared to be the main condition for capital efficiency.<sup>349</sup> Another problem was the high price of Zonguldak coal in the domestic market. Granigg recommended the management of the sale process through a sales agency. The coal operators were to be obliged to sell the coal extracted in Zonguldak only to the sales agency.<sup>350</sup>

In the same report Reşit Gencer pointed out the fact that the Ereğli Company had established its domination over the conditions of coal sale in the domestic and international markets. Its power was derived from its predominant position in coal production. Hence, Gencer suggested that in order to curb the Ereğli Company's dominance over the sale process, it was necessary to capture its position in coal production as well.<sup>351</sup> This would be realized not a palliative solution, but through a radical one, that is, full nationalization of the basin under state ownership. Because the foreign companies in the basin would be reluctant to cover the high costs of the restructuring production conditions in terms of efficiency and cost reduction, which necessitated large-scale investment, the state appeared to be the only investor capable of such a costly project.<sup>352</sup>

---

<sup>349</sup> The original report is not available. Here we utilize Reşit Gencer's report. 20/6/1935, Catalog no.[PMRA, 030..10.0.0/ 174..205..13]

<sup>350</sup> Gencer, p. 2.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>352</sup> For the favorable model for rationalization and the state's role, see *ibid.*, pp. 3-7. In fact the idea of nationalization had been previously recommended by the 1927 report mentioned in previous section. The report of 1927 offered certain strategies to strengthen the Turkish companies. Accordingly, all the production areas were divided between the concessionaires. The national companies did not have the chance to expand into new production fields. In such circumstances it would be better to improve their capital strength. However, to confine the large scale capital of the national banks or private entrepreneurs in the basin would be unproductive since the investment would begin to profit approximately after ten to fifteen years. Consequently, because coal mining requires large scale capital, to maintain their existence, it

In a short time the government began to take effective measures to reorganize the coal mining sector. Despite the fact that the government provided certain inducements to increase the amount of coal exportation, the mining companies preferred to trade on the domestic market. Therefore, beginning from 1935, the government compelled the coal operators to export ten percent of the total amount of the coal they extracted. The government compelled all the coal operators to join the *Kömür Satış Birliği* (Coal Sales Union),<sup>353</sup> a kind of sale cartel, functioning as a mediator between the coal operators and the domestic consumers in the domestic market, arranging coal exportation in line with the government's policies. To control domestic coal prices, the government set a maximum price level for coal sales.<sup>354</sup>

However, the project of creating an efficient coal industry in the service of the state's new economic objectives required a comprehensive restructuring of the conditions of both the labor and the capital in the basin. The state came on the scene as the sole actor to achieve such an ambitious task. From 1935 on, the state initiated important legal and institutional arrangements, preparing the legal and institutional ground that would serve gradually in the full nationalization of the basin. Aiming at the rational exploitation of the mines, particularly of the coal and iron deposits, on 14 June 1935 the Grand National Assembly enacted the establishment of the *Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü*, or MTA (Institute of Research and Exploration of Mines), and Etibank. The MTA was charged with the exploration of mine deposits in the country and with geological and topographic surveys, and the training of mine engineers, foremen and qualified employees.<sup>355</sup> Etibank was charged with the management of all of the different kinds of mining enterprises and the construction of electricity power plants.<sup>356</sup>

---

was recommended that the Turkish companies be financially supported by the state. Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü Archive, Report no: 1272, p. 45.

<sup>353</sup> For the *Kömür Satış Birliği* and coal exportation policy of the government, see Özekten, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 99.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>355</sup> For the duties and responsibilities of MTA, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 3- 10.

<sup>356</sup> For the duties and responsibilities of Etibank in the field of mining, see ibid., pp. 33-39.

On 20 June 1935 certain articles of the Mine Regulation were modified by Law No. 2818.<sup>357</sup> The need for a new mine regulation had been stressed in a series of reports.<sup>358</sup> Law No. 2818 increased the state's control over the conditions of coal production. The law abrogated the rights of the mining concessions, in the case of renting concession rights to third parties or of neglecting the technical requirements imposed by the Mining Regulation. The aim was to block the speculative gains from concession trading, a profitable practice the mine concessionaires preferred. The law also compelled the mine operators to adjust the production process to meet the strict technical requirements. They were obliged to report their mining facilities, the technology they used, the number of workers they employed, the topographic and geological maps of the pits they operated and last their production amounts. With this law, the state aimed at closely monitoring, and thereby, controlling the conditions of coal production in the basin.

As required by Articles 5 and 6 of Law No. 2818 the rights of those who rented their concessions to a third party were abrogated.<sup>359</sup> The mines in question then passed under state control. The subcontractors of the previous concessionaires continued to run the mines, at this time as subcontractors of the state. Therefore, the state eliminated actors in pursuit of speculative gains. The management of the mines was granted to Etibank. Etibank began to run the Saricazadeler pits of the Italian company at Kozlu and Kandilli, the Çamlı pit and some small pits.<sup>360</sup> Etibank entered into coal production not only as a state-owned establishment, but also as a rival of the İş Bankası companies. This rivalry became apparent in the late 1930s, when the government began to look for an agent to manage the process of full nationalization.

---

<sup>357</sup> Law No 2818 modified following articles of the Mine Regulation: 20, 23, 59, 60, 71, and 81. For the 1935 modification and the related articles, see *ibid.*, Vol.1, pp. 74-76.

<sup>358</sup> For the need of a new Mine Regulation, see for instance, *Âli İktisat Meclisi Raporları*, pp. 10-11; and Walker D. Hines at al, *Kitap I.*, pp. 405-407.

<sup>359</sup> For the Articles No. 5 and 6 of Law No 2818, see Anıl and Merey, *ibid.*, pp. 75 and 76

<sup>360</sup> For the state's effort to enter the basin as the direct investor through Etibank and transfer of the pits under state control, see Hüseyin Fehmi İmer, *Ereğli*, pp. 43 and 44.

Following the legal arrangements, in 1936 the Second Five-Year Industrial Plan was initiated. The second plan mainly concerned the development of the major industrial branches in Turkey.<sup>361</sup> It aimed to establish industries that required large scale capital investment and technical strength, which exceeded the power of private entrepreneurs. To establish self-sufficient industrial plants, all the necessary raw materials were to be obtained within the country. For this purpose, the plan stressed the development of the mining and energy sectors. Major emphasis was placed on chrome, copper, zinc, white lead, lignite, iron and coal deposits.<sup>362</sup> To meet the energy needs of industry, the plan projected the construction of two electricity power stations in Çatalağzı, near Zonguldak, and in Kütahya

The Second Five-Year Industrial Plan envisaged important targets for the Zonguldak coal basin. To provide cheap and abundant coal for the country's industry, railways and exportation, it was necessary to reduce the production and transportation costs of coal. The plan stressed the inadequacy of the current circumstances in the basin and offered a development program on the following lines: the rationalization of production methods, the concentration of the scattered coal enterprises, the construction of a modern port for the export of steel and coal, and the improvement of the existing railway network.<sup>363</sup> Accordingly, the mining area was to be divided into three production districts, Zonguldak, Çatalağzı and Kozlu. The Kandilli and Çamlı mines were left aside. The merger of the mines under three production districts would facilitate the management of the rationalization program by a central body, which would run the mechanization program of the mines. It would determine the production targets for the mining districts and advise the construction of the social facilities for the mine workers.<sup>364</sup>

---

<sup>361</sup> The Second Five-Year Industrial Plan was formulated while the first Five-Year Industrial Plan was in effect. For the aims and strategies of the Second Five-Year Industrial Plan, see TC. İktisat Vekaleti Sanayi Tetkik Heyeti, *2 inci 5 Yıllık Sanayi Planı* (Ankara: Başvekalet Matbaası, 1936), pp. XXI-XXII.

<sup>362</sup> For an evaluation on underground resources of the country, see *ibid.*, pp. 1-38.

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

The Kozlu and Zonguldak mines were of special importance. They belonged mainly to the mining areas of the Ereğli Company and companies of İş Bankası. The Ereğli Company and the Kömür-İş Company of İş Bankası had run the Kozlu pits in close cooperation since 1929. They had established a sales bureau as well. In 1931, the depression on the coal market led to the decline of coal prices in the domestic and international markets. In order to remove price pressure on the profit, İş Bankası companies intended to merge with the Ereğli Company. The negotiations between the two parties, which continued until 1934, did not come to a conclusion due to disputes within the Ereğli Company's council of managers. As the parties were unable to reach an agreement, in 1936, the state decided to purchase the Ereğli Company.<sup>365</sup>

From 1935 on, the government's intention to purchase the Ereğli Company became apparent. Negotiations between the Ereğli Company and the Ministry of Economy continued through 1936. On 28 November 1936 the government and the Ereğli Company came to an agreement, which was approved on 3 March 1937 by Law No. 3146. By the agreement, the state purchased all the mines of the company, with their equipment and infrastructure, and the concessions of the Zonguldak port and Zonguldak Çatalağzı railways. According to the agreement, over the next ten years the government was to export a certain amount of coal to the Ereğli Company in return for the government's purchasing debt. On 15 June 1937, Law No. 3241 was enacted and all the rights granted to the Ereğli Company were transferred to Etibank.<sup>366</sup> Etibank, hence, received the dominant position of the Ereğli Company, which had run three-fourths of the coal mines in the basin.

The company then began to operate only its most efficient coal veins. Coal production, the amount of which had been steadily increasing, began to decline. Technical repairs and preparatory supports in the mines were neglected. Hence, Etibank encountered great

---

<sup>365</sup> A report written in 30 May 1939 by the general director of the Kömür- İş Company describes briefly the two companies' attempts at unification, see MTA Archive, Esat Kerimol Report no. 1564, p. 13

difficulties in starting up coal extraction in the pits left by the Ereğli Company after the purchasing agreement.<sup>367</sup>

The purchasing of the Ereğli Company constituted an important step toward the nationalization of the basin. With the entrance of Etibank into the coal production, national capital established its predominance. The entry of Etibank into the coal industry coincided with the debates on the full nationalization of the basin. With the rise of nationalization debates, the İş Bankası companies and Etibank appeared as two alternative candidates to run the nationalization program. On the basis of Law No. 3241, on 3 January 1938, Etibank established the *Mahdut Mes'uliyetli Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi*, (Ereğli Coal Exploitations), or EKI, as the subsidiary operating management.<sup>368</sup>

In order to achieve the targets set up by the Second Five-Year Industrial Plan for the mining sector, in 1937 the government took further steps, intensifying its control over the sales prices of coal in the domestic market and exportation. The state broadened its coal policy, encouraging exportation and its domestic use as fuel. To promote coal exportation, it intervened in coal prices by means of governmental decrees and legal arrangements. It required coal agents to export coal at prices lower than its domestic prices.<sup>369</sup>

On 1 November 1937, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk underlined, in his opening speech to the Assembly, the importance of the mineral resources not only as the raw material for domestic industry, but also an export item which would in return facilitate payments in foreign exchange. He pointed out the necessity of preparing a three- year plan for the improvement of the most important mineral resources.<sup>370</sup>

---

<sup>366</sup> For the full text of the sales contract and of Law No. 3146 and Law No. 3241, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 128-139.

<sup>367</sup> Özeke, *Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi*, p. 73.

<sup>368</sup> For the establishment and organization of EKI, see *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası ve Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi* (Ankara: Rönesans Reklam, 1956).

<sup>369</sup> Özeke, *Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi*, p. 65.

<sup>370</sup> For Atatürk's opening speech of Grand National Assembly, see Afetinan, p. 130.

Following this, on 8 November 1937, Prime Minister Celal Bayar declared in his government program that a three-year mining plan was to be prepared. He envisaged annual production targets for the coal companies as well.<sup>371</sup> In December 1937, the government put the mining section of the Second Five-Year Industrial Plan into practice under the title of the Three-Year Mining Program. In September 1938 this program was revised in accordance with the Four-Year Industry Program of 1938.<sup>372</sup>

The Three-Year Mining Program was put into practice immediately. In mid-1939, despite the fact that most of the projects of the Four-Year Industrial Program had been postponed, the Guleman chrome, Ergani, Murgul and Kuvarshan copper, Divriği processing and the Karabük iron and steel factories were established. The program aimed at encouraging the domestic use of coal and lignite as heating fuel. For this purpose, Law No. 2473, the *Mahrukat Kanunu* (Law on Fuel), was enacted on 22 June 1938. The law obliged the use of coal, lignite and their by-products as fuel for heating in all public buildings and buildings belonging to private companies, associations, clubs, chambers of commerce and industry, schools, hospitals and other public places. Municipalities with populations of less than two thousand were to be exempt from the law.<sup>373</sup> The Three-Year Mining Program also set production targets for EKI, the İş Bankası companies, and the Italian Türk Kömür Madenleri Company, and forced them into cooperation in order to achieve their production target, which aimed at increasing the total coal production to 128 % of the total amount of coal produced in 1936.<sup>374</sup> In the following years, this ambitious target would put the companies and their work force under great pressure.

---

<sup>371</sup> While announcing the first Bayar government's program in the national assembly, Celal Bayar described a new mining plan. See *ibid.*, pp. 146-150.

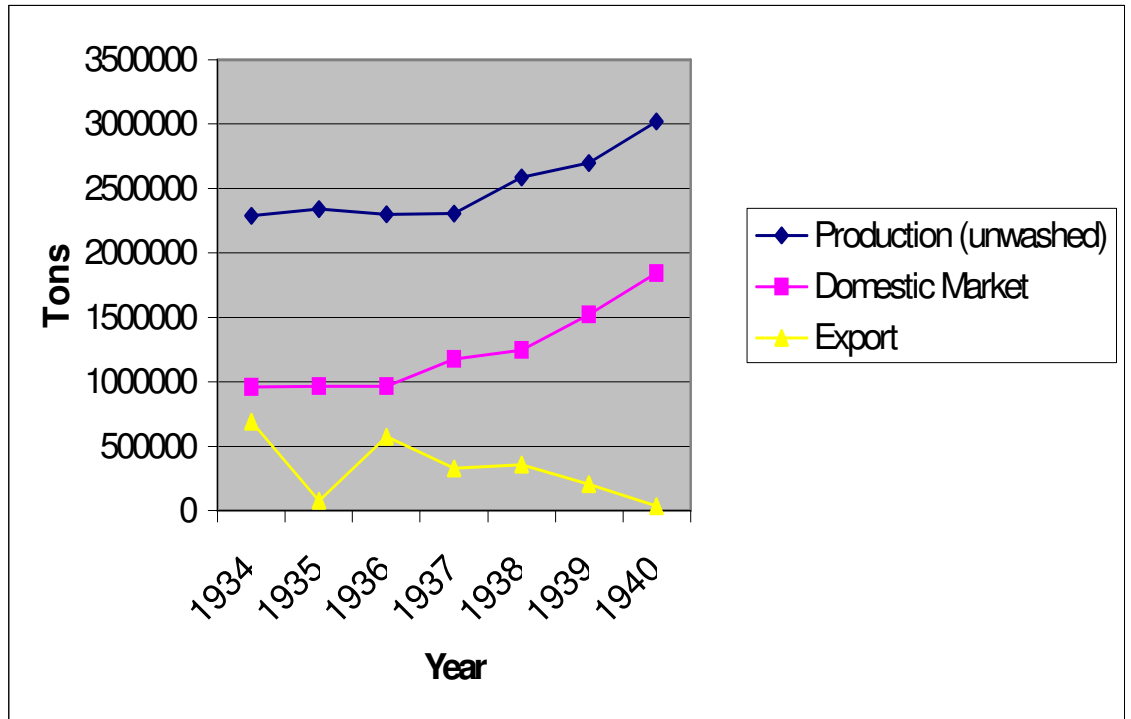
<sup>372</sup> For the objectives of the Four-Year Industry Program in relation to the Three Year Mining Program, see trans. Murat Koraltürk, *Sümerbank In the Vanguard of Turkish Economy* (Istanbul: Creative Yayıncılık ve Tanıtım Ltd., 1997), pp. 171-172.

<sup>373</sup> For the full text of the law, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 73-76.

<sup>374</sup> For the production targets imposed on the companies, see Özeke, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 82 .

By 1938, the state had established firm control over coal production. The nationalization of the Ereğli Company had enabled it to control large areas of coal extraction. It also achieved the amalgamation of most of the scattered mines under EKI and the İş Bankası companies. The Italian Türk Kömür Madenleri AŞ and some small mines occupied an insignificant place in coal production. By 1938 and 1939, approximately eighty-five percent of the total coal extraction had been realized by Turkish capital. EKI had extracted twenty-nine percentage and the İş Bankası companies had extracted forty-one to forty-three percentage of the total coal production. The small coal operators produced only thirteen percent of the total coal. The sole foreign capital was represented by the Italian Türk Kömür Madenleri companies in Kozlu and Kandilli, producing approximately fifteen percent of the total coal production.<sup>375</sup> From 1937 on, there was a steady increase in the amounts of total coal production as a result of the pressure of production targets.

Table 4. Total Coal Production and Supply Market between 1934 and 1940



Source: TC İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, *Madenlerimiz 1934-1940* (Ankara:1943), 75.

<sup>375</sup> For the shares of the foreign and national capital, see Source: TC. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, *Madenlerimiz 1938-1939* (Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyat Müdürlüğü, 1940). For 1938 data, p. 19, and for 1939 data, p. 75.



Table 5. Coal Consumers in the Domestic Market in 1938 and 1939.

Coal Consumers	Proportion of Coal Purchase in %	
	1938	1939
State railways	24.25	26.83
Denizbank	12.41	9.69
Electric companies	9.15	7.96
Cement factories	6.06	3.84
Gas companies	4.57	2.95
Şirketi Hayriye	3.18	2.27
Military factories	2.91	2.82
Sugar factories	2.37	2.24
Textile factories	2.28	2.52
Navy	2.18	2.47
Cellulose factories	1.23	0.5
Bottle and glass factories	0.8	0.95
Sümerbank	0.1	0.34
Beykoz leather shoe factories	0.37	0.28
Iron and steel factories	0.1	7.69
Various companies and individual enterprises	28.04	26.2

Source: TC. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, Madenlerimiz 1938-1939 (Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyat Müdürlüğü, 1940). For 1938 data p. 33 and for 1939 data p. 88.

The state owned industrial plants and railways constituted the majority of the domestic consumers of Zonguldak coal. The cement, textile, cellulose, sugar, bottle and glass factories, most of which had been founded by Sümerbank under the First Five-Year Industrial Plan, were some of the coal consumers. The Karabük iron and steel plants, which began to operate in 1939, became major coal consumers in the following years. At the same time, the mining industry itself, with its coal washeries and repair shops, consumed coal as fuel. Factories managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, the business enterprises of *Teke*l (the Turkish State Liquor and Tobacco Monopoly), and military factories were other significant coal consumers, as were the İstanbul and Kozlu electric power stations and private industry.<sup>376</sup>

In the late 1930s, among the state owned sectors, transport companies consumed nearly forty percent of the total coal supply. Among them, the *Devlet Demiryolları* (state railways) alone consumed nearly twenty-five percent of the total supply. While in 1930, the total length of railway lines was 5,320 kilometer, in between 1939-41 this amount reached 7,500 kilometer. The state's policy of establishing a national railway network increased the

<sup>376</sup> For the coal consumers among the industrial sectors and state owned factories, see Özek, *Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi*, pp. 58-61.

total length of the railway lines through constructing new railways and purchasing privately owned railway concessions. As the transport capacity of the railways and the frequency of railway travel increased, the state railways became one of the main coal consumers in the domestic market.<sup>377</sup>

#### The Project of the Full Nationalization and Rivalry between Etibank and İş Bankası

In the 1930s, through legal and institutional arrangements the state attempted to restructure the coal industry in the service of the national economy. However, compared to government's large scale nationalization attempts of the 1930s, to a great extent, the coal enterprises remained outside of state ownership. The same was true for the reinsurance sector, where İş Bankası's joint stock companies had a predominant position. In the 1930s, İş Bankası's joint stock companies in mining and reinsurance could not be nationalized under full state ownership.<sup>378</sup> In this context, the government intervention into the coal industry remained harmonious with the interests of İş Bankası's coal companies. For instance, instead of nationalizing the whole of the basin, the government preferred to purchase only the Ereğli Company. However, in 1935, just before the purchase of the Ereğli Company, its share in total coal production dropped to 32.3 percent; unlike the companies of İş Bankası, which produced 51.61 percent of the total coal production. Hence, by 1935, İş Bankası companies had established dominance in the coal production sector.

It is striking that the restructuring of the coal industry was run under the authority of Celal Bayar. Bayar's political career, first as general director of İş Bankası, then in between 1932 and 1937 as Minister of Economy, and in 1937 and 1939 as Prime Minister, enabled him

---

<sup>377</sup> For the rise of the Devlet Demiryolları as one of the main coal consumers, see *ibid.*, pp. 51-55.

<sup>378</sup> Kocabaşoğlu, p. 295.

to play a central role in the decisions concerning the coal industry.<sup>379</sup> Throughout Bayar's political career, İş Bankası's coal companies maintained their existence in the basin as the largest representative of national capital. Despite the fact that in 1937 Etibank took over all the transport and mining concessions of the Ereğli Company, the entry of Etibank into the coal enterprise did not shook the predominance of İş Bankası companies. In 1935, the semi-coke factory, and in 1937 the briquette factory, began to operate under the management of İş Bankası's mining companies. İş Bankası's companies were successful in the mission set out for them in the Five-Year Industrial Plans.<sup>380</sup> In this context, as far as the debates on the rationalization of coal production under a central administration went, the parties grounded their arguments on the comparison of the efficiency in EKI and İş Bankası's companies.

The idea of amalgamating all the coal mines under a central management, a practice more familiarly known as "fusion," came on the agenda of the Ministry of Economy in 1936, when Etibank entered the basin. Beginning from 1937, the companies of Etibank and İş Bankası extracted coal under the pressure of the fusion debates. On one side the İş Bankası group desired to operate all the coal mines under its own management, asserting that its companies could run the coal mining enterprise with a profit-oriented spirit, yet in harmony with the interests of the national economy. The other side argued for the step-by-step fusion of the mines under the state authority and then the transfer of the mines to an official body under Etibank's authority.<sup>381</sup> Until the establishment of full state ownership, the İş Bankası companies appeared to be the most favorite candidate.

As a reconciling solution, at the end of 1937, the two parties began negotiations for the merger of Etibank's and the İş Bankası coal enterprises. However, because each party tried to

---

<sup>379</sup> Cemil Koçak notes that Celal Bayar's appointment as Minister of Economy did not mean he left his post at İş Bankası. In 1932 Muammer Saffet (Eriş), Bayar's close relative, was appointed as general director by proxy. Until 1935, Bayar participated in the meetings of the board of directors and signed the board's decisions. So, for a while he carried out both of his posts. See Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi (1938-1945) Vol.1* (Ankara: İletişim Yayınları, 1986), pp. 41-42. And compare Kocabaşoğlu, p. 197.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>381</sup> For the debates on the method of fusion and the projects of two competed perspectives, see Özeken, *Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi*, p. 113.

maximize its share in the prospective unification, the negotiations resulted in failure.<sup>382</sup> Then the Celal Bayar government authorized Professor Granigg, who carried out studies in 1925 and 1935, to look into the possible methods of fusion. Granigg submitted his recommendations in a report dated 5 May 1938.<sup>383</sup> He compared and contrasted the efficiency of İş Bankası's companies and EKI in the coal enterprises.

One year later, Esat Kerimol, general director of the Kömür-İş Company of İş Bankası, evaluated the production conditions in the basin and offered alternative methods of fusion.<sup>384</sup> Both reports stressed the inadequacy of the production conditions and the urgency of fusion. The reports both sided with İş Bankası mining companies, granting an active role to them in the project of fusion, either in corporation with Etibank, or as the sole actor. Granigg underlined the success of the İş Bankası's companies in the basin, which had become the most efficient coal enterprises in Zonguldak and Kozlu. The social facilities the companies provided to the mine workers stabilized the labor force. Absenteeism and inefficiency among the workers were diminished by the accommodation and dining facilities.<sup>385</sup> Unlike the İş Bankası's companies, Etibank had not achieved such a success due to the lack of initiative and mismanagement in EKI. Despite the fact that Etibank had acquired the wealthiest mines of the Ereğli Company, it had also taken on its backward management mentality through hiring its administrative and technical personnel. He criticized the bureaucratic mentality of EKI's management. Granigg explicitly sided with the İş Bankası's mining companies, praising the companies' dynamic management, efficient production strategies and social policies toward its labor force. He depicted its companies as the ideal model to be imitated by Etibank.<sup>386</sup>

---

<sup>382</sup> Esat Kerimol's report, MTA Archive No: 1564, 30 May 1939, *Zonguldak Havzası Müesseselerinin Birleştirilmesi Hakkında Rapor*, p. 14.

<sup>383</sup> Professor Granigg's report, 5 May 1938 MTA Archive no. 1561, "*Türkiye İş Bankası*" ve "*Etibank*" in *Zonguldak Havzasındaki Kömür Madenleri*".

<sup>384</sup> Esat Kerimol's report.

<sup>385</sup> Granigg's 5 May 1938 report, p. 4.

<sup>386</sup> For comparison of Etibank and the Business bank's companies in terms of management, see *ibid.*, pp. 7-11.

Granigg concluded his report by discussing the different alternatives of fusion, within which İş Bankası and Etibank would play parts in accordance with their managerial, technical and financial strengths. Accordingly, in a country adopting a liberal economic system, İş Bankası would have been granted an active role in such a project. But, in a country where a liberal economy was not preferred, as was the case in Turkey, Etibank and İş Bankası could cooperate for fusion, which would be to the benefit of Etibank, but to the detriment of İş Bankası. Granigg projected that the loss and benefits of the both parties would be balanced in time if Etibank adopted the dynamic management of İş Bankası and transferred part of its profit to İş Bankası.<sup>387</sup> The report reveals the dominant idea of the time, which underlined the outstanding position of İş Bankası mining companies, yet granted both Etibank and İş Bankası enterprises active roles in the process of fusion.

In his report, Esat Kerimol outlined the shares of the Turkish and foreign enterprises in the total amount of coal production. By the 1938, the share of the foreign enterprises, namely the Italian companies, had declined to twenty-one percent, and with the amalgamation of certain mines the total number of mines under operation had declined to ten.<sup>388</sup> He summarized a number of technical and administrative problems that originated from the operation of the scattered mines among different companies and mine operators. Accordingly, to increase efficiency in coal production, all of the parties in the basin had to agree on the amalgamation of the scattered mines, so that the endless disputes over the intermingled boundaries of the coal veins would come to an end. The production costs would decline with more efficient use of the equipment and the rational exploitation of the diverse coal veins. The amalgamation of the mines under a central administration would increase labor productivity as well.<sup>389</sup>

---

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-27.

<sup>388</sup> Kerimol's Report, p. 4.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-7.

Kerimol's report summarized the competing perspectives of different interest groups on the method of fusion. Most of the foreign and small mine operators advocated the status quo on the grounds of the immunity of individual rights. They objected to the amalgamation, which would remove the driving force of competition. They argued for a redrawing of the mine borders between the coal operators and putting an end to the border disputes. The second perspective, with its different versions, offered amalgamating the enterprises of Etibank and İş Bankası and leaving the small mine operators and Italian company aside until they exhausted their capacity of production. According to this perspective, the main problem of the basin was not a technical, but an administrative one. In any case, amalgamation would bring more advantages than the competition of large-scale companies.<sup>390</sup> Kerimol concluded his report, recommending the fusion of Etibank, İş Bankası and the Italian company. The fate of the individual mine operators could be assessed in accordance with the advantages and disadvantages of fusion with them. Kerimol projected the administrative, legal and technical details of fusion in reference to Granigg's 1938 report.

From 1938 on, İş Bankası companies in the basin strengthened their stance in the contest for leadership of the fusion project. EKI did not achieve its production targets and lagged behind İş Bankası's companies.<sup>391</sup> The lower productivity in EKI's operating mines was met with criticism and brought about further government pressure over EKI management. A report submitted on 4 December 1938 by EKI's general director, Ergene, to the Prime Minister, Celal Bayar, illustrated the poor production conditions in EKI's mines and the harsh rivalry between EKI and İş Bankası's companies.<sup>392</sup> Vehbi Ergene tried to reply to Bayar's tough criticisms of the lower productivity, mismanagement and lack of dynamism in EKI. In fact, Bayar's criticism on EKI's management echoed those of Granigg in 1937. As the report reveals, Ergene was accused of spending most of his time with the affairs of the *Satış Birliği*

---

<sup>390</sup> For the competing perspectives and their versions on the idea of fusion see, Kerimol's Report, pp. 8-9.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

(Sale Association) in İstanbul. Against this accusation, he compared the length of time he and the managers of İş Bankası companies spent outside of Zonguldak. Then he explained the reasons for EKI's failure to achieve its production targets. He mainly underlined the labor shortage, the inadequate infrastructure and the old equipment that EKI had taken over from the Ereğli Company.

In reference to his meeting with the Minister of Economy, Ergene stated how the minister had informed him about Celal Bayar's dissatisfaction with the lower productivity in EKI's mines.<sup>393</sup> The minister had reminded him once more on the production targets of EKI, and had stated his intention to grant a mining area of EKI to a İş Bankası enterprise, Türk-İş. The report clearly revealed the rivalry between EKI and the İş Bankası's companies to capture control of the basin. Accordingly, the manager of Türk-İş had already submitted a report to the Minister of Economy, promising extra high levels of coal production if it were allowed to operate the mining area of EKI, which was near the Kilimli mines of Türk-İş. The minister found the idea of granting an EKI's mining area to another company acceptable, for it was convenient to the rationale of the fusion project.<sup>394</sup> An enclosure of the report explains the reason for the production pressure on the companies of the basin, particularly EKI: if the government did not take the necessary measures, a coal shortage would be unavoidable in the 1939 winter and it would endanger the opening date of the Karabük factories.<sup>395</sup> Hence, one the one hand, due to the state's own needs for coal, and on the other, due to the contests over leadership in the fusion project, the EKI management became the target of criticism.

A report on Prime Minister Refik Saydam's visit to Zonguldak in December 1939 indicates the extensive nature of the fusion project.<sup>396</sup> The report contains notes of the

---

<sup>392</sup> Bekir Vehbi Ergene's Report, 4 İlkAnun 1938, Catalog no. [PMRA 030..10.0.0. / 174. 206.. 2.]

<sup>393</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid., Head Consultant (Başmüşavir), Report, 11 July 1938, submitted to the Prime Ministry.

<sup>396</sup> 4.12.1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0/ 2.11..3.]

meetings among the Prime Minister and high level officials of the basin. The report indicates the decisive steps taken by the government in realizing the fusion of the various interests in the shortest time possible. At this time, the fusion project was discussed in terms of labor force. The participants discussed the living and working conditions of the mine workers over two days. The minutes of the meetings note a variety of topics, ranging from health care, housing facilities, and nourishment, to working conditions such as the problem of lower productivity and absenteeism among the mine workers, the tax burden on the wages and the training of technical personnel and engineers. The living and the working conditions in the basin were evaluated in reference to the problematic of productivity and labor discipline. Hence, the mine workers were featured in the fusion discussions as the objects of social policy, as will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

The idea of fusion under state ownership was realized in 1940. The political circumstances in Turkey facilitated full state ownership of the basin. On 25 January 1939, Prime Minister Celal Bayar resigned his post on President İsmet İnönü's request. The governmental change implied not only the beginning of the "National Chief" period in Turkish political history, but also the beginning of a new period in the basin's history. In 1940, all of the coal mines operated by İş Bankası companies and the Italian company, private entrepreneurs, and local firms were nationalized. Despite the fact that İş Bankası companies had sought to realize the project of fusion under their leadership and political climate had been in their favor, after the resignation of Celal Bayar the political climate changed in favor of EKI. It is no doubt that outbreak of the Second World War increased the chance of EKI, which would be more reliable to manage coal mining as a strategic commodity in wartime.

The nationalization of the basin was then put into practice by the new government, under the presidency of Refik Saydam. Law No. 3867 *Ereğli Havzasındaki Ocakların Devletçe İşletilmesi Hakkındaki Kanun* (the law regarding the full state control of the mines in the Ereğli



basin by the state), was enacted on 30 May 1940. The law authorized the Council of Ministers to decide the extent of the nationalization and its date.<sup>397</sup> After a five month delay, on 15 October 1940 governmental decree number 2/14574 transferred management of the basin to the full control of the state.

Full nationalization of the basin under EKI management coincided with the increasing pressure of the Second World War on the Turkish economy and society. The period of full state ownership began with the *Milli Koruma Kanunu* (National Protection Law) of 1940. Under the National Protection Law a forced labor regime was established in the Zonguldak coal basin. With full nationalization, the state established its firm control over the basin, not only as the political power with its executive, legislative and judicial functions, but also as the sole employer of the mine workers. Under the extraordinary conditions of the war economy, the mode of the state's existence in the basin complicated its relations with the mine workers, who were at the same time citizens of the state. The war economy of the 1940s imposed extraordinary measures on the basin, which deteriorated the relations between the state and the basin's inhabitants, most of whom were deeply engaged in the coal enterprise. Before discussing the Second World War period in the basin, the living and working conditions of the mine workers should be elaborated within the context of state-labor and capital relations.

---

<sup>397</sup> For the articles of Law No. 3867, see Anil and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 155-161.

## CHAPTER 4

### WORK RELATIONS, THE MINING COMMUNITY AND THE LABOR MARKET IN THE EREĞLİ-ZONGULDAK COAL BASIN

#### Working in the Mines: The Organization of the Labor Process, Work Relations and Wages

In the 1920s and 1930s, the labor process in the Zonguldak mines showed great resemblance to those of previous decades. The lack of mechanization and hence, the labor intensive characteristic of the coal mining kept the labor process and work relations similar to that of the previous decades. Since the coal mining of pre-mechanized era was organized on similar principles everywhere, the Ereğli-Zonguldak basin was not an exception. Approaching methods to coal seams, the actual coal cutting process, loading and hauling of the coal from the rooms of the mining crew to the pit mouth, supporting of the roofs with timbers, boring tunnels and main galleries and other auxiliary jobs were carried out the basin by an intensive use of labor. As *Meslek* indicated in 1925, "the principle capital of all the miners in the basin is composed of a mining permit and the employees that they hire at a very low wage."<sup>398</sup> Regardless their size and capital strength all the miners in the basin followed low cost production strategies which were also compatible with the limited demand for coal and narrow market scale. Hence, the intense use of unskilled and cheap labor was more rational for the miners of the basin than the adaptation of new mechanical means to the mining

---

<sup>398</sup> "Havza-i fahmiyede mevcut alelumum madencilerin başlıca sermayesi uhtelerinde bulunan ruhsatnamelerle pek ucuz bir ücretle istihdam ettikleri ameleden ibarettir," in "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 13 (10 March, 1925), p.4.

process.<sup>399</sup> In the 1930s there were few mines where pneumatic picks and perforators were introduced.<sup>400</sup> The technology was limited to lifting machine, fans and water pumps, which were the prime devices of deep mining.<sup>401</sup>

Throughout the inter-war years, the coal winning, loading and hauling process in the mines was carried out by a traditional labor force with traditional means of production. All of the equipment in the mines was composed of an ax and a pick for coal cutting, a shovel and a chute for loading and transporting the extracted coal, a bully head and steel auger to open the holes in coal face or rock, wooden pit props for fortification and lastly lamb, and narrow gauge railroads. The transportation of coal from coal face to the pit mouth was the most arduous process. As the underground hauling was not mechanized, the coal cut, the extracted rock mass and supplies were mainly carried by railway cars driven by mules. Then, the coal and rocks were transported by sled on the shoulders of children or by baskets from hand to hand.<sup>402</sup> By the late 1930s, the diesel engine was introduced into the hauling process as an impressive device.<sup>403</sup> In order to avoid the high costs of underground transportation and fortification, the coal operators of the time preferred to run galleries near the surface, deepening between 100 to 300 meters. Only the thick veins were extracted and the bituminous content of the basin's coal facilitated advance in coal seams through manual power and explosive rather than the mechanical cutters or pneumatic devices of the time.<sup>404</sup>

Up until the mid-1930s, the room-and-pillar mining system prevailed in the coal winning.<sup>405</sup> The coal cutting, loading and hauling processes and support systems were

---

<sup>399</sup> Although Özekten remarks on the mechanization of certain pits run by İş Bankası companies, the companies seem to have mechanized the underground hauling systems to a limited extent, through laying railways and swinging conveyors. By 1936 only six percent of the underground hauling was mechanized. Özekten, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, pp. 41, 69.

<sup>400</sup> The Kömür İş Company of İş Bankası was one such enterprise which began to use pneumatic picks and perforators. *Kömür Havzasında Türkiye İş Bankası 1926-1937* (n.p.: Devlet Basımevi, 1937), p.5.

<sup>401</sup> For the level of technology, in the late 1920s and 1930s, see Kadri Yersel, *Madencilikte Bir Ömür Anılar Görüşler* (İstanbul: Maden Mühendisleri Odası, 1989), p.14

<sup>402</sup> For the mining and transporting equipment of the 1930s, see Yersel, pp.14-15

<sup>403</sup> Hızıroğlu Bedri, *Madencinin Kitabı* ( n.p.: Matbaacılık ve Neşriyat, Türk Anonim Şirketi, 1934),p.16; Yersel, p.15

<sup>404</sup> Özekten, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 172.

<sup>405</sup> Erol Kahveci, "The Miners of Zonguldak," eds. Erol Kahveci, *Work And Occupation In Turkey* (London: Mansell, 1996), p. 187.

organized in accordance to the variations of room and pillar mining. By the mid-1930s the longwall method was introduced. In the longwall mining system a long face was worked by many small teams at the same time. As the longwall mining concentrated the mining crews on the same face it also diminished the problem of supervision. The foremen, hence, were rid of wandering around the mining crews scattered in various rooms. It also made possible the use of conveyors or corrugated iron in removing coal from coal face to main hauling roads.<sup>406</sup> The longwall mining also made the use of certain mechanical devices possible. One was the mechanical coal cutter (*potkapaç*), run with air pressure or electricity. The coal face was cut by the machine from beneath of the face. Then the coal either fallen up with its gravity or was drooped by hewer with pick. Although the mechanical coal cutter was introduced in the coal extraction process by the longwall mining in the basin, its use remained limited.<sup>407</sup>

The underground occupational categories were first determined by the Dilaver Paşa regulation.<sup>408</sup> The basic job categories remained unchanged, but with the increase in coal production, the teams were enlarged with the participation of the helpers to the master workers of each occupational category. In time the underground occupational categories became organized on the basis of small team work. The underground works were maintained by semi-skilled master workers, their helpers and numbers of unskilled employees. Above them there were a few overseers and managerial cadres in varying number in accordance to the size of the mine and capital strength of the mine operator.

In the inter-war years, a mining crew composed of two or three workers, a hewer, his mate and some times an employee.<sup>409</sup> It was responsible for the actual coal cutting and loading process. Hand picks, a shovel, timber, and basket were the traditional tools of the

---

<sup>406</sup> For the implementation of the longwall mining system in the 1930s and its advantages, see B.K. Çağlar, "Randıman ve Metot," *Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 1 (İkinci Kanun, 1937), pp. 37-38.

<sup>407</sup> For the introduction of pneumatic coal cutters in the basin, see Cemal Zühtü Aysan, "Havzamız Kömürlerinde Mihaniki İstihsal Ameliyatı," *Mağden, Türk Mağden Mühendisleri Cemiyeti Mecmuası*, no.1 ( Şubat-Mart, 1936), pp. 6-9.

<sup>408</sup> Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, p. 93.

<sup>409</sup> For the composition of the mining crew in the 1920s, see "Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1340-1925), p.2.

mining crew. Although explosives were used in loosening up the hard coal layer, it is not clear whether blasting belonged to the mining crew or a specialized worker called a fireman. Coal cutting, the supporting of the coal face under work and removing coal from the coal face to the entry of the room, was the crew's responsibility. The crew was paid on the basis of piece work. They did not received additional pay for the auxiliary jobs they carried out their respective rooms.<sup>410</sup> They had to walk the distance between the work place and the mine entrance which grew longer as the mining advanced. However, just as they were piece workers the time they spent while walking was unpaid.

Besides the mining crew, there were some other crews maintaining basic auxiliary jobs.<sup>411</sup> The underground transportation and maintenance of the roads were carried out by particular groups. Among them the *tabancı* (floor worker) and his mate drifted and maintained roads parallel to the coal face. The *taramacı* (man combing out) with his employees trimmed the swelled floors and roofs via explosives, the *yol marangozu* (carpenter) and his helpers laid track roads and carried on the maintenance of track ways. There were also many employees doing different underground transportation jobs alone such as *sağcı* (the worker who controls and directs the full and empty trams in the crossroads of the pit), *varageleci* (the worker responsible for the machine with which heavy material is transported within the pit), *arabacı* (carter), *kapıcı* (door keeper) and *seyis* (mule drivers). The roof support also required highly specialized team work. The *domuzdamcı* (wooden chock-makers) with *meremetçi* (drift setters) were some other workers who carried on roof supports via different pit prop systems. Boring main galleries, drifting tunnels and roads through driving in solid rocks belonged to the *lağımıcı* (drift developer) and his mates. Various maintenance jobs were carried out by different

---

<sup>410</sup> The mining crew was the main unit of coal production. For the division of labor between the members of the crew and flow of the work, see Hızıroğlu Bedri, pp. 15, 21 and 46.

<sup>411</sup> The wage sheets of different dates in the 1920s and the 1930s provide lists of occupational categories in underground and surface works. Here, the 1922, 1926, 1937 and 1938 wage sheets and minimum wage scales are used. For the 1922 wage sheets, see AYTEKİN, *Workers of The Ereğli-Zonguldak Coal Basin*, Table 4: Categories of Workers and their Wages around 1922. For the 1926 wage sheet, see İKTİSAT VEKALETİNDEN HAVZA-I FAHİMİYE, 1927. MTA Archive, Report no. 1272; 1937 minimum wage scale in accordance to the different job categories, see ÜMRAN NAZİF YİĞİTER, *Kömür Havzasında Amele Hukuku* (Zonguldak: Ocak Yayınları, 1943), pp. 50-51. For the 1938 minimum

craftsmen such as stonemasons and repairmen with their helpers as well. As the teamwork constituted the main unit of the work process, the teams were managed and supervised mostly by their master workers. Hence there were few chief wardens, master overseers, overseers, foremen or clerks engaged in the management of the underground work process and laborers. In the inter-war years there existed two or three shifts in a working day. The underground workers performed coal cutting, hauling and fortification jobs simultaneously in the room and pillar mining or in a sequential order, in longwall mining. In both mining systems while the shifts started at definite hours the end of the shifts was uncertain. The working hours per day varied between eight to twelve, sometimes more hours, depending on the performance of the crews to complete the piece of work for which they were responsible. For instance, the mining crews could not leave their working place until they had loaded a certain number of trucks with coal. When they were unable to fill their quotes, they had to make up for it the next day, which meant working overtime.<sup>412</sup>

Besides mine workers, there were small numbers of surface artisans such as blacksmiths, carpenters, repairmen, and locomotive drivers, railway track maintenance men who were employed in workshops of different sorts and in surface transportation. There were a number of unskilled surface employees who carried out the maintenance of timber and coal cleaning. The port workers who transported the coal from the seaside to the ships constituted another occupational group in transportation process. They differed from the mineworkers and railway workers with their special organization and rules. Above all the manual labor, there were a few white collar personnel, managerial staff and engineers. Most of the underground and above ground jobs entailed a considerable degree of craft knowledge and experience. The crew system, which comprised at least two persons, was reproduced on the basis of the

---

wage scale with the work categories, see Anil and Meray, Vol. 2, pp. 164-168. The occupational categories and work descriptions are picked from these three sources.

<sup>412</sup> For the long working hours, and a discussion held by Yusuf Akçora Bey in the Grand National Assembly, on the working conditions in the mines, T.C., *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, Cilt 15, Devre 2, İctima Senesi 2 (Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1976), pp. 553. For the shifts after the introduction of the longwall mining, see Kahveci, "The Miners of Zonguldak," pp. 187-188.

apprenticeship system where the master worker taught his skills to his helper and employees throughout the work process. Both the craft nature of the work and the shared experiences in the work places created a sense of occupational identity and group solidarity. Particularly the most dangerous and exhausting nature of the underground work, the long working hours, wage cuts, fines, shared living conditions and common regional roots among the mine workers strengthened the sense of group solidarity and occupational identity of the workers underground and on the surface.

The wages in the basin were differentiated in accordance to the surface/underground, production/auxiliary, and skilled/unskilled categories. The tables below indicate the average wages of the ages of the different work categories in 1926.<sup>413</sup> Comparing the daily wages of the workers, while workers undertook the actual production process or performed auxiliary jobs, they were qualified in general as unskilled workers and received lower wages than the craftsmen. Furthermore foreign workers hired by the mine operators were paid more than the native workers, even if they did the same job.

Table 6. Categories of Workers and Craftsmen, and Wages in 1926

Type of worker	Daily wage (piasters)	Type of worker	Daily wage (piasters)
Underground workers		Craftsmen	
<i>Başçavuş ecnebi</i> (Head foreman-Foreign)	730-410	<i>Ustabası-ecnebi</i> (Foreign foreman)	530-300
<i>Başçavuş Türk</i> (Head foreman-Turk)	530-200	<i>Ustabası Türk</i> (Turkish Foreman)	380-185
<i>Çavuş ecnebi</i> (Foreman Foreign)	450-400	<i>Makinist</i> (Engine- Driver)	230-115
<i>Çavuş Türk</i> (Foreman Türk)	350-160	<i>Vinççi</i> (Winch Operator)	180-100
<i>Kazmacı ve yedek</i> (Sapper and his mate)	170-95	<i>Tesviyecı</i> (fitter)	245-85
<i>Dahili Amele</i> (Underground Employee)	110-60	<i>Kazancı</i> (repairman)	175-115
<i>Arabacı</i> ( Carter)	135-70	<i>Demirci</i> (Blacksmith)	220-100
<i>Fırıncı</i> (Furnace)	180-120	<i>Ateşçi</i> (Fireman)	220-170
<i>Saççı</i> ( directs wagons in the crossroad of the pits) ve <i>Tumbacı</i> (who dumps the full wagons)	120-80	<i>Divarçı ve Dülger</i> (Stonemason and carpenter)	270-120
<i>Lambacı</i> (who responsible for safety lamp)	110-90	<i>Marangoz</i> (Carpenter)	300-95
<i>Harici Amele</i> (Surface Employee)	150-70		
<i>Varagelci</i> (who controls pass Rope machine )	125-80		
<i>Kavas</i> (door keeper)	110-85		
<i>Seyis ve Ahırcı</i> (horse keeper)	125-95		
<i>Katip ve Memur</i> (clerk and civil servant who manage records)	300-100		

Source: İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927. MTA Archive, Report no: 1272

<sup>413</sup> İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927, p. 51 and 52.

However, the 1926 figures do not differentiate between the workers in reference to piece rate and time basis waging. The reliability of the 1926 figures is questionable, for some of the underground workers were paid in accordance to the amount of coal they extracted or the distance they advanced through rock or coal seam. The exact situation was entirely different, particularly for the wages of underground workers. In his interview with the Zonguldak gazette, the Commerce undersecretary Zühtü Bey stated that the wages of the workers varied from 60-70 to 150 piasters only so-called. Accordingly, with this amount of money one could only buy a little food for one or two persons. Therefore, the worker could neither afford to nurture his body nor recharge his energy for the next day.<sup>414</sup> The situation did not change in the 1930s. Comparing wage levels in different sectors in Turkey, according to the 1938 wage index, the Zonguldak mine workers were paid less than most of the workers employed in other sectors, such as the railways, the cellulose factories and the cement industry. The construction and mine workers were the two groups of workers who received the lowest wages.<sup>415</sup> In the 1930s the wage differentiation between underground and surface jobs continued to the advantage of the surface workers. Wages differed among the underground workers as well. Experience and qualification were determinant. For instance, a hewer was paid more than a basketman. An experienced worker earned more than a new employee.<sup>416</sup>

Throughout the inter-war years the workers were paid on piece rate or time basis systems, varying in accordance with the nature of the job they performed. Most of the surface workers were paid on a time basis. However, the underground workers, particularly those whose labor was measurable through the outcome of their labor efforts, were paid by piece rate. For instance, the mining crews and the drift developers constituted piece rate workers. In this system, the mining crew was paid in accordance to the actual amount of coal, which was measured with the number of trucks the crew loaded. The drift developer teams were paid per

---

<sup>414</sup> Quoted in Ahmet Naim, *Kömür Havzası*, p. 137.

<sup>415</sup> For the statistics, see Gerhard Kessler, *Türk İş İstatistikleri*, İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası Cilt 4 (İlk Teşrin 1942), p. 246.



meter they advanced in the boring galleries.<sup>417</sup> The underground worker whose labor effort could not be measured by an actual product of his labor was paid on a daily basis. The ordinary employees were in such a category.

The piece rate wage system operated on certain principles as same ways throughout 1920s and 1930s. Meslek described in 1925 the piece rate wage system in 1926. Comparing the system with the late 1930s through reports of Refik Saydam's 1939 visit in Zonguldak the system seems to have remained unchanged.<sup>418</sup> In the actual coal cutting process, the wage rate for each loaded truck was determined either before or after the work. The rate determined at the beginning of the work was the subject of bargaining between the master worker or gang boss and the headmen or pit engineer. The selling price of coal on the market, the geological conditions of the coal face, which conditioned the speed of the advance in the coal vein and the personal relations between the bargaining parties were determinant over the wage rate per wagon. The pre-determined rate per wagon at the beginning of the work provided the workers with the knowledge of what they would earn at the end of the month. The workers received a degree of control over their wages through the bargaining process.<sup>419</sup>

In both payment methods, the wage was determined in accordance with the exchange value of the coal in the main gallery of the pit. *Meslek* describes the system in a table extracted from a pay sheet in the Gelik mines.

Table 7: The Wage Sheet for Piece-Rate Payment

<i>Marka Numarası</i> (mark number indicates the mining crew)	<i>İşçi adedi</i> (number of worker in each crew)	<i>Berlin adedi</i> (number of wagon called Berlin which carried 500 kg. coals)	<i>Berlin Fiyatı</i> (price of per wagon at main gallery-piaster)
13	4	16	20
15	4	19	18
27	4	21	18
41	4	24	18

Source: "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p.2

<sup>416</sup> For the average daily wages of surface and underground works between 1933 and 1940, see Yiğiter, p. 74.

<sup>417</sup> As the mining crew was basic unit in coal cutting, crew system was basic unit in drift developing. The drift developing team was headed by the master drift developer who bargained the employer on the ground of advance per meter in the stone. He paid his employees himself. For the piece rate payment system for drift developing, see Yersel, p.15

<sup>418</sup> For the determination of wage rates per wagon at the beginning and at the end of the month and their outcomes for work relations, see "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p.2; and also the 3 December 1939 report in 4.12.1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0/2.11..3.], pp. 5-6.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

The calculation of piece rate pay was as such: for instance, mining crew numbered thirteen was comprised of four workers, one hewer, one helper, and two transport employees. The selling price per wagon at the pit mouth was twenty piasters. The crew had to load sixteen wagons per day to earn their daily wages. The hewer received ninety piasters, his helper eighty piasters and the employees sixty piasters a day in exchange for sixteen wagons. The labor cost for sixteen wagon coal comprised 290 piaster. If they produced less, then their wages were cut. The labor cost per ton was calculated as such: For the sixteen wagons of coal, a member of the crew had to produce five wagons of coal. If the total wage per day was divided by the total number of wagons, then the unit cost of labor per wagon was 18.5 piasters. So the labor cost per ton (two wagons) was thirty-seven piasters and because the selling price of per ton at the main gallery was eighty piasters, the unit cost of labor comprised less than half percent of the unit price of per ton. As *Meslek* indicated, such a low "wage per ton was not evident even in mechanized production in the entire world."<sup>420</sup>

The calculation of wages determined at the end of the work was similar to those determined at the beginning of the month. However, the second way of wage determination invited serious disputes between the workers and the officials. In this system, the officials determined the wage rate in according to the worker's performance throughout the work period. In this case the wage was subjected to the officials' evaluation and the workers lost control over their wages. The mining crew worked throughout the work period without knowing their earning at the end of the work period.<sup>421</sup>

In this system mining crews with three workers were attached to a particular room of a coal face and required to produce coal at a pre-determined rate of trucks per day. Each day the number of loaded trucks was registered and if the daily production was lower than the

---

<sup>420</sup>"Bütün dünyada makine ile istihsalatta dahi bu miktara tesadüf edilmez," in "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p.2. *Meslek* rightly underlined lower wage rates in the Ereğli basin than the piece rate wages in other coal fields of the world. In Britain wages accounted for 75 percent of the total costs in the early 1920s (falling to 66 percent after the defeat of the miners in the early 1926 stoppage) and in the United States the average was about 60-65 percent. Just after the mechanization of the hauling system and to a certain degree, of the coal cutting process, the wages were to decline in the 1930s. For the wages and labor costs, see Supple, pp. 570-571.

expected number of trucks then the mining group was compelled to make up the loss of the day through producing the missing amount of coal the next day. At the end of the month, the wages were calculated on the total number of the loaded trucks. In this system both the performance of the mining crew and the amount of coal they produced were taken into consideration. If they produced less than the production target, then the piece rate per loaded truck was decreased in the form of a wage cut.<sup>422</sup>

Although Law No. 151 required the coal mining operators to comply with the minimum wage scale which was determined by a commission comprised of representatives of workers, miners and the Ministry of Economy, most of the miners did not adjust the piece rates in reference to the minimum wage scales. Some of them harmonized the minimum wage scale with a premium to the numbers of loaded wagon to encourage the workers to produce more.<sup>423</sup> However, in general, the law solved neither the wage disputes nor the problems of the over work in the basin. For instance, the eight hour restriction for work day and double pay for overtime provisions were implemented to the detriment of the workers. As such, the wages of mine workers decreased to cover the costs of the overtime. Furthermore, fines imposed on the workers for many reasons were a customary practice, which further diminished their total earnings.<sup>424</sup>

It is obvious that in one or another form the piece rate wage system invited continuous discontent and disputes between the piece workers and the employers. Besides, as the piece rate workers earned as much as they extracted coal, pressure to save time for coal winning brought about negligence in the proper timbering of the roof or such unpaid axially jobs that

---

<sup>421</sup> "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," p.2; and 3 December 1939 report in [PMRA 30..1.0.0/ 2.11..3.], pp. 5-6.

<sup>422</sup> For the determination of wage rates per wagon at the beginning and at the end of the month and their outcomes for work relations, see "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p.2; and also the 3 December 1939 report in 4.12.1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0/ 2.11..3.], pp. 5-6

<sup>423</sup> 4 December 1939 report in [PMRA 30..1.0.0/ 2.11..3.], p.3.

<sup>424</sup> Ahmet Naim, *Kömür Havzası*, pp. 138 and 155.

were the crew's responsibility. The system, hence, led to frequent fatal accidents. In 1930, for instance there was one death per twenty-five thousand tons of coal produced.<sup>425</sup>

In fact, piece rate payment in coal production and drift developing was compatible to the coal mining conditions of the basin. Considering the lack of mechanization and the prevalence of the room and pillar system until the mid-1930s, the piece rate payment provided more production with less supervision. It operated as a self-adjusted system. The piece rate payment was based on a contract between the employee and the employer, the conditions of which were subject to bargaining, yet, with uneven strength of the parties. The piece rate payment system provided more autonomy to the crews in their workplace and more control over their work time. However, the amount of product was subjected to the employer's will. As long as the employer received a certain amount of coal with a particular size and quality, he did not interfere in the process of work or the supervision of the crews.

The piece rate system enabled the coal operators to solve the problem of recruitment, supervision and work organization simultaneously. The coal operators of the basin mostly assigned the question of supervision and labor control to the various secondary actors in the mines. They constituted a secondary authority in the running of the piece works and prime authority over the employees assigned to them. As the piece rate wage system was harmonious with the contract labor, the coal operators both resorted to independent sub-contractors or internal contractors such as gang bosses who ran piece works with their fellow employees or the headmen who were experience mine workers and had local ties with other mine workers. In both cases, the contractors had easy access to the labor market thanks to the social and cultural ties they shared with the employees. In both case, their personal authority over their followers facilitated an amply labor supply and problem of labor discipline.

---

<sup>425</sup> Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti, p. 432

At this point, there was a complex relationship between the coal operators, the leaders of the crews and the employees. The coal operators concentrated on the outcome of the labor that was the final product, and assigned the labor aspect of the work process to the leaders of the contract labor. In the case of sub-contract system, the coal operators, who had mining licenses but no desire to run the mines due to the troublesome nature of the business, assigned the whole process of mining or some of its processes to sub-contractors. The system was called in the local idiom *kesenecilik* (piece work mining).<sup>426</sup>

The sub-contract system prevailed in particular in the actual coal cutting process, drift development and in some of the surface works. It provided low cost production through using cheap labor. The sub-contractor could solve the recruitment problem by means of his personal relations in the local networks of the labor market and with the help of the same mechanism, he employed the workers at low wages. As he infringed on the legal requirements which imposed certain protective measures for workers, such as compensation payment for those who were injured from accidents or regular payment of wages, he ran the production process with small labor costs. Although the prevalence of the subcontract system in the basin is not clear, it might have had widespread use particularly by the small scale mine operators.<sup>427</sup>

The internal contractors operated the work process under their supervision in a manner similar to that of the independent sub-contractors. The internal contractor might have been an overseer or headman under the direct authority of the operator, but employed his fellow villagers, or a gang boss contracted with the coal operator to work for him for a while with his fellow workers. In both cases the interpersonal relations between the internal contractor and the employees charged the contractor leadership of the crew. The leader of the crew, hence, appeared as the second authority for the coal operator in the running of the mining and the prime authority for the employees under his supervision. In such a hierarchy,

---

<sup>426</sup> "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p. 2.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

the leader could both act as representative of the crew and coal operator, trying to maximize both the income of the crew and of coal operator, through compelling the employees to produce more. Particularly when the product of labor was not satisfactory, the crew members were then he punished through wage cuts and fines. Moreover, to increase the amount of product, particularly when demand for coal increased, as the case in the late 1930s, the pressure on the piece rate workers was multiplied.

The leaders of the crews tried to increase amount of product by resorting various sort of means. The authority of the leader was derived from both by nature of the work and his craft knowledge. His personal ties with the local community of the employees multiplied his authority as well. He solved the problem of labor discipline, recruitment and supervision through many extra economic means which brought a set of extra work relations to the very heart of the work place. The crew member could not complain the piece rate system when the fines and wage cuts were imposed or work became more oppressive. If he complained he could not find a job elsewhere in the basin. Most of the crew was organized under the leadership of a gang boss, or master miner from among the fellow villagers, the crew members were harassed by the leader, who could make the life of the complainer out of the work very difficult.<sup>428</sup> Hence, it is not possible to understand the hierarchy of the work relations in the Ereğli-Zonguldak coal basin without evaluating the dynamics which shaped the labor market and the process of the articulation of the social/ cultural realm to the work site.

### The Social Composition of the Mining Community

Since the late nineteenth century the villagers of the basin area had worked in the mines as the main source of the underground labor force. Most of the underground workers came from the villages of Ereğli, Devrek, Bartın, Çaycuma, Safranbolu and Kurucaşile. There

---

<sup>428</sup> "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p. 2.

were a number of workers from remote provinces such as Rize, Trabzon, Erzurum and eastern Anatolia. By 1927, eighty-eight percent of the workers originated from the surrounding villages of the basin and the remaining twelve percent was from other regions.<sup>429</sup> In time, although the numbers of the workers from out of the basin increased to a certain extent, this percentage remained nearly unchanged. In 1939, of the total labor force, three out of four were from the villages of Zonguldak, and the rest from the Black Sea and eastern Anatolian provinces.<sup>430</sup> In 1937 the construction of the Zonguldak-Ankara railway line was completed and whole hinterland of the basin, comprising Çankırı, Karabük, Çaycuma, Filyos and Çatalağzı, began to provide a greater labor force than in previous decades.<sup>431</sup>

Along with the traditional labor reservoir of the basin, there was a continuous flow of men who sought a livelihood from a variety of regions to the basin. The basin attracted various sorts of people who had to leave their homeland for one or another reasons. The family stories of the Zonguldak people give some clues about their origins. For instance, the family of a local newspaper publisher, Ali Bahadır, belonged to a nomadic from the Amik-Reyhanli region that had been forced to settle in Trabzon in the 1920s. However, due to a blood feud, his father had left Trabzon and settled in Zonguldak with his family. He had then begun to work in the mines as underground worker.<sup>432</sup> Another person, Ali Kaya informed us that in the 1930s, when his mother-in-law was aged four, she had come to Zonguldak from Erzincan with an elderly relative.<sup>433</sup> Adventurers, idlers, porters also made up part of the labor pool.<sup>434</sup>

Through the late 1930s, with the increasing pressure of the government on the companies to produce more coal, especially for the Karabük iron and steel factories, the companies looked for alternative labor reserves, one of which was prisoners. From May 1937

---

<sup>429</sup> İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927, MTA Archive, Report no. 1272, pp. 42 and 43.

<sup>430</sup> *Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (İstanbul: Alaadin Kiral Basımevi, 1940), p. 15.

<sup>431</sup> Yersel, p. 12. For the railroad lines, see *Yurt Ansiklopedisi, Zonguldak*, vol. 10 (İstanbul: Anadolu Yayıncılık A.Ş., 1982-1983-1984), p. 7767.

<sup>432</sup> Interview with Ali Bahadır 27/9/2003, Zonguldak.

<sup>433</sup> Interview with Ali Kaya, 27/9/2003, Zonguldak.

<sup>434</sup> Özeke, *Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi Problemleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1948), p. 6

on, the inmates from prisons in various provinces began to be employed in the Zonguldak mines. 244 of the total 279 prisoners had committed murder.<sup>435</sup> For the employment of the prisoners a prison was constructed in Zonguldak. Prisoners were employed in various sorts of fields as coal extraction, construction, repair and transportation. One work day in the mines cut two days from their sentences. After their release they would receive their nominal wages, which were held in a bank account throughout their work.<sup>436</sup>

By 1938, men from Elazığ and the Dersim provinces of eastern Anatolia began to work in the mines, most probably under the pressure of the state. Although there are not accurate numbers for them, it seems that just after the state's military campaigns of 1937 and 1938 in the Dersim region, as a part of the ensuing forced settlement program of the government, some of the Kurds/Alevis among the rebellion tribes were settled in the basin.<sup>437</sup> However, the Basin Head Office seems to have resisted the labor supply from Dersim and Elazığ, on the grounds that they disturb the peace of the basin and take the jobs of the "Turkish" mine workers.<sup>438</sup> Despite such objections, workers from Dersim were distributed to the various mines. The *Evrak İrsalat Defteri* (Document Register Book) of 1938 stated presence of the workers from Dersim, Sivas and Çorum. For instance, a correspondence dated 26 August 1938, notes the existence of workers from Tunceli. They were to be employed in the pits of the EKI, Kozlu Kömür İş, Maden İş and Kilimli İş companies.<sup>439</sup>

Correspondences continued in the following days. On 13 September 1938, of a total fifty workers from the east, EKI asked for settlement of its twenty workers in the Kilimli district or their employment in the Turk-İş pits.<sup>440</sup> A correspondence dated 13 September 1938 asked for the total numbers of the workers from Çorum who were employed by the İş Bankası's

---

<sup>435</sup> They were sent from, Ankara, Sinop, İstanbul, Çankırı, Sivas, Ordu, Trabzon, Giresun, Üsküdar, İmralı, Bursa and İzmir prisons. The condemned worked primarily in the Üzülmüş, Yeşiladağ, Kozlu and Gelik districts. Zonguldak CHP İlyön Kurulu. 923-938 *Cumhuriyet'in XV. İnci Yıldönümü Hatırası* (İstanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1938), p. 50.

<sup>436</sup> Kahveci, Erol, "The Miners of Zonguldak," p. 83.

<sup>437</sup> Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu (İstanbul: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940) pp. 15-18.

<sup>438</sup> See İzzetin Tuğrul Nişbay's report, 23/6/1938, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..10.0.0 / 174.206..1.), p. 7.

<sup>439</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no. 115, 26.8.1938.



companies in Kozlu, Kireçlik and Zonguldak, and by the Italian Turkkömür Company.<sup>441</sup> Correspondences dated 14 and 15 September, 1938 informed about the presence of workers settled in Sivas, who had been hired by the mining companies of the basin.<sup>442</sup> The workers from Sivas and Çorum were most likely originated from the Dersim region and settled in Çorum and Sivas. They later appeared occasionally in the correspondence register books of 1940 and 1941 in regard to their health problems.<sup>443</sup>

Despite the various labor reservoirs, the basin's villagers constituted majority of the workforce. At the initial years of the 1920s, the total number of the mine workers, most of whom were basin's villagers, comprised 7,000 to 16,000, varying in accordance to the seasonal cycles of farming.<sup>444</sup> In 1930s, particularly after the state's compelling the miners to produce more coal, the total numbers of the workers reached nearly 19,000. The number comprised both surface and underground workers. However, labor intensive production underground concentrated nearly three to four of the total numbers in underground jobs.

Table 8. Number of Mine Workers in the Zonguldak Coal Basin, 1934-1940

<i>Years</i>	<i>Numbers of Workers</i>	<i>Rate of Increase in Number</i>
1934	13,925	100
1935	14,222	102.01
1936	14,096	101.1
1937	15,359	110.2
1938	17,871	128.2
1939	18,937	135.9

Source: Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti, Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1944 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu, p.127.

Alongside the manual labor force from Anatolia, there were workers from Balkan countries. The existence of the Montenegrins, Croatians and Bulgarians in the mines traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. The coal mining enterprises had largely employed labor force from the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Some of the workers seem to have settled with their families permanently. Two governmental decrees illustrate the existence of a labor force from the Balkans in the basin in the 1920s. In one, Morris İştravus from Hungary

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., correspondence date, 13.9.1938

<sup>441</sup> Ibid., correspondence date, 13.9.1938

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., correspondence date 14.9.1938 and 15.9.1938.

<sup>443</sup> See for example, KUA, Gelen Evrak Kayıt Defteri, no. 132, 2.12.1940 and Gelen Evrak Kayıt Defteri, no. 107, 2.7.1941.

acquired Ottoman citizenship rights in 1922, on his request.<sup>445</sup> Similarly, Croatian Yuvan Bayramoviç acquired Ottoman citizenship on 7 May 1922 along with his wife Yanova and children.<sup>446</sup>

The population composition of the basin changed immediately after the First World War and in the National Struggle period. In the turmoil of the wars the Greek and Armenian local inhabitants gradually departed the basin.<sup>447</sup> Zonguldak was one of the provinces which were allotted to emigrants from Greece. The Population Exchange Agreement of the Lausanne Treaty removed the remaining local Greeks. In return, some of the Muslim groups settled in Zonguldak.<sup>448</sup> The integration problems of the emigrants, "*Golos*" Muslims from Greece constituted the most problematic exchangees for the local officials and the population of the basin.<sup>449</sup> This "*Golos*" Romany community would remain a source of "disturbance" for the provincial authorities and the local people, who criticized their unacceptable morals and insistence on speaking Greek rather than Turkish. In the following decades they constituted the lowest social tier of the basin population.<sup>450</sup>

Alongside the manual labor force of different regional origins, there were a few numbers of foreign white-collar workers, hired mostly by the companies. They constituted the managerial and technical staff of the companies. The French and the Italian communities in

---

<sup>444</sup> For instance on April 1922, total number of the mine worker was 7.194. It increased in 16,366 on December 1922. For the total numbers of the mine workers and fluctuations in numbers in accordance to the months, see Source: Tunalı Hilmi's Correspondences 16/9/1925 Catalog no.[PMRA 30.18.1.1/15.58.1].

<sup>445</sup> İstravus had settled in the basin since 30 April 1336. He was a mine operator granted permit to run mines at Kerpiçlik, 28/2/1922, Catalog no. [PMRA 30.18.1.1/ 4.50..16]

<sup>446</sup> He had worked in the Zonguldak mines since 1912. His three children were born there. 7/5/1922 Catalog no. [PMRA 30..18.1.1/ 5.14.18]

<sup>447</sup> The local Armenians of the basin might have left the basin in the National Struggle period. However, due to the labor shortage, the mine operators seem to have resorted immigrant Armenians as labor force. A correspondence gives some clues on the existence of Armenian workers at the initial years of the 1920s. Accordingly, Armenians who came in 1920 from Russia to Trabzon were hired by the Ereğli Company, however, without the permission of the provincial authorities. The correspondence says nothing about the fate of these workers, but it proves the existence of an immigrant Armenian labor force for a while in Zonguldak. 19/2/1920 Catalog no.[PMRA 272.0.0.11/ 15.56.4]

<sup>448</sup> In a series of correspondences dated between 1925 and 1929 the Zonguldak provincial government and the Ministry of Internal Affairs evaluated Cemal Bey's request for immovable property in response to his properties in the Kesriye district of Manastır province in Greece 29/1/1929 Catalog no. [PMRA 272.0.0.11/ 24.127..10]

<sup>449</sup> *Golos* was a subdivision of the Tırhala Province in the Ottoman period. By the Lausanne agreement, the Muslim inhabitants of *Golos* were sent to Zonguldak province.

<sup>450</sup> The Romany community created difficulties for the state officials as well. The correspondence between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Zonguldak Provincial Governor and Zonguldak Province Settlement Employee gives an idea about the fate of the Romany community. One of them, dated 19 June 1927, states that without official permission, a group of the Romany had escaped from Zonguldak and they were not found by the official authorities. See, 16/7/1927 Catalog no. [272..0.0.12 /54.131..2].

the basin constituted the bulk of high-skilled workers. By 1926, the total number of the foreign workers varied from 100 to 150.<sup>451</sup> In regard to the 1927 population census figures, the total number of the foreign male and female subjects in Zonguldak, most of whom were Italian and French citizens, was 561. Their numbers seem to have decreased to 233 according to the 1935 population census figures.<sup>452</sup> Similarly in 1938 the numbers of foreign engineers were nineteen while number of the Turkish engineers was 37.<sup>453</sup> Its reason is not clear, but the rise of the number of the Turkish engineers in the basin and the hiring policy of the Turkish companies might have been one reason.

With the establishment of the *Yüksek Maadin ve Sanayi Mühendis Mektebi* (High School for Mine and Industry Engineers) in 1924, the Turkish mining engineer began to join the white collar community of the basin. Their number increased steadily until the school was closed down in 1931.<sup>454</sup> Most of the graduated engineers were sent abroad for apprenticeships. On their return they were appointed to important posts in different public and private enterprises.<sup>455</sup> Regardless of their nationalities, the white collar workers of the basin played their part in the formation of a middle class culture in Zonguldak. Through their mode of living, the mine engineers and their families pioneered the government's modernization project. For instance, the *Türk Maden Mühendisleri Cemiyeti* (Society of Turkish Mine Engineers), established in 1930, became a symbol of the local upper class culture.<sup>456</sup>

---

<sup>451</sup> İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927, MTA Archive, Report no. 1272, p. 52

<sup>452</sup> For the 1927 figure, T.C Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, 28 *Teşrinievvel 1927 Umumi Nüfus Tahriri, Fasıkül II.*, İ.U.M Neşriyatı 7 *Mufassal Neticeler* (Ankara: 1929, Hüsnütabiat Matbaası), p.187. For the 1935 figure, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, Kat'i ve Mufassal Neticeler Zonguldak Vilayeti, 20 İlk teşrimn 1935, Neşriyat Sayısı, 75, Cilt 58* (Ankara: Mehmet İhsan Basımevi, 1937), p. 26.

<sup>453</sup> Zonguldak CHP İlyön Kurulu, p.95.

<sup>454</sup> The *Yüksek Maadin ve Sanayi Mühendis Mektebi* trained seventy engineers between 1924 and 1931. The founder and director of the school, Mehmet Refik Fenmen, stayed at his post until 1931. Along with the Turkish professor, mathematician Kerim Bey, Physicist Hayri Bey and chemist Mehmet Akif Bey, four teachers from Belgium gave vocational lectures, and two teachers, one French and one Swiss, taught French to the students. Two female students attended the school as well. Refik Fenmen, "Zonguldak Yüksek Maadin ve Sanayi Mektebi," *İş ve Düşünce*, 10: 2/38 (1944), pp. 21-27.

<sup>455</sup> The school was closed temporarily, but, it was not then opened. After the establishment of the M.T.A, the institution sent the students abroad. Training of mine engineers abroad appeared to be cheaper than the cost of training mine engineers in the country. See Niyazi Acun, *Toprakaltı Servetlerimiz Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü I* (İstanbul: Sinan Basımevi, 1947), p. 72.

<sup>456</sup> For the Türk Maden Mühendisleri Cemiyeti and its activities, see Zonguldak CHP İlyön Kurulu, pp. 95-99.

## The Segmented Labor Market as the Means of Labor Control

Considering the census figures, along with the Turkish language, there were more than fifteen languages spoken in Zonguldak. The late nineteenth century cosmopolitan composition of the city dwellers remained in the 1920s, to a great extent, despite departure of the local Armenians and Greeks. The heterogeneity of the mining community in the basin was a typical feature of coal mining communities everywhere. As the geological fixity of the mines entailed the inflow of the laborers of various regional and ethnic origins, the basin was no exception. However, this heterogeneity was of qualitative sort. Quantitatively, the mining community had a considerable degree of homogeneity. Except for a few white collar employees of different nationalities, and the inhabitants of the mining districts who did not engage directly in mining, the majority of the mining community was composed of the manual labor force.

The rural roots of the workers constituted another common denominator of the work force. The majority of them came from the agricultural communities near the basin and the rest from the rural areas of distant regions. The workers from the surrounding villagers were small land proprietors engaged in subsistence farming or forestry.<sup>457</sup> Most of the workers from Black Sea provinces, on the other hand, were land poor villagers who had to seek their livelihood outside of their homeland. Both groups of workers continued their attachment to farming and/or place of origin. The cyclical work pattern between mine site and villages created a migratory workforce in continuous motion.

However, despite the common social roots and class position of the manual labor force, it was segregated into numerous groups who occupied distinct places in the work

---

<sup>457</sup> According to the 1927 Agriculture Census, 76.4 percent of the Zonguldak provincial population was engaged in farming. Villagers of the basin mostly raised corn, millet, barley, rye, wheat, oat, and such cereals along with vegetables and fruits. See, *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, Volume 10, p. 7743

process. Duration at the work site was one of the discriminatory means between the basin's labor force. According to the duration in the work place, the workers from surrounding village were marked as "*münavebeli/muvakkat amele*" (rotational/temporary employee), and the workers from out of the basin, particularly the north eastern provinces of the Black Sea region were marked as "*daimi amele*" (permanent, fixed worker). Although both of the laboring groups developed migratory cycles between the mines and their places of origin, their duration in the mines varied. The workers from the surrounding villages developed a cyclical work pattern between the mines and villages, staying at the mines fifteen days a month and approximately four months a year.<sup>458</sup> The attachment of the villagers to farming brought about a community in continual movement between the mines and the villages. Unlike them, the workers from beyond of the basin villages tended to stay at the mine site longer from months to years.

The permanent/temporary differentiation among the workers was reproduced and fixed in time, through the re-peasantization of the villagers from the surrounding farming communities. As far as the villager workers maintained a cyclical work pattern between mining and farming they did not become permanent mine workers. The re-peasantization worked on the grounds of symbiotic relations between the mine operators and the villager worker on the one hand and mining and farming on the hand. The heavy reliance of the basin on the manual labor associated with the lack of the mechanization made this unskilled migratory labor force compatible with the needs of the mine operators. The villager laborers supplied the mine operators with seasonal and cheap labor in return for small earnings supplemental to their farming activities or clearing their debts. As far as the mine workers kept their permanent residence in their respective villages and subsisted on farming, they shouldered the reproduction cost of labor. Considering that the majority of the underground work force came

---

<sup>458</sup> Etibank, *Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (İstanbul: Alaadin Kiral Basımevi, 1940), p. 15.

from vicinity of the basin, the whole basin was turned into a natural pool of labor in the service of the coal mining enterprises.

The villager workers followed a series of flexible strategies in between cultivating land and mining coal. This cycle provided them with considerable opportunity for surviving. In pursuit of livelihood, they integrated small scale agricultural activities with wage earning. Hence, they did not transform their traditional livelihood totally. As long as the proportion of the wage earning remained a supplemental part of the livelihood, its partiality became a means for re-peasantization. The income derived from the mines was allotted to tax payments and goods which they could not produce in their subsistence agricultural economy. As one of the retired mineworker said in his memoirs, the villager workers did not work if they did not want to. When the time to pay taxes came they worked in the mines for supplementary income.<sup>459</sup>

The residence pattern of the villager workers helped them keep their ties to their respective village communities as well. Their part-time presence at the mines prevented permanent settlement near the collieries. The proximity of the villages to the mines made it easier for the mine workers to travel between the mines and the villages. On the other hand, the distance between the work area and living areas enabled them to restrict their ties with the mines to the work period. Furthermore, the villager miners were dispersed among the numerous villages so that they did not concentrate with their families in a homogenous settlement around the mines. Throughout the work period they stayed in barracks built by the mine operators, or in cave like shelters which they built out of pieces of timber and covered with mud.<sup>460</sup> Since their families continued to live in the villages the mining area never became home for the men. Due to the temporary character of residence, the villager workers never became alienated from the rest of the local population. The process of re-peasantization was fostered by the deep involvement of the local actors in the process of recruitment. The

---

<sup>459</sup> Quataert and Duman, p. 164 .

informal relations based on the village community provided the network for the flow of labor to the mines. The gang bosses, the recruitment agencies and fellow workers from the common village community facilitated the easy access of the villagers to the mines.<sup>461</sup>

On the other hand, although most of the workers from outside the basin left their families behind, in time permanent settlement with families increased among the workers from outside.<sup>462</sup> As long as out-siders settled in the basin with their families, and the villager workers kept their permanent settlement in their villages the temporary/permanent dichotomy was reproduced. However what made this dichotomy more a durable and discriminatory one was the emergence of regional, ethnic marks in the organization of the work process. Through this process, the groups and categories of the workers were ordered hierarchically with respect to one another and the regional marks indicated the demarcation of the ranges in the hierarchy. Hence, the manual work force was divided in itself as the indigenous villager versus Laz, the rotational worker versus permanent worker, Turk versus Kurd or Alevi.

In its 7 April 1925 issue *Meslek* well portrayed the social composition of the work force in reference to the regional -rural origin of the workers and the articulation of this origin to the work process:

The workers who work on the coal production are generally inhabitants of the Ereğli, Devrek, Bartın districts and Yaban abad, Çankırı, Safranbolu, Araç, and Daday and partly of the Trabzon, Erzurum provinces and their vicinities. Peoples of different regions work in different work fields. As a rule, the inhabitants of the places near the basin work in the underground labor process when they reach twelve years old, the inhabitants of Yaban abad work carried on the loading of coal from the coal threshing floors to the wagons, the inhabitants of Araç and Daday work on the narrow gauge railroad and pony driving jobs, the inhabitants of Trabzon and its vicinity [contract-piece work] jobs, and the inhabitants of the

---

<sup>460</sup> In his novel *Kıvrırcık*, İ. Behçet Kalaycı describes how the workers turned a cave into a temporary shelter. İ. Behçet Kalaycı, *Kıvrırcık*, *Genç Bir Madencinin Öyküsü* (Ankara: R Prodüksiyon, 1992), p. 14

<sup>461</sup> For the function of local actors in the recruitment process, see Yersel, pp.12-14 and p. 19.

<sup>462</sup> In the yearbook of a primary school in Üzülmüş, belonging to the EKI for the education of the children of its workers, clearly indicates the heterogeneity of the workforce in terms of regional roots through listing the "*memleket*"s (places of origin) of the student. In the lists covering the graduate students between the 1935 and 1955, Zonguldak and surrounding districts such as Ereğli, Bartın, Devrek, Akçakoca, Çaycuma, and Safranbolu appeared to be the prevalent homelands of the students. The whole vicinity of the Black Sea region seems to have been the main place of origin such as Hopa, Vakfıkebir, Giresun, Pazar, Rize, Sinop Çankırı, Düzce, Gerede, Kastamonu, Bolu, Cide, and Çoruh. Beside there were bachelors with places of origin such as İstanbul, Çanakkale, Susurluk, Balya, Burhaniye, Edirne, Tercan. For the lists of bachelors with their places of origin, see Namık Özalp, *Zonguldak ve Kömür Havzası* (Zonguldak: Üzülmüş Özel İlkokulu, 1955), pp. 50-116

eastern provinces work in threshing jobs. For a period of time, it is observed that the inhabitants from eastern provinces are introduced to underground works.<sup>463</sup>

As *Meslek* described above, the job categories differentiated from each other in reference to the regional attributes of the workers which were not directly related to either the nature of the work they performed in the mines or workers' skill having been acquired in their respective place of origin. As most of the underground work had been assigned to the fourteen villages of the basin since the Dilaver Paşa regulation, certain occupational categories of underground labor process had been associated with particular groups of workers who originated in particular villages. As the outcome of the specialization between the villages, some workers specialized, for instance, in coal cutting, some others in wooden chock-making.

Jobs that were not attached to the basin's villagers were introduced by laborers from the regions outside the basin boundaries since the late nineteenth century. Most of the workers from the Black Sea region, performed jobs such as opening holes in the shafts, putting dynamite or gunpowder into these holes and exploding them, or surface jobs such as repairs and carpentry. They also worked in transportation crews as railway laborers. Most of the jobs they performed required a certain degree of skill that differentiated them from the villager workers of the basin.<sup>464</sup>

No doubt the installation of regional segments into the organization of the work was functional in the regime of labor control. The overlapping of the regional origin and work categories restricted the free movement of the workers between different occupational categories and fixed the hierarchical labor relations in reference to the regional/cultural attributes. Despite the high turnover rates in the mines, the inflow of workers from different regions could not threaten the already established hierarchy between the regionally segmented laboring groups. They were allocated in different ranks on the scale of the labor

---

<sup>463</sup> " Ereğli-Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p. 2.

<sup>464</sup> For the job categories the immigrant labor force performed in the basin see Ahmet Naim, *Bir Yudum Soluk. Maden İşçilerinin Ocak İçi Yaşantıları*, 2.edition (Ereğli: Şirin Ereğli, 1983)



market, while some of them occupied well paid, prestigious work categories and received better social services from the companies, the others occupied less paid, disregarded categories and poor social services.

A report send to the Ministry of Economy by the Basin Head Office clearly depicts the different living conditions of the permanent and rotational labor force:

88 per cent of the basin workers are from Zonguldak and the surrounding towns, and the remaining 12 per cent are from other regions. This 12 per cent is well aware of eating and dressing manners. But the other 88 per cent has no social manners at all. They wear torn shirts and pants either made of coarse calico or printed cotton and rawhide sandals tied with string. When it's cold, they put on a worn-out cardigan, an old raincoat. Yet it is not their outfit which distinguishes them, it is the accursed coal dust covering their faces and clothing. The daily food these workers have consists of a kind of mash made of corn flour and bread. They neither know the taste of cooked meal nor meat, it is only onion that they eat with bread... Think of it: How healthy a mine worker would be who works in the mines for eight hours a day with his feet deep in water, whose daily food only consists of bread, who wears a shirt made of coarse calico, a pair of underwear-like trousers, a pair of rawhide sandals. And what would happen to the next generations raised by such men? Should these living standards continue for a few more years, it is no doubt that they shall not develop bigger than Lapp people.<sup>465</sup>

The elitist outlook of the report is obvious. However, it accurately portrayed the miserable conditions of the villager workers. Most of them stayed in tiny, dark and dirty worker dwellings or barracks into which they crowded like sardines during their work period. The lack of sewer systems and shortage of potable water compounded matters. Poor nutrition also facilitated the spread of epidemics among the mine workers, who had already exhausted their physical strength in the pit works.<sup>466</sup>

On the other hand, the workers, particularly from the Black Sea region earned more than the indigenous villagers and received better accommodation conditions.<sup>467</sup> The upper segment of the work, the white collar community filled the highest ranks and received better social services than the rest. Most of the foreign subjects in the city lived with their families in

---

<sup>465</sup> İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927, MTA Archive, Report no: 1272, pp. 42 and 43

<sup>466</sup> For the accommodation conditions of the villager workers, see Yersel, pp. 12-13

<sup>467</sup> Yersel, p. 14

the quarters or houses reserved particularly by the mining companies for them. In addition to the accommodation facilities, the companies also provided them with other social facilities, including sport activities such tennis, and school for their children. The State Yearbook of 1925-1926 notes the existence of three French schools, two of which were for male and one for female students.<sup>468</sup> The children of prominent Turkish Muslim families could attend these as well.<sup>469</sup>

The regional and ethnic segmentation of the work force functioned as another kind of labor division. There was a strong regionalism between the workers which curbed the formation of solidarity among the labor force on the basis of a common class position or common work experience in the mines. The culturally marked distinctions accumulated in the perception of the workers with respect to each other. For instance, the Laz saw the local villager workers as passive, subservient and heavily relying on anyone in authority. They called them "*kıvırcık*" (a kind of small tailed curly haired ship). These local idioms are still in use in the basin.

The regionalism some times paved the way for tensions between the different regional groups. The pattern of fellow countrymen fostered both solidarity and hostility among not only the workers, but also the ordinary people of the basin. The same regionalism deepened the line of cleavages in the daily life. The long-lasting regionalism can be seen in an incident on 5 July 1925 (1341) in Ereğli when the local inhabitants and the immigrants from Rize and Trabzon clashed. Correspondences between the upper officials of the state show how the incident created a heated atmosphere in Ereğli. Accordingly, a man from the local community raped two boys from Trabzon who were swimming in the sea. The incident prompted a fight between the locals and hundreds of men from Trabzon and Rize.<sup>470</sup> In a short time violent

---

<sup>468</sup> 1925-1926 *T. Devlet Salnamesi* (İstanbul: n.p., 1926)

<sup>469</sup> For instance, in my interview with Ali Bahadır, dated September 27, 2003 he stated that his mother-in-law was one of these students of the French girl school and she learned there playing piano and French language.

<sup>470</sup> For the correspondence, see "Hukuk Müşavirliğinin 30 Temmuz 1341 ve 819 Numaralı Mütala'aname Suretidir," in 30/8/1925 Catalog no. [PMRA 30.18.1/1 15.58.1].

incidents spread among the parties violently. The fight turned into an armed one, involving knives, bats, and revolvers. It could only end with the intervention of the local police forces and arrest of five men. During their transfer to the prison to be tried in the presence of justice, they broke the law by disobeying the police.<sup>471</sup>

The correspondences say nothing on the final fate of the condemned.<sup>472</sup> Yet, more importantly, they clearly reflect the local people's perception of the Laz, as is seen in the Zonguldak provincial government's report. Following the correspondence;

Because of the fact that the migrant Lazes had felt hostility against the locals of Ereğli for a long time and those immigrants had been in the smuggling business has caused disturbance and unrest in town... "People coming from different provinces of Trabzon who migrated to Ereğli and have been living in the area temporarily prefer to earn their living by illegal, criminal business supported by their families instead of decent jobs. We request that those people from Trabzon be sent back to their home towns due to their ill-manners who disturb the peace among Ereğli society in order to avoid unrest in town because, although local security forces keep their acts under observation continuously, it is impossible to watch the men around the clock since they all have boats on which they can easily get away."<sup>473</sup>

In spite of the local authorities' request to send all of the people from Trabzon back, the people from the Black Sea region maintained to settle permanently. The 1925 incident seems to have been a unique one. There are no signs of clashes stemming from the regional/cultural identities of the manual workers. Although there was a strong regionalism among the workers, it seems to have been more a source of solidarity among the fellowship from the diverse regions rather than a source of deep hatred between the regionally segmented workforce. Alongside some prejudices against each other which originated from cultural and regional attributes, the workers seem to have been aware of their class positions.

They struggled against the worst working and living conditions in the mines within the local communal networks. The solidarity between the workers of the same region

---

<sup>471</sup> For the correspondence, see "Zonguldak Vilayetin 15 Temmuz 1341 Tarih ve 235/33 Numaralı Mahrem Tahrirat Suretidir". In *ibid*.

<sup>472</sup> After arresting of the guilty, the *kaymakam* (governor) of Ereğli asked the governor of Zonguldak to take the suspects to the *İstiklal Mahkemesi* (Independence Court), on the grounds that the incident had disturbed peace and tranquility of the province and the country. Finally, on 30 August 1926 (1341) the Council of Ministers accepted and approved the *kaymakam*'s request on the ground of the "*Takriri Sükun*" law (Establishment of Public Order Law. For the governmental decree, see "Karamame, Ankara, 2 Eylül 1341, in *ibid*).

facilitated finding jobs in the mines, and solving provisioning and accommodation problems. Local-regional relations between the workers enabled them to protect themselves and fellow workers from the exploitative conditions of mine work. However, the same local communal networks were articulated in the process of recruitment and supervision of the workers in the mines. At this point, the regionally identified local communal networks became the source of both solidarity and coercion. To see how the local communal networks operated as the source of coercion and solidarity, the process of recruitment and supervision should be explored.

### The Recruitment Process, Debt-Bound Relations and Unfree Labor

The low wage economy of the basin and reliance on manual labor made the unskilled labor force of the basin compatible to the needs of the mine operators. The migratory work pattern of the villager workers did not curb the production process as long as the mine operators received an ample labor supply from the surrounding villages. For the more skilled jobs, the labor reservoir of the north eastern provinces of the Black Sea region flowed into the basin. Similarly, the continual attachment of the workers to the subsistence farming diminished the reproduction costs of labor. As the basin with its subsistence farming economy and village settlements contained the majority of the labor force, the basin served as an all-inclusive company village. As long as the mine operators overcame the problem of the labor shortage, particularly in the harvest time of the villagers, neither the villager nature of the work force nor their temporary settlement in the mining site became problematic.

The only troublesome issues left to the mine operators were the access to this labor reservoir and the keeping the free movement of labor under control. At this point the mine operators resorted to the very mechanisms of the local-cultural realm, utilizing the complex set

---

<sup>473</sup> In *ibid.*

of relations between the workers and the local labor recruiters, gang bosses, *muhtars* (headmen) and *ağhas* (land owners) and other such actors. The symbiotic relation between the mine operators and the local actors involved in the recruitment and supervision aspects of the labor to different extents, brought about the articulation of the work relations into the local communal relations. Hence, the mine operators solved the problem of recruitment, the free movement and the supervision of the labor simultaneously within the network of local communal relations.

Informal relations based on the village community provided the network for the flow of labor to the mines. The recruitment process was a complicated one, including various local actors. The *muhtars* and *ağhas* of the villages were the traditional actors in the recruitment process. The deep involvement of the village authorities in the process of recruitment was a long lasting practice dating back to the Dilaver Paşa regulation. From 1867 on, the *muhtars* or the *ağhas* took part in the process of recruitment and received a certain sum for each worker they brought to the mines. Recruitment became a continuous practice for the *muhtars* until 1961, when the system was abandoned totally.<sup>474</sup>

Another actor was the professional labor recruiter, called *sevk memuru* (dispatching functionary). They were attached to certain companies in return for a certain amount of money per worker they found. Utilizing fellow townsman relations, the recruiters accessed local labor reservoirs, persuading either the laborers or their gang bosses to work in certain mines in return for get amounts of pay. Particularly the marketplace of the districts served as the labor market. The recruiters contracted with the gang bosses or the employees at the market place of the certain districts such as Beycuma, Çaycuma, Devrek, Bartın, Çaylıoğlu, Tefen and Ereğli, at the beginning or middle of the month. In the market place, the recruiters bargained with the gang bosses and or the workers, trying to bind them to certain pits for certain periods

---

<sup>474</sup> Delvin Roy, "Labor and Trade Unionism in Turkey: The Ereğli Coalmines," *Middle Eastern Studies* 12, no. 3 (October 1976), p. 135.

of time. Another traditional means to receive the workers was the sending of town criers to announce hiring for certain pits. To speed up the arrival of the workers to the pits, they were transported from the market place to the pits with lorries and boats.

Sometimes, particularly in the late 1930s, when the production pressure of the state compelled the companies to employ more workers than in the previous decade, the mine engineers acted as labor recruiters. They participated to the labor market with the promise of high wages as well.<sup>475</sup> However, the gang bosses were undoubtedly the most influential and multi-functional local actors. As most of the gang bosses were at the same time headmen or overseer in the pits, they solved the problem of recruitment and overseeing of the labor process simultaneously. They gathered fellow villagers and brought them to the pits where they were attached. They were called "*amele çavuşu*" (worker headman) or "*sıra çavuşu*" (gang boss). The village ties of the gang bosses enabled them to recruit a certain amount of workers within the village networks when necessary. They were chosen by the villager workers among from the workers whom they believed to be canny in keeping their rights against the companies.<sup>476</sup> Some of them had come to the basin from distant provinces a long time earlier and had brought their fellow countrymen to work in the pits.<sup>477</sup>

The gang boss was either at the position of headman (*çavuş*) in a company or just leader of a group of fellow villagers. In the first instance, the villagers preferred to appeal to the fellow headman when they needed work.<sup>478</sup> Sometimes all of the whole men of a village were attached to a mine due the existence of fellow villager in the position of headman or

---

<sup>475</sup> In his memoirs, Yersel vividly depicts the recruitment process and the bargaining of the recruiters with the gang bosses in the market place. Yersel, pp, 15 and 19.

<sup>476</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report, p. 2

<sup>477</sup> For instance, Aziz Çavuş (foreman), who had come from İstanbul to work on the trolley street construction in Zonguldak in the 1910s, brought his countrymen from Siirt. The numbers of workers from Siirt increased in time with the help of the local network. Sefa Elibol, a training engineer in Zonguldak, gave these details to me in an interview. Sefa Elibol, interview by Nurşen Gürboğa, tape recording, Zonguldak, 17 June 2003.

<sup>478</sup> When the villager workers appealed to their fellow headman to find jobs, they encouraged his effort by presenting him with a certain amount of money or chickens, eggs, Safranbolu grapes. Such reciprocity should be perceived within the rural cultural context of the basin's inhabitants, as a sign of respecting the authority of the fellow headman, not as bribery in return for employment. For the presents given by the villagers to the headmen, see Çiladır, *İşçi Hareketlerinin Tarihi*, p. 129. See also Quataert and Duman, p. 159.

foreman.<sup>479</sup> A headman with the ability to attract more workers to the pits and authority over his villager was even rewarded by the companies. The foreman or headman represented second in command in the underground work relations. The paternalist relation between the headman and the workers solved the question of labor discipline. He provided his fellow villagers work, income, accommodation and protection. In return, he expected absolute obedience and hard work from them. The foreman determined the labor process, wages, piece rates, the number of trucks loaded per day, and overtime.<sup>480</sup>

In the second instance, the gang bosses were not headmen hired by the companies but independent workers. They were either prominent workers with their craft knowledge or canny workers promising protection to their fellow villagers. The worker headman (*amele çavuşu*) is more proper phrase than gang boss due to their laborer origin. Like company headmen and foremen, the worker headmen ran the supervision of the group during the work process. The worker headman was the prime authority over the workers as the workers felt responsible only to the worker headman. If a worker headman fell into disagreement with the foreman or engineer of the pit, or if they refused his demands, the worker headman would not hesitate to leave the pit with his workers.<sup>481</sup> The supervisors of the pit, then, could not persuade the workers even by promising extra wages.<sup>482</sup>

The worker headman had great bargaining power against the companies in respect to the number of workers the headman brought. By the late 1930s, the number of the worker headman varied between 600 and 700. One headman controlled approximately twenty-five workers. Although the companies received their laborers by means of them, the workers

---

<sup>479</sup> Yersel, p.12

<sup>480</sup> For the authority of the headman in the work process, see Hızıroğlu Bedri, p.45.

<sup>481</sup> For instance, the memoirs of Yusuf Küpeli, a retired mine worker who began his career in 1905 as a basketman at the Kozlu mines, reveals the excess authority of the worker headman. One day when he was walking through the entry of the pit, while everyone was staying out of the pit, his father gave him a resounding slap and ordered him not to enter the pit. Later, he learned that the worker headman demanded the mine operator to increase the wages of the workers. He received the total wages of the workers and then allocated the wages in accordance to his will. He determined the length of shifts, which sometimes exceeds sixteen hours. When he had trouble with the mine operator, he placed his cane at the entry of the pit, signaling his workers to boycott work in the pits until the trouble was resolved. For the memoir of Yusuf Tatar, see Kadir Tuncer, *Tarihten Günümüze Zonguldak'ta İşçi Sınıfının Durumu Kampanyalar Dönemine Geri Dönüş* (İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1998), pp. 46 and 47.

perceived themselves as bound only to the worker headman, not to the company. Due to the labor shortage, the engineers were reluctant to warn or punish them when necessary.<sup>483</sup> Hence, as the workers with the worker headman constituted an organized cluster in the underground work force, the recruitment and binding of the workers to the pits via headmen became problematic for the companies.

The free movement of the workers, particularly those who attached to a worker headman rather than company hired headmen or local recruiters, threatened the adequate supply of labor when the companies or mine operators necessitated. On the other hand, there existed another means of control over the free movement of labor: debt and bound relations. Debt bondage relations between the mine workers and the various local actors involved in the recruitment process were an effective means of control over the free movement of labor between the mines. Besides debt relations, the workers had to work only in the pits to which the labor recruiters attached them. However, the debt relations strengthened the bound relation of the workers to the pits and the recruiters. While the mineworkers bought seed, animals or paid their debts, in return for the loan they received, they were compelled to work in certain pits for a period until they paid off the total debit. For instance, it was case to force the mineworkers against to their will, to work in the mines under the sword of the gendarme in return for their debits to the *muhtars* or tax collectors.<sup>484</sup>

During the work period, the worker was expected to submit to the authority of the local recruiter to whom he was indebted. If the worker complained about the wage cuts, fines or oppressive work conditions, he could not find work elsewhere in the basin. Most of the crew was organized under the leadership of the local recruiters; the complainer was harassed by

---

<sup>482</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report, p. 2

<sup>483</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-2

<sup>484</sup> Yusuf Akçora stated during his visit in the mines, the workers complaint about being forced to work in the mines in return for their debts. The mining functionary also verified the workers' statements. T.C., *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi*, Cilt 15, Devre 2, İċtima Senesi 2, p. 553



the recruiter who could make the life of the complainer in the village very difficult.<sup>485</sup> The debt and bound relations restricted the free movement of the worker between the mines, which offered more opportunity than the mines he was attached to by the recruiter. Hence, the workers became unfree labor and the fellowman relationship between the workers and the labor recruiters turned into a coercive one.

The debt and bound mechanism was used by the mine operators themselves as well. The mine operators or companies generally took responsibility for the provisioning of the labor force in the coal basins, due to lack of the proper facilities to feed the workers.<sup>486</sup> To solve the problem of provision, some of the mine operators opened groceries near the mines, called "*amele bakkalı*" (the employee grocery). During the work period the workers bought some of their basic needs from the mine operator's grocery. In return their debts were cut from their wages, and in time the wage payment turned in kind.<sup>487</sup> Local tradesman who engaged in coal mining at the same time as acting as mine operators binding the villagers to their mines through debt bound relations. Most of the villager miners bought what they needed from the shop of the mine operator who employed them in his mines. The debt-bound of the villager miners forced them to work at the mines of the tradesman in return for their accumulated debts derived from shopping. The relation between the village authorities and the villager miners was not a naked exploitation. The paternalistic ties veiled the asymmetrical power relations between them. The villager authorities accompanied the workers to solve their

---

<sup>485</sup> Meslek well described the coercive relations between the recruiter and the workers. See "Ereğli Zonguldak Kömür Havzası," *Meslek*, no. 17 (7 April, 1925), p. 2. There exist various secondary that sources underlined the oppressive relations between the labor recruiters and the workers, based on the debt bond relations and extra economic means of coercion. See, Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, pp. 111-112, 150. Although Ahmet Naim underlined debt bound relations as the characteristic of the pre Republican era of the basin, Yersel points out the continuity of the same relations in the Republican era. Yersel, 12-13, 17

<sup>486</sup> Among the local mine operators one of the most prominent names was Mehmet Arif. His family was from a village of Hopa in the north east of the Black Sea region. He began operating mines in the initial years of the 1920s. According to the memoirs of Nizamettin Akkumru, a fellow townsman of Mehmet Arif, he supplied the labor force for his mines mainly from Hopa. Most of his fellow townsmen and men from the north eastern provinces of Black Sea region began their work careers as laborers in the mines belonging to Mehmet Arif. There must have been patron-client relationship between him and his fellow townsmen. Akkumru points out that he met every kind of needs of his fellow workers, including finding jobs. Nizamettin Akkumru, *Şimşir Kokardı Azlağa* (İstanbul: Çiviyazıları, 2005), p.77-78 and 195-196.

<sup>487</sup> The *amele bakkalı*s had existed in the mines since the initial decades of the coal extraction. In time they functioned as means of payment in kind and of bounding the laborers to certain pits in return for their debts to the groceries. Needless to say, the items were sold at a price over the real market price. Either lack of facilities for provisioning and compelling of the workers to buy goods from certain groceries turned them a means of coercion. To see an early example of the *amele bakkalı*s, Özeken, *Türkiye Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 27; and Ahmet Naim, p.152.

problems with the mine operators, official departments, other debtors and in return used their labor in their mines or made them loyal consumers of their shops.<sup>488</sup>

The company groceries were functional until the mid-1930s. Those groceries, ran either by the companies themselves or by private mine operators, were frequently criticized for exorbitant prices and nonquality items. However, Article 27 of 1936 Business Law brought a legal perspective to such groceries by putting the company management in charge of them.<sup>489</sup> According to law, *ekonomas* that were company markets selling necessities like food, drinks, clothing and fuel to the workers and their families could not be opened without the official permission of the Ministry of Economy. Businesses a certain distance away from towns had to operate *ekonoma*. It was up to the Ministry of Economy to determine and control what kind of necessities would be sold at the *ekonoma*, as well as their quality and price. Thus, by controlling the prices of both laborer groceries and the *ekonomas*, the government intended to have the laborers acquire their necessities at low prices.

After the opening of the *ekonomas*, the debt bound relations ran in more modern manner; the companies advanced wages in tokens redeemable only at the company store. The store limited the workers' ability to leave the work.<sup>490</sup> The *ekonomas* also signaled the introduction of a new regime of labor control which turned the realm of social provisioning into a means of debt bound relation, this time, under the control of the companies and the state.

The over-fluidity of the labor force hence was brought under control by appealing the dynamics of the rural community. The coal mining enterprise in the basin established itself the local regional, cultural and social networks. Its dependence on unskilled and cheap labor made it articulated to the already existing social cultural settings. Its maintenance became dependent on the maintenance of the already existing hierarchies between the very actors of

---

<sup>488</sup> For this shopping-owing and working mechanism, see Mübeccel Kıray, *Ereğli Ağır Sanayiden Önce Bir Sahil Kasabası*. (Ankara: İletişim Yayınları, 1964), pp. 69-72.

<sup>489</sup> For Article 27 of 1936 Business Law regulation, Sevim Özdamar, *Çalışma Mevzuatı* (1920-1996) (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1996), pp.94-95.

<sup>490</sup> For the opening of *ekonomas* and their way of operation, see Yersel, p.13.

the basin. Although the coal mining transformed the lives of the villager inhabitants, the wage economy and industrial activity it brought to the lives of the people, it neither paved way to the rise of free labor nor a classical coal mining community settled around the work site that became solely dependent on the coal mining. This was not an anomaly produced by a "pre-modern" or "pre-capitalist" social formation, but a modern phenomenon compatible with the coal mining sector. The symbiotic relations between the coal mining and the nearby rural communities made the maintenance of the already existing social cultural relations functional together with the maintenance of the coal mining with the low cost labor economy.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE QUESTION OF WORKER PRODUCTIVITY, SOCIAL POLICY AND THE SEARCH FOR A NEW REGIME OF LABOR CONTROL

#### The Living Conditions of the Mine Workers: The 1920s

In the 1920s, except for the government's short lived interest aiming at improving the living and working conditions of the mine workers, neither the government nor the mine operators had a concern towards the improvement of the living conditions in the work site via social services. The indifference towards the living conditions of the mine workers was the outcome of the dynamics peculiar to the coal mining sector of the time and the government's shifting interest from labor to the capital aspect of the sector. Hence, until the early 1930s, the living and the working conditions of the mine workers did not come on the agenda of either the government or the mine operators. In parallel with the rise of the etatist industrialization plans the government renewed its concern on the capital and the labor aspects of the coal mining sector. The living and the working conditions of mine workers in the basin received new official concern.

However, until the early 1930s, the labor policy of the new regime bore the main features of its Ottoman predecessor despite the fact that it took some pro-labor measures in regard to the mine workers. At the beginning of the 1920s, the policy makers of the newly established regime discussed the working and living conditions of the mine workers within a

nationalist populist discourse. Concerning the capital composition of the basin, the pro-labor laws of 1920 and 1921 indicated the reaction of the new political elite to the foreign investors in the basin. The government conceptualized the terrible working conditions of the mine workers as the excessive exploitation of the "Muslim Turkish workers" by the "foreign investors and non-Muslim local mine operators." However, in the second part of the 1920s the leading cadres and politicians lost their sensitivity about the conditions of mine labor. The prime concern of the state on the basin shifted from labor issues to the capital composition of the basin. The nationalization of the coal mining enterprise through the entry of the Business Bank's companies prevailed in the early 1920s pro-labor policies.

Similar to the previous decades, the mine operators showed no interest in the social provisioning and accommodation of the mine workers unless they were under legal pressure and the surveillance of the government. As discussed in the previous chapter, the compatibility of the temporary work pattern of the nearby villagers saved the mine operators from the social provisioning and housing problems of the mine workers. As long as the basin served as an all-inclusive company village where the workers shouldered their reproduction cost, the mine operators had no reason to provide them with permanent housing and social services. Hence, the mining companies adopted two distinct social policies towards their workers. The highly salaried technical and administrative personnel and the surface workers received better accommodations and social facilities.<sup>491</sup> Unlike the unskilled rural labor, which provisioned themselves via their own sources, the maintenance of the skilled segment of the work force was highly dependent on the accommodation and social services of the companies, otherwise there were no proper conditions for staying in the mine district. On the

---

<sup>491</sup> At the beginning of twentieth century, the Ereğli Company built homes for its engineers and employees and two primary schools for the children of French personnel. For the provisioning of the skilled workers and personnel it constructed stores and bakeries as well. Needless to say, only the foreign and salaried employees stayed in the houses. Quataert, *Disintegration*, p. 66. The quarter of the privileged workers and the personnel, called the "*Fener Mahallesi*" (Lighthouse quarter), was blocked to the entrance of other workers. Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, p. 82. Until the 1960s, the quarter continued to serve primarily the white collar workers and personals with upper status. Just by the 1960s the quarter was opened at least to visiting by lower status workers and ordinary people.

other, hand the villager workers stayed in over-crowd barracks during their work period and kept their permanent residences in their villages.

The lack of interest in the proper housing and provisioning of the mine workers during their work period was the natural outcome of the labor process. As long as the mine workers produced enough coal or completed the amount of the work required, neither their toughing out the arduous working conditions, nor their diets and level of health were matters of concern. The indifference to the conditions of the mine workers was derived from the very form of the exchange of labor between the mine workers and the mine operators. The mine operators bought the product of the mine workers. In return they paid the workers in accordance to the number of the trucks they loaded or the meters they advanced. As far as the piece rate constituted the main criterion of the wage, the mine operators were interested in neither the capacity of the worker to work for a specified period, nor the quality of the work except for the quality of the product, such as coal. Hence the living and working conditions of the mine workers remained at the outside their concern.

The living conditions of the mine workers in the 1920s showed great resemblance to those of the previous decades. The miserable conditions prove the lack of interest of both the state and the mine operators. While the government utilized its power to set standards for the labor conditions of the basin, it did not monitor whether the companies and other coal operators conformed to the standards that the laws imposed on them. Tunali Hilmi Bey's critiques in 1923 and 1924 reflected the indifference of the government. He accused the Ministry of Economy of treating the Zonguldak basin like a stepchild and of failing to organize the flow of statistical knowledge on the labor conditions. His report to the presidency of the National Assembly reveals in detail that the living and working conditions of the workers still had not become an object of knowledge for the government. Despite the requirements of the

laws, the coal mining undertakings were reluctant to produce the necessary documents and the government lacked the political will to carry out its own investigations.

Tunalı Hilmi complained that he had not been able to receive satisfactory answers to his questions from the related ministries on the labor conditions of the basin. In his words:

Since I have not received responses to this part of my questions it has been impossible to determine whether the number of accidents occurred has decreased or not. On the other hand, I need to point out in my first question I asked between the beginning of 1338 and November 1339 how many workers had been ill, how many of them died, how many went home and did not come back. And I also quoted the previous replies I had received saying that the number of workers who had died in their villages due to lack of health services was unknown. There had been no word about the ones ailing and dying in the mines. However, I received an absolutely reasonable answer this year. God, Mercy them! It is unbearable!

Eleven of the law suits opened on behalf the offspring of fourteen victims have been finalized, three of them have been postponed to the following year, but ten of them indicate the pitiful situation the mine workers have been at? <sup>492</sup>

The correspondence indicates that labor conditions in the basin were not fully documented. Even when they were documented, the records might have not reflected the true conditions due to inaccuracies. In Tunalı Hilmi's words:

The records of the Inspectorate for Workers tell us that the amount of damage that the mine workers were sentenced to pay is 10,890 liras. However, the figure I have found struggling in the responding letters of the Ministry of Justice totals 7,370 liras. This means that the Inspectorate has added 3,520 liras. There is something else worth mentioning: The total of reimbursement indicated in the Ministry of Justice records covers an entire decade, the period of 1912-1922.<sup>493</sup>

The state's reluctance to closely monitor the conditions of labor encouraged the coal mining operators to undervalue the requirements imposed on them by Law No. 151. Its provisions were far from properly implemented in the basin.

Most of the discussions held particularly by the Zonguldak deputies in the Grand National Assembly reached no end. The debates held in the 17 March 1925 session, clearly indicate the worse living and working conditions of the mine workers and violations of Law No.

---

<sup>492</sup> For Tunalı Hilmi's correspondences, see 16/9/1925, Catalog no. [PMRA, 30.18.1.1/ 15.58.1]

<sup>493</sup> Ibid.

151.<sup>494</sup> Discussions on the eight hour restriction went in the Assembly as an instance of violation of the law. Besides, the lack of accommodation facilities and other social provisioning were subjects of criticism. However, the deputies critical of the disinterest of the mine operators overlooked the part time feature of the labor force and the piece rate wage system. The restriction of eight hours work per day was improper to the very nature of the piece rate wage system. Similarly, due to the fact that the majority of the mine workers kept their permanent residences in their villages and worked in the mines for short cyclical time periods the mine operators free from the requirement to provision the workers. As far as the traditional work pattern maintained, the law could not find a proper ground to be implemented.

For the same reasons, the mine operators did not comply with the provisions of the Law which imposed a minimum wage scale and extra payment for extra work. The contents of the trials give important clues on the disputes that arose between the mine operators and the workers. Most of the disputes derived from the lack of payment for overtime work and compensation. Most of the mine operators seem to have not complied with the minimum wage scale.<sup>495</sup> Furthermore, the restriction of the law to Zonguldak basin created important problem for other mine workers, who demanded similar rights for their work areas.<sup>496</sup>

The worst living conditions of the mine workers were not peculiar to the work site. The living conditions of the villager miners in the workplace reflected to a great extent how they lived in their villages as well. For instance, Abdullah Cemal depicted Zonguldak villagers as such.

Every family lives a haphazard life in their hometowns. Although we see some families in proper social manners, this is not quite common. However, we also observe typical Turkish customs in these families such as patience, endurance and humility... Their sons are important to them but they do not do much raising them.

---

<sup>494</sup> See the discussion section held in the Grand National Assembly on the budget of the Ministry of Trade, *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 15, Devre 2, İçtima Senesi 2*, p. 553. Particularly the İstanbul deputy Yusuf Akçora Bey underlined the worst living and working conditions stemming from his Zonguldak visit, and the Zonguldak deputy Tunalı Hilmi supported his impressions.

<sup>495</sup> Ümrân Nazif Yiğiter, assistant attorney of the *Zonguldak Milli Korunma Mahkememesi* (Zonguldak National Protection Court), has evaluated the implementation of Law No. 151 between 1921 and 1940, in reference to certain trials. For the wage disputes and nonpayment of compensation, see Yiğiter, pp. 72-76.

<sup>496</sup> On November 4, 1929, the application area of the Law No 151 was clearly defined once again to remove such demands, see *ibid*.



The child takes care of himself without any special attention from his parents. If he catches a fatal disease and dies, his parents take it as ill-fate. If he reaches his adolescent years, it is for sure that he is an undernourished, skeletal youth... Middle class or rich families living in the cities are able to find all sorts of food, but they mostly prefer pastry meals... In their cuisine vegetables are secondary and meat comes as the third food. And, while rich villagers eat pounded wheat and vegetables, poor ones cook the herbs they pick on the hills.<sup>497</sup>

Most of the poor villagers had neither beds, nor quilts in their home. When the mine workers went to work in the mines, the relatively wealthier workers brought their quilts and beds. The rests slept on worn out clothes or simply on bare wooden bedsteads.<sup>498</sup> They stayed in the tiny, dark and dirty worker dwellings or barracks into which they crowded like sardines during their work period. They took baths only when they returned their villages. When the louse and fleas flooded into the barracks, they preferred to stay outdoors in the summer months. They lay on the ground, using brick pieces as pillows.<sup>499</sup> Similarly most of the workers brought their own food when they went to the mines. Their daily diet was comprised simply of bread and corn flour called *malay*. The items they bought from the worker groceries were limited to bread, halvah and olives.<sup>500</sup>

The provisions of Law No.151 of 1921 had little effect on the living conditions. Although the law imposed strict requirements on the mine operators to provide the workers such services as housing, medical treatment, the education of the young workers and as such, the coal operators avoided these responsibilities and the government was lax in its control over being implemented. The *Amele Birliđi*, which was established to protect workers' rights against the mine owners, primarily provided in the medical care for the mine workers and their families. Both the *Amele Birliđi* and the mine operators were charged with providing medical treatment to the mine workers and, to a certain extent, their families. The private clinics

---

<sup>497</sup> Abdullah Cemal, *Türkiyenin Sıhhi İctimai Coğrafyası: Zonguldak* (Ankara: Ögüt Matbaası, 1922), p. 17.

p. 18.

<sup>498</sup> Yersel depicted living conditions of the mine workers at the work site and the villages in the 1930s in the villages. It is no doubt that the same poverty had existed in the 1920s. See Yersel, pp. 12, and 21.

<sup>499</sup> Yusuf Akçora well depicted the impoverished conditions of accommodation in the mines in 1925. See *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 15, Devre I1, İctima Senesi I1*, p. 553.

provided health services only to their employees, not to their families.<sup>501</sup> Alongside the clinics, in Zonguldak, the workers were treated in the *Amele Birliđi Hastahanesi* (Worker's Association Hospital) and the Eređli Company's hospital in Zonguldak.<sup>502</sup>

However neither *Amele Birliđi* hospital nor the private clinics provided adequate health services. The poor sanitary conditions in the villages and mines paved the way for the spread of contagious disease. Throughout the 1920s, tuberculosis, malaria and parasite diseases and syphilis, were the most widespread diseases among the mine workers and the villager inhabitants of Zonguldak.<sup>503</sup> Considering the tiny, dark and dirty worker dwellings or barracks into which they crowded like sardines during their work period, infection easily spread. The lack of sewer systems and shortage of potable water compounded matters. Poor nutrition also facilitated the spread of epidemics among the mine workers, who had already exhausted their physical strength in the pit works.

In his study on the sanitary and social conditions of Zonguldak, Abdullah Cemal states that among the infants and adults ascarid and tapeworm diseases were widespread. Owing to itch, skin diseases were chronic in the region, particularly among the villagers who planted corn and millet. Pneumonia was another disease frequent in the cold seasons, particularly among the mine workers who were exposed to drafts in the mines. Tuberculosis and malaria were diseases that devastated the basin.<sup>504</sup> However, the most destructive calamity was undoubtedly syphilis.<sup>505</sup> The high mobility of the male population of Zonguldak,

---

<sup>500</sup> For the daily diet of the mine workers, see Yersel, p. 13

<sup>501</sup> The *Amele Birliđi* managed the outpatient clinics in the districts of Kozlu, Kilimli and Eređli. There were clinics in the Gelik, Asma and Kandilli under the responsibility of the mine operators as well. *İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye*, 1927, p. 43.

<sup>502</sup> The nationalist government charged the mine operators with the construction of "*Amelebirliđi Hastahanesi*" in 1922. The project of the building was drawn by Architect Kemalettin Bey. It was established in the *Sođuksu* quarter of the city. See Abdullah Cemal, p. 23.

<sup>503</sup> Ibid. pp. 43-45.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>505</sup> Syphilis was one of the most widespread diseases among the mine workers in the previous decades as well. The 1916 (1334) yearbook of Bolu district attributed the prevalence of the syphilis to poor moral qualities and primitive level of social life of the local inhabitants. But the yearbook did not give details of this "poor moral quality." Bolu Salnamesi (1334), p. 285. The densely populated bachelor workers no doubt constituted an attractive community for prostitution, which gave way to certain venereal diseases.

who often traveled back and forth between the Russian coastal regions, Istanbul and their homeland, pursuing their livelihoods gave way the spread of the disease.<sup>506</sup>

Another channel which brought particularly syphilis to the basin was prostitution. In the basin prostitution was a clandestine industry. Because there were not brothels under strict medical control, the prostitutes easily escaped. Those arrested by the municipal police were subjected to venereal check, but after the medical control and treatment, they easily disappeared again. Venereal diseases were most prevalent in the most densely districts, such as Bartın and particularly Zonguldak where the workers, who lived away from their houses and families, constituted the majority of the male population.<sup>507</sup>

The mine workers suffered not only from epidemics, but also serious injury and even death in mine accidents. The high frequency of the accidents indicated on the one hand the poor safety measures and inadequate technical and physical conditions in the mines, and on the other, the mine operators' indifference towards safety. It is no doubt that the piece rate work system made the workers more careless about spending some of their time fortifying roofs and such preventive measures. Instead they gave privilege to producing more coal as quickly as possible, otherwise they were to be punished by fines and wage cuts.

The number of accidents and casualties gives a clear idea about both the dangerous nature of the pit work and the extent of production pressure and suffering. Cave-ins, firedamp, stone-falls, conveyor hits and toxic gases were among the leading causes of these accidents. In 1922 (1338), sixty-six accidents occurred.<sup>508</sup> Forty-eight of the sixty-six incidents happened underground. The outcome of the accidents was eighteen dead and fifty-four injured. The underground accidents were more frequent and more deadly than the accidents above ground. During 1922, the total number of workers varied between 7,000 and 16,000 with

---

<sup>506</sup> As great numbers of people traveled by sea between Ereğli, Zonguldak, Bartın, Amasra and Rumenia, Bulgarias and Russia, syphilis and other diseases were transported from one place to another easily. Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>507</sup> After depicting prostitution as the source of syphilis Abdullah Cemal noted tendency to prostitution among women in the villages, where wars had led to a dramatic decrease in the male population Ibid., pp. 43 and 44.

<sup>508</sup> For the statistics, see Tunalı Hilmi's correspondences, 16/9/1925, Catalog no. [PMRA 30.18.1.1 /15.58.1]

respect to the agricultural cycles and number of accidents per month varied between three and eleven. The situation was not different in the later part of the 1920s. Between 1927 and 1933 the total number of deaths was 282 and injured 3109.<sup>509</sup> Most probably the casualty figures do not reflect the exact numbers of the dead as some workers who were registered first as injured, died later in their villages.

Although the *Amele Birliđi*, was charged with pursuing the rights of victims and, if they died, their families, its help was limited to those who worked at a minimum of 180 days a year and live within the Zonguldak municipal borders. This meant that most of the rotational workers, whose permanent settlement was not near the mines, but in villages, did not benefit from the *Amele Birliđi*'s assistance.

Furthermore, most of the compensation disputes were resolved by informal negotiations (the practice in the basin was called "*sulh*" [reconciliation] between the representatives of the responsible mine operator and of the victims. Although the victims could receive high amounts of compensation if they applied to the court, most of them preferred to reach a private agreement with the mine operators. Otherwise, by means of the court of appeal, the mine operators could appeal the compensation amount. In this case, the victims either received the compensation amount after a considerable delay or less than they expected.<sup>510</sup> As the *sulh* example proves the mine operators tried to solve all kind of the problems deriving from the mine labor, within the social cultural context of the rural community. Instead of institutional solutions offered by the law, they preferred to negotiate within the informal nets.

---

<sup>509</sup> For the Numbers of death and injures in the second part of the 1920s, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, p. 153.

<sup>510</sup> Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası*, p. 154.

## The Problem of Worker Productivity and Labor Conditions under Discussion: The 1930s

Throughout the 1920s neither the miserable living conditions nor the rotational work pattern of the villager workers were problematized by the government officials and the mine workers. A report dated 1927 from the Basin Head Office to the Ministry of Economy indicated the existence of an early concern about the state of mine workers, only in relation to the question of labor productivity. In the report, the relationship between productivity and the treatment of the labor force through social policy measures was defined clearly. Nevertheless the solutions offered only appeared on the agenda of the authorities in the second part of the 1930s. Yet, as the reports circulating in the 1930s followed the lines of reasoning similar to those of the 1927 report, it is worth analyzing how the report put the problem of low labor productivity and its relation to the labor conditions.

The report first stated the low productivity rates of the basin's workers in comparison to those of the different coal basins in Europe. With respect to the productivity of the surface and underground workers in the late 1920s, the amount of coal produced per worker was as such:

Table 9. Average Amount of Coal Production per Worker per Day in the 1920s

Zonguldak	France	England/ Cardiff	Germany/Ruhr	Scotland
520 kg	700 kg	890 kg	1,200 kg	1,470 kg

Source: İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927 (MTA, No. 1272), p. 47.

While analyzing the reasons behind the low productivity rate of the Zonguldak mine worker the report criticized the dynamics of the re-peasantization. Accordingly, the shortage of permanent and skilled workers in the basin was the main obstacle. In order to increase labor productivity and the total coal production, it was necessary to create a permanent, skilled and disciplined work force. The report recommended that the existing composition of the work force be

changed. Since the rotational villagers made up a great part of the workers, the detachment of the workers from their agricultural duties was to be part of this change.

For this end, the report suggests a set of social policies, including the permanent settlement of the villager workers with their families in "worker villages." By such a settlement program, they would have access to dining halls, sales cooperatives and public baths. Nutrition and health services would be improved, workers would be trained and a supervisory cadre was created. The report gives preference to accommodation and training. It recommended the construction of family housing near the mines, particularly in Üzülmöz, Kandilli, the regions belonging to the Ereğli Company and the Sarıcazadeler Company.<sup>511</sup>

Containment of the worker lives appears to have been the main motive behind the idea of the "worker village." By living with their families near the mines, the men would leave their agricultural pursuits and concentrate on their mine jobs. They would be able to serve to a great extent to create a skilled, permanent work force. By itself, the settlement of the workers near the mines could not change their indifference to the mine work. In the report, vocational training was recommended as one of the instruments in restructuring the existing work force. Particularly, the training of foreman was of special importance in the supervision of the underground labor process.<sup>512</sup>

The report recommends the *Amele Birliđi* as agent of the state. Accordingly, by force if necessary, the *Amele Birliđi* should even force the workers to eat and to wear.<sup>513</sup> Stressing the already official character of the *Amele Birliđi*, the report stated that the director should be official one. A civilian director might come under the influence of "dangerous movements." Keep the work force under state control was a crucial problem. At this point, documentation of the labor conditions gained special importance. The report underlined the need for the establishment of a statistical service. To comprehend the true conditions of labor in the basin,

---

<sup>511</sup> İktisat Vekaletinden Havza-i Fahmiye, 1927, MTA Archive, Report no. 1272, pp. 41-47.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., p.48.

the *Amele Birliđi* should be charged with organizing the worker registers in collaboration with the mining companies. Only in this way could the rights of the workers be protected. The documentation of labor conditions would also allow the government to keep the companies under stricter control.<sup>514</sup>

The 1927 report situated the state as the sole mediator regulating relations between workers and employers in the basin. Similar suggestions can be found in the 1926 reports of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry<sup>515</sup> and the reports of the Industry Congress of 1930.<sup>516</sup> Both reports focused on the problem of labor productivity in relation to the high coal prices. They underlined the cultivator attributes of the workers as the main reason for the inadequate work force and the need for a permanent, skilled work force. The report by a commission assigned in 1926 by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and Industry to investigate the causes of the low level of coal production in similar line of reasoning:

When we examine the graphic indicating the quantity of coal produced by seasonal workers in several months, we see that it dropped to 7,208 tons in July but rose to 103,841 and to 113,014 in August. Recruiting seasonal workers depends on the agricultural work to be done in the fields. Since these workers usually work in the mines they only come to work in the mines after or before the harvest time when they can not earn their living in their villages. It is obvious that the steady coal production in the basin was dependent particularly on the existence of a permanent mine workers.<sup>517</sup>

Despite the existence of critics on the rotational nature of the labor force and their cultivator identity, such a critical outlook did not find a response in the labor policy of the mining operators and of the state in the 1920s. The reason is that the critics did not cover the dynamics of the coal mining sector in the period, while discussing the link between the labor productivity and the state of mine labor in a narrow scope. They undervalued the close connection between labor productivity and mechanization. Furthermore they de-linked the

---

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., p.43 and pp. 47-48.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid., p.40.

<sup>515</sup> H. Avni, *İstanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası 1926-1927-1928 Seneleri Faaliyet ve Muamelatına Ait Umumi Rapor* (İstanbul: İstanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Neşriyatı, 1934) pp. 434.

<sup>516</sup> Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti, *Sanayi Kongresi Raporlar-Kararlar-Zabıtlar, "Zonguldak Raporu"* (Ankara: Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti Yayını, 1930), pp. 431.

close relation between the geological conditions of the work place and the labor productivity. Considering the mechanization level and the geological features of the coal seams in the basin, both factors constrained labor productivity. As the mine operators did not appeal to the mechanization of production and hauling process, the amount of coal extraction continued to depend on the intense use of manual labor. Similarly, the underground physical conditions in the basin did not facilitate the use of mechanical devices. The uneven nature of the coal seams, the relative softness of the coal and the low waged labor made labor intensive production more advantageous and yet less productive than the mechanized production.<sup>518</sup> Pretending not to see the impact of the high labor and low machine ratio in the production process, the reporters also became blind to the compatibility of the existing state of work force to the production regime in the basin.

Unlike the critics of the reports in the late 1920s, the coal operators long lasting indifferences to the issue of labor productivity was harmonious with the temporary and unskilled nature of the mine labor. Only the introduction of an intense mechanization in both the production and hauling labor process of underground work would bring a new regime of labor. As long as the labor intensive nature of the work continued, the manual labor continued to fit the requirements of the labor process. Furthermore, the rotational nature of the work pattern and the maintenance of the subsistence farming enabled the mine operators to keep wages and labor cost at low rates. Hence, they had no reason to change neither the work patterns of the cultivator workers nor their level of skill.

Similarly the marketing aspect of the coal mining sector in the 1920s was compatible to the existing production and labor regime. Compared with the late 1930s, in the 1920s there

---

<sup>517</sup> H. Avni, p. 435 and 436.

<sup>518</sup> In an article written in 1946 on the low rate of labor productivity in Zonguldak mines, Rebi Barkin underlined the close connection between the level of the labor productivity and the mechanization. He pointed out that the main factor behind the low efficiency in coal production was not the low labor productivity but backward technology and deficient equipment. This production regime entailed use of manual workers in huge numbers. Hence when the total amount of coal was divided to the total number of the workers, the amount of coal produced by per worker appeared to be small. However, in reality, both the state of the workforce and their productivity were natural outcome of the lack of mechanization. While Barkin made this analysis in 1946, his arguments explained the low level of labor productivity in the inter war years as



had been a limited demand for coal. Considering the economic conditions of the 1920s, both the number and the scale of the coal consuming sectors had been limited. As far as the industrial structure remained stagnant, the internal consumption remained constant. Hence the lack of interest in labor productivity was reflective of, on the one hand, a stagnant demand and, on the other their low-cost production strategy.

In addition, both the mechanization of the production process and the improvement of labor productivity would necessitate the reorganization of the labor process and changes in the choice of technology. Both efforts would require a great deal of expenditures, which would increase production costs. Instead of concentrated on the improving productivity in the mines, the companies concentrating their effort on preventing an increase in the number of mine operators, surplus production and competition. All of these developments would bring a drop in coal prices and in profits due to the inelasticity of demand. For these reasons, in the 1920s, neither the low productivity of labor nor the part time work patterns of the mine workers were perceived as problems. The state of mining labor, contrarily, was compatible to the coal energy economy of the country.

Nevertheless, as the existing production and marketing conditions of the coal mining sector became incompatible to the interests of the state in the 1930s, similarly the low productivity of the mine workers and the state of labor in general became problematic. The main motive behind the government's new interest in the conditions of mine labor was shaped by its new economic objectives. Throughout the 1930s, the government attempted to restructure the marketing and productive aspects of the coal mining sector in the service of the expanding railway networks and the prospective steel and iron industry. As the part of the same attempt the government began to search the means to increase the amount of coal produced per mine worker per day. After the direct involvement of the state in the

---

well. Rebii Barkın, "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında Kalifiye İşçi Davası," *Çalışma*, no.3 (January 1946), pp.15-20. For a general evaluation of the factors determinant in the productivity of labor in the basin's mines, see also Özekten, *Kömür Ekonomisi*, pp.173-177.

industrialization process of the country, the market dynamics of the coal sector changed sharply, particularly in the second part of the 1930s. Parallel to this process, there appeared a tendency toward creating more productive, permanent and skilled mine labor. Unlike the 1920s, in the 1930s, the issue of skill formation, training, the improvement of living conditions and permanent attachment of the villager workers to the mining gained priority. In order to stabilize coal production the official actors began to underline the need for a permanent mining community. Hence a need to formulate a social policy toward the basin's workers came on the agenda of the state only after its industrialization programs became evident.

Throughout the 1930s, reports on the Zonguldak coal basin circulated between the different state offices.<sup>519</sup> Most of the reports analyzed labor productivity in relation to the production costs and high coal prices. The reporters underlined low labor productivity as a factor behind the low level of coal production and high coal prices. Accordingly, an increase in labor productivity would lead an increase in coal production and a decline in coal prices in the internal market. From this perspective, they found the worker's half-hearted engagement in mining as the main reason for low labor productivity. Consequently, the dynamics which led the re-peasantization of the mine workers in the 1920s became the target of critics in the 1930s.

The rotational work pattern of the villager workers, their continual attachment to farming, and the fluctuations in the numbers of the workers at the work site due to the seasonal cycles at the farming and their permanent residency in their villages were problematized in reference to the lower labor productivity. In this line of reasoning they recommended that the formation of a permanent mining community near the mine site and the

---

<sup>519</sup>For the reports of the bureaucrats and experts, see Reşit Gencer's Report, 20/6/1935, Catalog no.[PMRA 030..10../174..205..13]; Esat Kerimol's Report, 30/4/1939, MTA Archive, Report no. 1564, "Zonguldak Havzası Müesseselerinin Birleştirilmesi Hakkında Rapor"; professor Granigg's report, 5/4/1938, MTA Archive, Report no. 1561 "Türkiye İş Bankası" ve "Etibank" in Zonguldak Havzasındaki Kömür Madenleri"; İzettin Tuğrul Nişbay's report 23/6/1938, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..10.0.0/174.206..1.]; and lastly Report on Refik Saydam's Zonguldak visit, 4/12/1939, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..1.0.0 / 2.11..3.]

improvement of the workers' conditions through social policy measures would remove the problem of both low labor productivity and high coal prices.

For instance, according to the American specialists, although the wages were low, the production costs per ton were high.<sup>520</sup> Considering that an average mine worker extracted nearly 500 kg. of coal per day, the rate of the labor productivity did not cover production costs. Accordingly, to change the situation, the nature of the mine labor would have to be transformed. In this sense, the American specialists recommended the improvement of the living and working conditions of the average mine worker. They discussed the question of discipline and efficiency in reference to the nature of the work force. The inadequate supply of labor, the lack of housing facilities, the insufficient nutrition and health care, the absence of an accident insurance system and the shortage of skilled foremen, technicians and mining engineers were counted as the leading obstacles.<sup>521</sup> To meet the increasing need for an efficient work force, the American specialists called in their report for the government to formulate the principles of a labor policy. In this respect, such a policy should have provided the workers with a wide range of social facilities.<sup>522</sup>

The American specialists attributed the state a central place in labor organization. Accordingly, state control was not limited to the task of improving labor conditions; it was also to find proper solutions to possible class struggles between the newly emerging industrial work force and the employers. In that sense, the state needed to take an active role in protecting the rights of workers and organizing labor associations. Despite the fact that, as the specialists pointed out, the Republican People's Party refused to include class struggle in its program and offered a solidarist model for social cohesion, the principles of a social policy and a labor code needed to be formulated as soon as possible.<sup>523</sup>

---

<sup>520</sup> Hines et al., Volume 1,2, p. 377.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., pp. 377-379.

<sup>522</sup> Hines et al., Volume 6, pp. 239-243.

<sup>523</sup> Ibid., pp. 246-249.

At this point, the specialists underlined the importance of state surveillance through statistical knowledge on the labor condition. Documentation of the true conditions of labor would enable the state to establish firm control over labor conditions. To this end, companies with certain numbers of workers were to be obliged to submit regular reports on the number of workers they hired, working hours, attendance registers, wages, accidents and occupational diseases.<sup>524</sup> By means of statistical data the conditions of labor would become the object of knowledge in the service of state control over the industrial situation.

In 1935, the problem of low productivity was underlined once again, this time by Reşit Gencer, the chief director of Etibank. In reference to professor Granigg's observations, Gencer underlined the pressure of high production costs over coal prices.<sup>525</sup> Accordingly, before 1932, the coal companies had higher profit margins, and higher labor productivity with lower labor costs. However, the increase in coal production brought an increase in production costs as well. Due to the lack of mechanization, the low level of labor productivity could not cover the production costs. Thus, as Gencer truly stated, the mechanization of the mines was a prerequisite for low cost production. However, the mechanization of the production would require a skilled labor force, a new kind of organization in the labor process and a new regime of labor control. In Gencer's words:

The workers' mode of live in the basin is the main obstacle to establishing such modern management. Workers are temporary and they are not committed to the mines. Their living conditions are poor and primitive. It is necessary to make them commit to the mines, to get used to their work, and at the same time provide them such standards that they shall not miss their villages... The main obstacle to overcome is the habits of the workers.

Even though special compounds are being built for the workers it is still a far possibility for them to leave their villages and settle down in the basin. Such an enterprise is a time consuming and combative effort, a matter of correction...<sup>526</sup>

---

<sup>524</sup> Ibid., pp. 249.

<sup>525</sup> For Gencer's report, see 20/6/1935, Catalog no.[PMRA 030..10../174..205..13]

<sup>526</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

As Gencer suggested, as far as the workers maintained their rotational work pattern, it was impossible to create a permanent mining community. As long as the villager workers privileged their agricultural pursuits and hence, perceived the pit work as a source of supplementary income, they would transform neither their traditional working habits nor their mode of life.

The problem was perceived for the most part by all the reporters as a problem of "mentality." For them the villager workers were both conservative and content with their low living standards. They had no incentive to raise their living standards through engaging in wage earning pursuits.<sup>527</sup> Actually, as long as the proportion of the wage earning remained supplemental, the rotational nature of the mine work allowed the re-peasantization of the villager workers. As the wages were set without considering the livelihood of the family members of the worker, the worker had to maintain a subsistence farming economy. The low wages and dependence on land had not created a problem for the mine operators. However, as the previous production and marketing aspects of the coal mining began to contradict with the state's new objectives for the coal mining sector, its labor aspect began to contradict as well.

Furthermore, contradiction of the existing state of labor force to the state's new economic objectives was not peculiar to the coal mining sector. Indeed, the work pattern of the average mine worker in the basin illustrated to a great extent the main features of the work force in Turkey. In the 1930s the problem of the peasant worker was discussed in different circles.<sup>528</sup> According to the American specialists, for instance, most of the workers in different sectors in Turkey kept their attachment to agriculture and developed a rotational work pattern

---

<sup>527</sup> The same perspective can be seen in Özen's studies on the basin. He describes the labor problem of the basin in reference to the villager workers' conservative mentality in regard with earning livelihood. See Özen, *Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi Problemleri* (İstanbul: n.p., 1948), p. 6.

<sup>528</sup> For instance, in 1936 Mümtaz Faik Fenik went Kayseri to search the reasons behind the problem of labor shortage in Kayseri textile factory. The interview with the workers and directors revealed that the indifference of the inhabitants to work in the factory was derived from adaptation problem of the villagers to factory work and low wages. Ayşe Buğra, "Devletçi Dönemde Yoksulluğa Bakış ve Sosyal Politika," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 99 (Winter, 2003/2004), p.94.

between agricultural and industrial pursuits. Hence, the problem in Turkey was not a problem of labor shortage, but a shortage of skilled labor.<sup>529</sup> The American specialists underlined the high turnover rate in the industrial sectors. According to the public surveys to which they referred, the rate of turnover in Turkey's industry was too high to create skilled industrial labor. Most of the workers were deemed inadequate because of their irregular attendance at work, especially at harvest time. The villager workers engaged in industrial pursuits seasonally only as long as they needed money to pay their taxes.<sup>530</sup>

Actually, the low wage policy of the plants was an important factor behind the part time work pattern of the villagers. Furthermore for the rise of an industrial work force from the agricultural labor pool, there should be a great transformation in the mode of agricultural production. Only an intense mechanization of farming could bring about a labor surplus in countryside. While losing their livelihood, then the surplus agricultural work force would be able to cut its ties with the land. The villagers with their families then would have to immigrate to the industrial centers permanently.<sup>531</sup> Since the problem of the peasant worker was not situated in such a broad context, the solutions were limited to social policy measures. For instance, the American specialists attributed the high rate of turnover in factors such as the negligence of working and living conditions of the workers and their families and lack of social facilities. Such social services would attract them to work year round.<sup>532</sup> In that sense the industrialization attempts of the government would gain success only if the government could created an adequate number of skilled and or a permanent labor force.

The new production targets imposed on the coal mining sector compelled the mining operators to find an additional number of mine workers. However, despite finding an adequate numbers of mine workers, at this time, the high turnover rate destabilized the total amount of

---

<sup>529</sup> Hines et al., Volume 4, p. 233.

<sup>530</sup> Ibid., pp. 233-238.

<sup>531</sup> For a discussion on peasant worker phenomenon in Turkey and rise of industrial worker in reference to mechanization of agricultural sector, see Behice Boran, "Sanayide Köylü- İşçi," *Yurt ve Dünya*, Cilt 3 (March -April 1942), pp. 80-84.

coal production. For instance, in 1935, the average work duration in the mines was seventeen days, and in 1936 it even declined to fourteen days.<sup>533</sup> The high turnover rates remained unchanged in 1938. In 1938 while the turnover rate at the EKI mines was 26%, that in the mines operated by the *İş Bankası* was 12%.<sup>534</sup> Despite the fact that more centralized management had been established through the merger of the scattered mines under the control of two large national companies, they could not solve the problem of high turnover.

Perceiving high turnover as a problem in the late 1930s marked the changing place of the coal mining sector in Turkey's economy as well. Considering the production and marketing conditions of the coal mining sector, high turnover rates had not been a problem. However, in the second part of the 1930s, the situation changed. Under the pressure of the production targets the government imposed on the companies, the high turnover rate became problematic. Particularly the agricultural cycles became detrimental for the companies. At both sowing and harvest times, coal production fell sharply since the mine workers were busy in their fields. Some times the workers were less interested in earning supplemental income, specifically in good harvest years. For instance, due to the high yielding crop in 1936, the number of the workers declined considerably. To cope with the labor shortage in 1937, the companies and coal operators submitted a petition to the Ministry of Economy recommending that the state accept cash compensation for the *Yol Mükellefiyeti* of the mine workers (forced labor imposed on villagers to work in road construction for a specific time period), so that they did not have to leave the mines.<sup>535</sup> Similarly, in 1937 and 1938 the companies faced a serious labor shortage in the sowing and harvest seasons of the year, beginning in April and lasting until November.<sup>536</sup> The crisis of labor supply deepened in 1939, together with a shortage of

---

<sup>532</sup> Hines et al., Volume 4, p. 238

<sup>533</sup> Ahmet Ali Özek, *Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi problemleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1948), p. 6.

<sup>534</sup> Granigg's report, 5 May 1938, MTA Archive, Report no.. 1561, Türkiye *İş Bankası* ve Etibank in Zonguldak Havzasındaki Kömür Madenleri, pp. 5 and 28.

<sup>535</sup> For the miners' petition see 26/3/1937, Catalog no.[PMRA,30..10.0.0 / 155.91..12.]

<sup>536</sup> See the council directors reports of the 1937,1938 and 1939 Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, *İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1937, 1938, 1939)

timber and equipment due to the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>537</sup>

The labor shortage compelled the companies to reconsider the already existing pattern of recruitment, which was out of the companies' direct control. Until the mid-1930s the intermediary position of the local actors between the mine workers and the companies had not created a problem. However, as the numbers of the workers became inadequate, the recruitment agents, the worker headmen and other local middlemen gained important bargaining power against the companies. The labor market became area of struggle between the companies and the intermediaries over the control of the labor supply. In 1939, Esat Kerimol, the general director of the Türk-İş company, described the problem of the "spoiled workers" in the labor market as a problem of discipline:

The highest cost in coal production is the wages and especially the efficiency. There would be great benefits when the workers were attained to a disciplined working environment...

The number of workers in the basin did not drop but increased. However, the efficiency rate is not higher but lower. After examining several examples it is our opinion that this is the result of spoiling the workers. This not only upsets the discipline among the workers, but also prompted the increase of daily wages causing high labor cost. Thus, the annual loss throughout the basin is not less than eight hundred thousand liras.<sup>538</sup>

As Kerimol's report illuminates, to curb the worker's power of bargain in the setting of wages, it was necessary to cut the local ties the workers were able to use against the companies.

However, considering the critics on the rotational work pattern and villager nature of the workers, the problem was perceived as an extensive one, of which the spoiled workers were the outcome. To increase the production amount of coal with low costs, the companies required a low waged, productive and disciplined labor force. This would be possible only by establishing a firm control over the labor reservoirs. However, as long as the workers maintained their lives in their respective villages, their containment became problematic. A productive and disciplined mine worker would be created only under the new means of

---

<sup>537</sup> *Etibank Bilanço ve İdare Meclisi Raporu Sene 1939* (np: np, 1939), p. 4.



containment. The psychical containment of the workers through company controlled villages appeared to be the most functional means of containment. By the mid-1930s, the official bodies and the experts began to discuss permanent worker villages near the work site as the means of controlling the mine workers.

### The Worker Village Projects as the Means of Containment

In 1938, EKI's director, Bekir Vehbi Ergene, described the problem of temporary worker phenomenon in the basin as follows:

The mine workers in the basin work there traditionally and partly reluctantly rather than willingly. The development of the basin depends on how much the workers are willing to work there; how much benefit they find in this, and how much sustenance they expect. In this respect, we should create a mass of workers residing in the work site with their families, meet their demands by providing inexpensive goods, and construct infrastructure to provide a healthy living environment for the workers who come without their families.<sup>539</sup>

As the citation implies, Ergene and others gave special importance to the settlement of the villager workers near the mines. The permanent settlement of the workers with their families appeared as a determinant solution to the problem of labor mobility between the villages and the mines. To stabilize a number of mine workers under the full control of the companies, the reports of various authorities suggested the construction of family housing in the form of "worker villages." As the 1927 report recommended, in the 1930s the authorities continued to see the accommodation of the work force in company housing as a device of containment of the work force. In the 1930s, the idea of constructing "worker village" near the mines remained in circulation. The settlement of the work force under the control of the companies would guarantee not only a stable work force, but also the reproduction of the labor force through the following generations of the worker families. Hence, the building

---

<sup>539</sup> Esat Kerimol's Report, 30/4/1939, MTA Archive, Report no. 1564, pp. 6-7.

company villages became a metaphor of building a mining community in the service of the companies.

In relation to the question of labor productivity, the formation of a permanent mining community would be functional in creating a productive work force. For instance, the American specialists pointed out that the existing situation of the mine workers did not serve to create an efficient work force. Most of the workers lived in crowded worker barracks and provisioned themselves with food from their villages.<sup>540</sup> Their ties to their villages continued due to their families. Therefore, the construction of permanent accommodations or the "worker's villages," around the mines became key in creating an efficient work force. The existence of a disciplined, obedient and stable mine labor was greatly dependent on the pattern of residence. In this context, they called on the companies to build simple family dwellings with small gardens. They gave preference to family men. In the course of time married workers would settle in the houses with their families at a steady rate.<sup>541</sup>

Similar suggestions continued in the late 1930s. In his 1938 report, Professor Granigg called on the government to reconsider Etibank's and İş Bankası's attempts to construct worker villages in Kozlu, Gelik, Zonguldak and Asma. Both plans required nearly five million Turkish liras.<sup>542</sup> He warned the government that to settle the mine workers in Zonguldak and Kozlu would end in failure since the villager workers and their families would want to return their villages in a short time. Before taking on such a vast amount of financial burden, Granigg suggested an alternative plan, that was the construction of a "worker city" on the fertile plain between Filyos and Çaycuma. The plan underlined maintenance of the farming activities of the workers while working in the mines.

Although Granigg's worker city was not realized in the following years, the concept

---

<sup>539</sup> Bekir Vehbi Ergene's Report, 4 İlk Kanun 1938, Catalog no. [PMRA 030.. 10../ 174.. 206.. 2.], p. 8.

<sup>540</sup> Hines et al., Volume 3, p. 377.

<sup>541</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

stayed in circulation at least in the initial years of the 1940s.<sup>543</sup> Despite the fact that the line of reasoning behind the plan well fitted the ruling cadres' worries and desires on the labor question, they preferred to implement other plans. Granigg's suggestion is worth analyzing for two reasons. As suggesting the creation of a stable labor force near the mines while keeping the mine workers villager identity attracted the officials of the time. His concerns suited their perception. The ruling circles tried to reconcile the immediate need for an industrial work force in the newly rising industrial plants with the desire to preserve social stability in the countryside. The solution Granigg recommended was somewhere that the villager worker of the basin would be contained in a company controlled space without becoming solely dependent on wage earning. Only his ties with the land could protect him from becoming a purely industrial worker.

By means of Granigg's plan, we can trace the worries and desires of the ruling circles on the labor issue, as it related to the Zonguldak mine workers. Granigg points out the advantages of a worker city by comparing his plan to the projects of Etibank and İş Bankası. Accordingly,

The Kozlu and Zonguldak environ is a mountainous region with narrow valleys. There was not an adequate place even to build a plant... The area between Filyos and Çaycuma is a vast plain. The valley is wide and it has a partly soft slope. It is impossible to provide land for the workers in Kozlu, Zonguldak to raise poultry or small cattle, so they will have to detach from the land.<sup>544</sup>

Granigg's ideal worker was not the purely industrial worker, who had cut his ties to agriculture and become solely dependent on wage earning. He clearly sided with the worker who carried on his agricultural pursuits in addition to mining. According to Granigg,

But in Filyos and Çaycuma a 1000-2000 m<sup>2</sup> or larger piece of land can be easily

---

<sup>542</sup> Granigg's report, 5 May 1938, MTA Archive, Report no. 1561, Türkiye İş Bankası ve Etibank in Zonguldak Havzasındaki Kömür Madenleri, p. 28.

<sup>543</sup> For instance, the *Etibank* inspection report of 1939 mentioned that evaluation of the Granigg's project by the *Etibank* authorities was continued. See *Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (n.p: Alaeddin Kiral Basımevi, 1940), p. 18.

<sup>544</sup> Granigg's 1938 report, p.29

provided to every family. Here the worker can be a cultivator, and can work his wife and children. He can raise poultry and his wife can sell the eggs and chickens at the Zonguldak market. Here, the worker or indeed his family can grow vegetables and sell them at Zonguldak (All the vegetables consumed in Zonguldak-Kozlu are shipped from İstanbul at present.), in Filyos and Çaycuma the worker will be able to have his goats and sheep and to sell milk, cheese and meat to Kozlu-Zonguldak.<sup>545</sup>

In his line of reasoning, Granigg did not indicate by which means the workers who already lived and maintained their subsistence livelihood in their respective villages were to settle in the company constructed villages. His imagination did not cover the reality of the basin itself. Actually, the basin itself already served villagers as farm land. What made workers' wages low was the very fact of this subsistence farming. So, the aim was not to re-peasantize the already peasant community, but to control labor turnover and restrict the free will of the workers on their labor through binding them to company villages. As long as the villages remained out of the companies' control, it was not possible to contain them and make them subservient mine workers.

The Granigg projects might have been functional in that sense, following Granigg's words: "there are all opportunities in Filyos-Çaycuma for the mine workers to remain villager and to keep his roots at land. Only in such a state will the worker have to come under discipline and to come to work. Because they will realize that otherwise the house does not belong to them, but to the mine."<sup>546</sup> The companies would utilize housing facilities in reshaping the mode of worker's living in conformity to the requirements of work in the mines. So a mine worker staying in the Granigg's worker city would have to comply with the company's requirements, otherwise he would lose his access to the company's social services.

Thus, the question of why Granigg recommended settling the villager worker in a worker city based on agricultural activities brings us to the problem of the free movement

---

<sup>545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>546</sup> Ibid., p. 30.; "Filyos-Çaycumada maden işçisinin aynı zamanda köylü kalması ve köklerini toprakta muhafaza etmesi için bütün imkanlar vardır. Yalnız bu halde işçi inzibata girmiş olacak ve madendeki işine gelecektir. Çünkü aksi taktirde çok iyi bilecektir ki ev kendisine ait değil,

of the worker. The workers were already villagers and carried on their agricultural activities in their villages. However, the existing villages were outside of the companies' control. The idea of re-peasantation in the company owned and company shaped city was strongly related to the issue of control. Turning villager miners into the villager workers, yet not in their own villages, but in a newly constructed worker city would solve the problem of labor mobility. Furthermore, company villages would subordinate daily life of the workers to the needs of mining, arranging the rhythm of the daily live between the pit, house, company recreational activities and as such. The habits of the workers would also be the subject of treatment and means of threat over the worker who disobeyed company rules in the villages.

Why Granigg insisted on maintaining the villager nature of the mine workers lay in his perception of the industrial worker in the modern world. Accordingly, the modern proletarian was corrupted and became a threat to the social order. Unlike the European industrial worker, for Granigg, the Turkish worker was not corrupted yet due to his lasting relation to land and village life. The preservation of the villager nature of the mine labor would eliminate the possible threats of a purely industrial community. To keep the Turkish worker away from the experiences of the western proletariat, his ties with the land should be preserved as far as possible. Granigg wrote:

Social history points out clearly that the worker who has broken his ties with land give rises to the proletarian who bringing about misery and disorders in the various industrial countries.

As a matter of fact, since the rise of the industry, approximately from 1830 until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, houses the worker class lived were in very poor conditions (like the ones Kozlu-Zonguldak in present). Well, the regrettable outcomes of such conditions are all well-known and it is useless to dwell on it. Especially after World War I it has been understood that the industry and the agriculture are not two enemies at opposite poles but, on the contrary, it is possible to reconciling both the industry and agriculture by providing the industrial workers the land to cultivate.<sup>547</sup>

---

madene aittir."

<sup>547</sup> Granigg's 1938 report , p.30

Granigg's ideas behind the worker city project illustrate the perception of the peasantist ideologies of the time about the working classes. In the 1930s, as was the case in many parts of the world, peasantist ideologies flourished in Turkey. The peasantists agreed on the rise of national industry, but objected to the outcomes of industrialization, which were detrimental to social stability. Urbanization and the desertion of the countryside, class struggles with the rise of the proletariat, the disintegration of small family production units in rural life were some of the hazards industrialization brought about.<sup>548</sup> The solution was the preservation of agrarian life in harmony with industrial development. Furthermore, the containment of villagers in their villages would maintain the spatial dimension of the social hierarchy. The villagers, who constituted the poor of the country, hence could not threaten the social order through flowing to the city centers. Mobility meant upside down of the already established asymmetrical power relations in the society.<sup>549</sup>

Although Granigg's plan was compatible to the desires and worries of the ruling elite on the labor question of industrialization in general and of coal mining in particular, the decision makers preferred to keep workers in their villages. Settling villagers with their families at the work site would create a considerable amount of financial burden. The low wage policy of the state contradicted such a solution. Instead of settling large numbers of villagers near the mines, the authorities gave privilege to the building of company quarters for the settlement of the skilled work force and the white collar employees. Instead of the permanent settlement of the mine workers, the policy makers decided to improve the living and working conditions of the mine workers through providing social services to during the work period.

The reports on Refik Saydam's visit to Zonguldak in 1939 reflect the government's

---

<sup>548</sup> For the main arguments of the peasantist ideology in Turkey in the 1930s, see Asim Karaömerlioğlu, "The Village Institute Experience in Turkey: People's Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (1998), 25, 1, pp. 48-53.

<sup>549</sup> Buğra discussed the policy of keeping villagers in countryside in relation to the state's policy on poverty and the poor. For the preservation of the social stability through containment of the villagers in countryside, see Buğra, pp.77-79

perspective on the question of the mobility of the work force. The reports shared concerns similar to those of the previous reports of various authorities, establishing a relation between labor productivity and the well-being of the mine workers. On 3 and 4 December 1939 Prime Minister Saydam met with the official authorities of the basin and evaluated the living and working conditions of the workers in detail.<sup>550</sup> In the meetings, the participants showed their awareness of the connection between social provisioning and labor productivity. The urgency of a social policy for the mine workers appeared to be a main condition of high productivity. The well-being of the workers gained special concern. Besides, all of the participants agreed that providing good living and working conditions would assure a stable and skilled labor force. In this context, the details of social services such as housing, healthcare, nutrition, education and a social insurance system were discussed. The system of payments to the workers and of their recruitment process was debated in the context of the labor supply.

The meetings were important as they revealed how the policy makers thought, formulated and solved the problem of labor control. In both meetings, the participants discussed different settlement projects in terms of the opportunities and financial burdens. The EKI director, Bekir Vehbi Ergene, pointed out the settlement of workers, as bachelors or with their families, required vast amounts of money. While construction of a house for the single worker was at 350 Turkish liras, it was at 1500 Turkish liras for a family. Furthermore, due to the rough terrain of the city, plots suitable for such a project were expensive. Speculators strove to benefit from the companies' housing projects. The construction of large scale worker villages or at least worker quarters would bring about a large amount of financial burden.<sup>551</sup>

In the meetings, two alternative settlement plans were formulated. The first involved initially skilled workers, such as foreman and hewers, with their families. The settlement of underground and surface workers would be done over a longer period of time. The pattern of

---

<sup>550</sup> Refik Saydam's Zonguldak visit, 4/12/1939, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..1.0.0 / 2.11..3].

<sup>551</sup> Refik Saydam's Zonguldak visit, 4/12/1939, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..1.0.0 / 2.11..3], the 3 December 1939 report, p. 28.

settlement would be either in the form of worker villages or dispersed worker quarters. The second plan involved connecting the worker villages to one another and to the mines by a railway network. Villager workers, with their families, would settle in worker suburbs near the railway stations. Refik Saydam seems to have been wary of settling villager workers in such a clear cut suburbs or villages which had the potential to become worker ghettos. Dialogues between Ergene and Saydam indicated Saydam's deliberation:

Bekir Vehbi Ergene: The goal we would like to achieve is: The villagers in the vicinity of the mines are farmers, there would have to be built seven to eight thousand houses which is a job requires fifteen years. However, we prefer going to the villages.

Prime Minister: You can get there slowly in fifteen years. We rather not meddle with the villages now.<sup>552</sup>

Despite the fact that throughout the 1930s various authorities agreed on settlement of the workers, with their families, near the mines, the detachment of the villager families from their villages was still uncertain. Following the dialogues between Saydam and provincial governor Halit Aksoy, "What about the families of the workers, are they going to stay in their villages or settle down around the mines? This needs a definite decision." "Prime Minister: We shall get there slowly."<sup>553</sup> The inability to reach a consensus on the pattern of worker settlement, indeed, implied an uncertainty of the decision makers on the question of how to reconcile the need to create a permanent work force with the need to preserve the stability of the villager communities.

Instead of creating a purely mining community in the basin, the government preferred to maintain the stability of the villager communities. In the following years, neither Professor Granigg's plan of a worker city nor various projects on worker villages were to be put into practice. The rotational basis of the labor process was preserved to a great extent. The

---

<sup>552</sup> The 3 December 1939 report, p. 30 in *ibid.*

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*; "Vali Halit Aksoy: Amele ailesi köylerinde mi kalacak, Madenler civarında mı yerleşecek ona kat'i bir karar vermek icap eder. Başvekil: Oraya yavaş yavaş gireceğiz."



government and the companies did not attempt to engage in any large-scale housing projects. Instead, they implemented two distinct policies in respect to the categories of the workers. In the late 1930s and in the 1940s they initiated the construction of worker barracks for unskilled mine workers. Villager workers stayed in the barracks for the duration of their work period. On the other hand, worker quarters, with housing for families, were generally granted to the skilled workers, such as official personnel, technicians, engineers and foremen.

The settlement policy of the government and the companies towards the mine workers was compatible to the political concern of the government. A permanent mining community in the company villages nearby the mines would be easily controlled and directed by the companies. By building company villages, the company also built a mining community loyal to the companies. The company villages functioned as the modern means of master servant relationship. The community would provide the obedient and industrious mine worker who became solely dependent on the income and social services of the companies. However, the same company villages would ironically become the site of labor solidarity, the source of militancy and labor organization. The occupational solidarity and common work experiences would be reproduced in the social life of the community. Instead of creating such a threat with its own hand, the government preferred to keep the majority of the workers at their villages.

The main problem the mine operators faced was the control of the labor market. By constructing worker barracks the mine companies solved the problem of accommodation at low cost. Only a number of skilled work forces were stabilized in the permanent company houses. As they constituted small part of the mining community, housing and provisioning of them would bring small financial burden. On the other hand, rather than settling the unskilled workers in company houses, the government and the companies preferred to stabilize the flow of the mine workers between the mines and their respective villages. Instead of bringing the mine workers under the company controlled space, the already existing villages would be put

under the control of the companies by means of a railway or highway web. Indeed, this solution was less expensive and more functional than the establishment of the permanent mining villages. In this solution, the mine workers would continue to provision themselves with their subsistence farming. Hence, the mine operators would be able to pay workers below the cost of reproduction.

Such a settlement policy was compatible with the needs of the labor process as well. Considering the lack of mechanization, by the late 1930s, the labor process continued to rely on manual labor. As long as the labor machine ratio in the labor process did not change, the unskilled workers continued to prevail over the skilled ones. At this point, the stabilization of the skilled workers in permanent settlements gained priority. As long as the companies controlled the labor mobility between the mines and the villages in accordance with the production targets, the unskilled mine workers in their remaining villages would not create trouble.

#### The Articulation of the Solidarist Discourse to the Social Policy Implementations

In the 1930s, the official bodies began to discuss the Zonguldak mine workers as the prototype of the industrial worker anticipated to be seen in Turkey. The new concern about the living and working conditions of the mine workers rose in parallel with a new interest in the labor conditions in the country. The 1930s began with important discussions among the ruling elite on the creation of an industrial work force in the service of the industrialization program of the state. The new concern on the labor aspect of the economy in general was related strongly to the new economic objectives of the government. The establishment of industrial plants as required by the First Five-Year Industrial Plan was expected to create approximately

15,000 industrial workers.<sup>554</sup> More importantly, when the programs of the industrial plans were put in practice, the state appeared to be sole employer of most of the newly established factories.

From the official point of view, the prospective industrial work force should have been in harmony with the national unity and social cohesion. The expectation of an immediate rise in the number of industrial workers brought about considerable fear of class struggle. From a nationalist populist perspective, such a struggle would endanger social harmony and national unity in society. Indeed, in its 1931 party program, the RPP had already formulated a populist solidarist solution to a potential class struggle in society. Accordingly, it was the principle of the party to perceive Turkish society as not made up of antagonistic classes, but a as community composed of professional groups of various sorts, each of which has a place in individual and social life in accordance to the division of labor.<sup>555</sup> For the stability of the national community, every kind of threat including class struggle, should have been removed by the state. In this model the state appeared as the main regulatory body, playing its part in establishing harmony and solidarity between the classes.<sup>556</sup>

By the mid 1930s, the fear on a class struggle became more obvious as the industrial plans were put into practice. The government had to find appropriate means for controlling the newly rising working class. The program of the First- Five-Year Industrial plan signaled a labor code against the destructive affect of the prospective working class. Accordingly, a new labor law was penned to meet the requirements of the new developing industry. The law would prevent the proletariat from becoming a destructive power by arranging the work relations in harmony with the national interests. The individual rights and benefits were to be subordinated

---

<sup>554</sup> Afetinan, *Devletçilik İlkesi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Birinci Beş Yıllık Sanayi Planı 1933* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1972), pp. 33 and 134.

<sup>555</sup> For the definition of the principle of the populism in the R.P.P's 1931 party congress and its reference to solidarist social model, İlkin, Selim. "Devletçilik Döneminin İlk Yıllarında İşçi Sorunlarına Yaklaşım ve 1932 İş Kanunu Tasarısı," *Ortaadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Gelişme Dergisi Özel Sayısı* (1978), p. 270.

<sup>556</sup> For instance, in their report the American specialists centered the state in resolving labor capital dispute. They emphasized the harmony in Turkish society and role of the state to maintain this harmony by eliminating possible class struggles. See Hines et al., *Kitap I.*, Cilt 1, 2, pp. 187-191.

for the benefit of the nation. The law was to establish harmonious and cohesive relations between the labor and the capital.<sup>557</sup> When the labor code was enacted in 1936, through banning the right of strike and all kinds of civil labor organizations free from state surveillance, it provided legal grounds for a solidarist solution to the class struggles.

In the first part of the 1930s, the working conditions in the Zonguldak coal field constituted a point of reference for various debates concerning the nature of industrial labor.<sup>558</sup> As the state's interest in the coal field acquired new impetus, the Zonguldak mine workers became subject of investigation. In this context, while the government attempted to restructure the coal basin in harmony with its economic objectives, it also began to scrutinize their conditions. By the mid-1930s, the government imposed set of social policy measures towards mine workers. The living and working conditions became the subject of improvement.

During the 1930s, the mine companies in Zonguldak basin started to take several social policy measures in the basin. Providing well being of the workers emerged as prerequisite for labor productivity and for social harmony between the classes. The mining companies first introduced a meal service to the workers. The workers paid a small sum for the meal at the end of the month. It was the Türk-İş Company that first started serving daily meals for the mine workers in 1932. The RPP provincial branch honored the food service of Türk-İş as respect for the Turkish working class.<sup>559</sup> Kömür-İş and Türk-Kömür followed Türk-İş in food service. The Türk-Kömür Company began serving food to its workers for sixteen piasters per two, and eight piasters per one meal.<sup>560</sup> The companies served two meals a day for the mineshaft workers since the daily shifts were not suitable for a three-meal system. The instructions İsmet İnönü gave during his visit to the coal basin in 1938 required all companies

---

<sup>557</sup> Afetinan, pp.33.

<sup>558</sup> For such debates on the work force in terms of economic variables, see Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ali İktisat Meclisi Umumi Katıplık, *Türkiyede Sanayi Nasıl Teesüs ve İnkişaf Edebilir? Neşriyat Serisi A. No.12* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Müdevvenat Matbaası, Ankara,1933), pp. 18-19; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ali İktisat Meclisi Umumi Katıplık, *Madenlerimizden En İyi Surette İstifade Şekli Nedir Neşriyat Serisi A. No.14* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Müdevvenat Matbaası, Ankara,1933), pp. 10-11; Muhlis Ete, "Sanayide Rasyonalizasyon" in *Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti*, pp. 690-691 and pp. 693-695; Walker D. Hines et al., *Kitap I*, Cilt 1,2, pp. 107-108; Afetinan, pp. 135.

<sup>559</sup> CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 January 1935, 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], pp.38 and 66.

to serve inexpensive food to the workers. EKI began serving low cost food on February 6 1939. Workers paid 400 piasters per month for a 3500-calorie table d'hote per day.<sup>561</sup> The local press comment on the table d'hote system exercised in the coal basin as a sign of social progressivism and caring for the working class.<sup>562</sup>

The accommodation of the workers during their work period came on the agenda of the companies as well. Despite the fact that Law No. 151 had stipulated that appropriate wards and bathrooms be built for workers, since application of law had not been followed up, the mine workers had to take shelter around the mines with their own efforts. However, as of the 1930s, the companies began to give priority to solving the housing problem. Although, not as big as the housing project prompted after the World War II, the companies built several worker barracks near the mines.

The companies constructed two different types of housing for the skilled and unskilled workers. For the temporary mine workers coming from the nearby villages several wards were constructed. For the overseers, technicians, engineers and administrative staff, one-storied detached houses were built. The first attempts came from the İş Bankasi companies, Kömür-İş and Türk-İş. In 1935, Kömür-İş built one-storied houses with small gardens in Kozlu. The new quarter, called *Kılıç Mahallesi*, was allotted to the civil servants and administrative cadres. The Company built two worker barracks in İhsaniye as well.<sup>563</sup> It was in 1936 when the workers first moved into in these barracks. In the same year, the construction of new accommodations was planned.<sup>564</sup> Finally, in 1939 the Company completed its large scale housing projects.<sup>565</sup>

Plans for the worker barracks and Kılıç quarter were published in a periodical named

---

<sup>560</sup> Zonguldak Gazetesi, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 1936.

<sup>561</sup> Ümran Nazif Yiğiter, *Kömür Havzasında*, p.74

<sup>562</sup> Zonguldak community center publication *Karaelmas* wrote that since 1938 workers were served hot meals regularly everyday for an insignificant amount of 4 liras which deserved to be praised. See Naci Erali, "Halkevcilerin Tetkikleri" (Ereğli Kömür Havzasında Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesinin Bugünkü Durumu), *Karaelmas*, Number3,(1941), p.11.

<sup>563</sup> Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, *İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1936), p.2

<sup>564</sup> Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, *İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1937), p.3

<sup>565</sup> Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, *İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1938) and Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi, *İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1939).

*Arkitekt* by architect Seyfi Arkan in 1935.<sup>566</sup> Other than houses for the workers, engineers and civil servants, the plans included a public school, a tennis court, a volleyball court and a movie theater besides the houses. The plan of Kılıç clearly reflected the hierarchical work relations in the design of houses and their places in the quarter. The residence of the director, for instance, was placed at the top of the hill. The interior plans of the houses and the number of the rooms also differentiated according to the status of the employees. In the period between 1935 and 1939 the Kılıç quarter arose on the hillside of Kozlu with its 'A' houses for engineers, 'B' category houses for civil servants, 'C' category houses for workers, and barracks for bachelors.

Similarly, in 1935, Türk-İş Company of İş Bankası, started to build two quarters for workers and engineers at Üzülmüş, near the semi-coke factory in Zonguldak.<sup>567</sup> The accommodation priority was given again to the civil servants, engineers, technicians and for a limited number of foremen. Following the national companies, in a short time the Italian company Türk Kömür, implemented the same social program in Kandilli.<sup>568</sup> By 1937, EKI followed up the social projects of the İş Bankası's companies. By 1939 EKI completed the construction of large wards with 500 beds near mines in Asma, Gelik, and Çaydamarı. Next to the wards, EKI built a canteen and shower units to provide additional services to the workers. However, after 1940, the wards were opened for the use of the workers.<sup>569</sup> By 1940 worker's pavilions were scattered throughout several production areas in the basin.<sup>570</sup> By the end of 1940, more than half of the mine workers inhabited the 106 worker's wards.

The company quarters and the worker wards built by the national companies received praise both from the local newspapers and the journals of the period. Zonguldak newspaper

---

<sup>566</sup> Seyfettin Arkan, "Zonguldak M.K.I. Amele Evleri Mahallesi Umumi Planı," *Arkitekt* 5, no. 9 (1935), pp. 253-258.

<sup>567</sup> Ibid.

<sup>568</sup> Zonguldak Gazetesi, 28 Sonkanun 1336.

<sup>569</sup> See Etibank 1939 Yılı Financial Statement and Board of Directors Report, p.5 and Etibank 1939 Inspection Committee Report ( n.p.: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940), p.19.

reported the speech of the head of the RPP provincial branch during the ceremony held to celebrate laying the foundation of the buildings in Üzülmüş zone.

Dear party chief has enlightened us about how workers and employers are in a state of harmony and equality and how they trust each other, how they are united as one complete soul and he has illuminated the populism and national unity ideals of our party which has eliminated class differences and privileges.<sup>571</sup>

The words stated by head of the RPP provincial branch were part of the solidarist discourse of the time. As stated in the column next to the news report,

Here the employee and the employer are all together and placed in a row. ..the employees and the businessmen are all at the same level. The worker has his hot meal day and night, sleeps in a clean bed...they have bathrooms, they wear different outfits for work and for off-duty hours, they can do their shopping in shops selling at cost prices...and they also have the opportunity to apply to a benevolent association whenever they need assistance.<sup>572</sup>

The solidarist discourse of the newspaper emphasized the harmony and solidarity between the classes through pointing out how the powerful class protects the weak one. In the August 26 1935 issue, the newspaper described the social services of the Kömür-İş Company as follows:

The society has show great affection to the workers through dealing with their health and social conditions closely. It has given them human rights,... has served them warm meals, and put their way of living in order. It has begun to construct a modern city, through building houses special to the workers, clerks, bachelors and the married.

The society has also built schools, gymnasiums, play grounds and entertainment areas, parks, cinemas, theaters and such establishments which will meet every kind of urgent requirements.<sup>573</sup>

*Maden*, a journal published by the *Türk Maden Mühendisleri Cemiyeti* (Association of Turkish Mining Engineers) praised the modern social facilities constructed by *İş Bankası* companies as a victorious success of national capital.<sup>574</sup> The journal presented the social services of the *İş Bankası* companies as the symbols of social development in the basin and

---

<sup>570</sup> There were numbers of pavilions near the Çaydamarı, Baştarla, Yenişehir, Asma, Esen, Karadon, Kilimli, İncirharmanı, İhsaniye and Kireçlik mines. Sadreddin Enver, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzamız* (n.p:Etibank Yayınından, nd.), p.79-80.

<sup>571</sup> *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, Number, 8 July, 1935

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>573</sup> *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 26 August, 1935.

<sup>574</sup> "Madencilğe Dair haberler," *Maden*, 1, no. 2, pp. 32-34

the compassion of the new regime toward the working class. The affluent level the mine workers supposed to reach during the Republic period registered the success of the new regime as well. An article in *MTA Journal* (publication of the Mining Study and Research Institute), emphasized the superiority of the new regime by comparing the living conditions of mine workers both in the Ottoman period and in the Republic period. Accordingly, during the Ottoman rule, workers had been made to work as if they were animals who deserved to be whipped, in a way they had been confined in a dungeon.<sup>575</sup>

The social policy practices of İş Bankası became concrete with the reforms of the Republican period as well as the government's interest in the working class. The article praised the İş Bankası companies as "the welfare of the worker has the priority above anything else, especially for the new established and national organizations." Accordingly, on the agenda and construction programs of the Kömür-iş and Türk-iş 'welfare of worker' takes the lead. In order to obtain their welfare, they all worked without pursuing any benefit or profit. The companies all regarded the workers as a brother and a citizen.<sup>576</sup>

The modern company quarters together with their houses for workers and civil servants, cafeteria, laundry room, sales shops and the public school impressed the official visitors deeply. State officials seldom inspected the basin. The developments in the Zonguldak coal basin signified the success of the state's industrialization attempts as well. After Mustafa Kemal's visit to the coal basin in 1931, İsmet İnönü, Celal Bayar and Refik Saydam had visited the area several times. During those visits not only the improvement of living and working conditions for the workers had been praised, but the success of social policy practices of the new regime had become the subject of propaganda.

The social policy implementations were in harmony with the solidarist solution of the state to the labor question. As the solidarist model offered solidarity between the classes it

---

<sup>575</sup> B.K.Çağlar, "Randıman ve Metot," *MTA Mecmuası*, 2, no.1 (İkinci kanun, 1937), p.36

<sup>576</sup> Ibid. p. 39.



easily merged with paternalist techniques of labor control of the companies in the basin. The paternalist social policies, on the one hand, legitimized the asymmetrical power relation between the companies and the mine workers. On the other, hand they legitimized the solidarist populist discourse of the new regime. In the end, the state and the national companies as the representative of the new regime appeared to be the main arbitrators for the expected conflict between employees and employers.

In general, the mine workers were perceived by the official actors and the companies as a rural mass who had ties with the land and lived in the realm of the economic mentality based on agriculture as their means of subsistence. Mine workers were described as poor, defenseless and passive masses exploited by land proprietors, recruitment agents, gang bosses and mining companies with foreign capital. This easily manipulated community would achieve a certain living quality and affluent conditions only through the guidance and protection of the government and national companies. By means of social services, the national companies would not only establish control over the daily lives of the mine workers, but also would teach the mine workers how to eat, sleep and work. Shouldering the mission of modernizing the life manners of the mine workers, the companies joined the social engineering of the ruling elite as well.

On the other hand, the hierarchical work relations were reproduced and legitimized through the discriminatory social policies towards the different segments of the workers. As a managerial strategy the paternalist social policies served to create and manipulate the effective hierarchical relations among the workers and between the workers and the companies. The original rationale of industrial paternalism desired to counter the shortage of skilled labor.<sup>577</sup> Firms partially subsidized a wide range of social services so as to attract workers and encourage them to become a permanent and reliable workforce. Housing, mutual

---

<sup>577</sup> For the use of paternalism as a managerial strategy see Reid, Donald. "Industrial Paternalism: Discourse and Practice in Nineteenth-Century French Mining and Metallurgy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 27, no. 4 (October, 1985)

benefits and pension funds, stores, schools and religious centers were among the most common institutions offered to the labor force.<sup>578</sup> Considering the discriminatory policy of the companies, most of the social services were provided particularly to the skilled work force. The companies concentrated on the immediate needs of the mine workers during their work period. Similar to the previous decades, they followed two distinct sets of social policies towards the manual workers and the skilled ones. The low cost production strategy incorporated in the low cost social provisioning policy, which gave privilege to the skilled workers. The cost of social provisioning prevented the companies from undertaking large-scale social policy implementations. The majority of the manual work force, hence, was accommodated in crowded barracks and their families did not receive any of the social facilities in their villages.

However, the limited social services towards the mine workers enabled the state and the mining companies to present themselves as not the oppressors of the workers, but as the workers' natural intermediary in dealings with the heavy working conditions. The social provisions of the companies, the *Amele Birliĝi*'s health and insurance services, the Zonguldak People House's donations and social services all served in create a paternalist appearance for the state and the national companies. In such a picture the companies and the state appeared to be the sole protectors of the poor people of the basin. The paternalist management considered itself to be the guardian of order. By means of a set of social services the companies tried to contain the mine workers during their work period in the mines. However, just as the paternalist outlook of the companies defined them as a malleable and easily shaped work force, they failed to oversight the subject position of them.

---

<sup>578</sup> Reid, *Industrial Paternalism*, p.582

## CHAPTER 6

### LIVING IN-BETWEEN THE MINES AND THE VILLAGES IN THE CONTEST WITH THE RULER

#### The Mine Workers, Patterns of Solidarity and Means of Struggle

The miner workers of the Ereğli-Zonguldak coal basin mostly were perceived by the official circles and the mining companies from an elitist perspective. The mine workers appeared in the elitist discourse as a rural mass, living in inertia with poverty and misery. This poor mass was identified as victims of the aghas, the small mine operators and the canny recruitment agents. In addition, they were identified as villagers rather than workers. Their continual attachment to farming and their unwillingness to maintain mining as their sole livelihood made them in the eyes of the elite a conservative mass. As the natural outcome of the same elitist perspective, the long lasting dynamism established between villagers and the mining was neglected. Hence, the mine workers were viewed by the authorities as poor and humble peasants rather than workers, or as a mass subject to the exploitation of the profit-oriented mine operators, rather than the subjects of their lives at the work site and in the villages.

The flexible work pattern that the mine workers developed between mining and farming led to such an illusion. The same blind spot underestimated the workers' nearly one century long working tradition in the mines. As the authorities did not understand the dynamic relation between mining and the villager communities in the basin, they continued to see the

mine workers simply as villagers seeking to make a living in mining. Contrarily, while the mine workers developed a flexible work pattern between mining and farming, working in the mines became an indispensable part of their lives. Their temporary existence in the mines was not a casual or untidy one. It was rather a cyclical one arranged in accordance with the agricultural cycles. As the legacy of the first forced labor regime their work and off times followed each other in an order, covering nearly half a month of work and half a month off.

The rotational work pattern of the mine workers was not a sign of their villager nature. Rather, it was a pattern, a strategy the mine workers followed in their favor. They turned mining into an opportunity in their lives. Their temporary existence in the mines made them able to resist the hardship of the working conditions. In pursuit of livelihood, they integrated small scale agricultural activities with wage earning. Combining coal mining and agriculture activities gave them the opportunity to maximize their human and material forces. Because they could depend on subsistence security from agriculture, they responded with more flexibility than the permanent workers to the hard working conditions. At both sowing and harvest times, the mine workers stayed in the fields and were less interested in gaining supplemental income in good harvest years. When the crops yielded less than subsistence, they resorted to mine work to support themselves. They became, hence, less reliable, more autonomous, mine workers.

The continual attachment of the mine workers to the land did not prevail over their miner identity. From the late nineteenth century on, while the villages near the mines were becoming hewer-villages or chock maker-villages, their humble villagers were also becoming hewers, chock makers or timbermen. Similarly a mine worker from north east of the Black Sea region became a drift developer along with his identity of a villager from Rize or Hopa. As long as the son of the hewer or timberman from a particular region or village maintained his father's occupation in the mines, working in the mines became an indispensable part of the daily life.

The articulation of the villager identity to the occupational identity made the identity of the mine worker a multi-layered one. This identity stemmed from the compatibility of the seasonal work between the mines and farms, and the similarity of the work habits in the mines and farms both of which relied on manual labor. The dependency of the mining companies on the local communal networks particularly in the recruitment and management process of labor further brought the village-based communal ties to the heart of the work site. In this process, the villager and occupational identities of the worker merged into each other rather than juxtaposed one another temporarily. Hence the basin's workers made their identity on the ground of this very dynamism between villages and mines.

Similarly, the elitist outlook despised the solidarity between the mine workers that stemmed from these very work relations. There was strong solidarity between the mine workers, bearing traces of their multi-layer identity. There was both a vertical solidarity between the different occupational groups in the underground work process, and a horizontal solidarity between the workers from the same village or region. Although there was a strong regionalism among the mine workers of the basin, this regionalism did not turn into hostility. The means of labor control brought about solidarity between the workers from the same regions or villages. Furthermore, the shared work experiences and shared living conditions in the mines created vertical solidarity between different occupational categories of manual labor and a common identity between the laborers as mine worker. The basin's labor history can not be understood without considering the reciprocal relations between the means of labor control and means of labor solidarity.

The regional segments did not prevail over the shared work experience in the mines, but accompanied it. The underground work process was physically the most exacting, dangerous and uncertain. Psychological burden of the underground work, deaths, accidents and illness created a sense of common fate. Furthermore, the crew constituted a main unit of

labor organization. The craft nature of the underground work and the dependence of the work mates on each other enforced the group solidarity and occupational identity among the crew members. The vulnerability of the wages under the piece rate system also created a common sense of uncertainty and hatred of the employers. The hardship of the underground labor process alienated those who shared its hardship from those who did not. The high salaried white collar workers were at the same time the targets of the workers' hatred.

The common experience of the mine workers, such as the unjust piece rates, the inhumane treatment, over work, production pressure, fines and wage cuts, the payment of high salaries to foreign workers united the workers against the mining companies. The strikes waves in the basin prove the existence of solidarity between the occupational groups working in the underground and surface jobs. There were a number of strikes in the basin between 1908 and 1913. The strikes were initiated mostly by the surface workers, and spread among the underground workers.<sup>579</sup> The railway workers, the pit workers and the port workers went on work stoppage in order to force their demands. Low salaries, arbitrary penalties, wage cuts, and the foremen's inhumane treatment constituted the main themes of the labor unrest.<sup>580</sup> The recurrence of strikes indicates that the workers resorted to work stoppage as a means of imposing their demands. In June and July 1923 the mine workers once again resorted to work stoppage against the Ereğli Company, protesting the unjust piece work system, wage cuts and fines and high payment to the foreign workers. Along side the transportation workers, the coal washing factory workers and underground workers participated in the strikes with their families.<sup>581</sup> The strike waves prove the existence of labor solidarity between the manual workers of different occupational groups from different regional origins. There is no doubt that

---

<sup>579</sup> For the 1908 strikes in the basin, see Quataert, *Disintegration*, pp. 64-66; Sina Çıladı, *Zonguldak Havzasındaki İşçi Hareketleri ve İşçi Örgütleri 1908-1993* (Karadeniz Ereğlisi: İlke Yayınları), pp. 3-4.

<sup>580</sup> The militancy of the workers turned into hatred against the Ereğli Company during the World War I. The evening of the day Zonguldak was bombarded by the Russian army, a few hundred armed workers from Gelik mine moved to Zonguldak, planning to attack the Ereğli Company's headquarters and kill its officials. The incidents had only been prevented by the declaration of martial law in the region. Yunt, pp. 54-55.

<sup>581</sup> For the 1923's strikes in the basin, see Ahmet Naim, *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası* and Turgut Etingü, *Kömür Havzasında İlk Grev* (İstanbul: Koza Yayınları), pp. 78-98.

the work site and the shared working experience prevailed over the regional differences. The mine work constituted the space/experience dimension of a vertical solidarity between different sections of the manual labor force.

Similarly the regional identities of the workers brought about a horizontal solidarity between the fellow townsmen in the work site. While the villages constituted the spatial dimension of this solidarity, the local communal relations constituted its experience dimension. Due to the symbiotic relation between the mine operators and the village communities, the mine workers easily transmitted the village based solidarity to the work site. Workers from the same region or village solved their accommodation and nourishment problems cooperatively.

Their regional segmentation of the work process gave the workers the opportunity to work with their fellowmen in the same job categories. Crew organization and the piece work system allowed them to solve the problem of supervision within the crew. The worker headman, who was usually from the same village, managed the work process. His authority over the crew members was derived from both his craft knowledge and his local personal ties with the crew members. Albeit coercive in itself, the patronage relation between the worker headman and the employees provided work discipline and protection for employees simultaneously.

The village based community relations gave the worker headmen excessive power both at the work site and in the labor market. The worker headman was able to utilize this power both to oppress his fellows in the labor process, and to impose the collective demands of his followers over the mine operators in the labor market. The dependency of the mine operators on the worker headmen as labor recruiter and as supervisor of the employees strengthened the hand of the worker headman particularly when the labor shortage increased competition for labor power. At such moments, the worker headman acted as representative

of his fellow workers, trying to maximize piece rates in favor of the crews under his control. The informal networks of the mine workers enabled them to organize under the leadership of a headman. The headman acted as representative of the crews, advocating the rights of the workers at work site and in the labor market. Hence the crew unit constituted of the nucleus of the organized labor movement under the leadership of the worker headman from the same village community or the region.

There was no doubt that crew based labor organization brought about the coercion of the crew members by the headman. It was the same authority of the worker headman which oppressed, yet at the same time, defended the employees in the mines. The same community ties became the means of coercive relations between the employees and headman. Nevertheless the headman stood apart from the other local authorities such as aghas, muhtars and local mine operators. The headman was involved in the actual work process as worker, and so was subjected to the oppression of overseer or engineer. However, the aghas and muhtars did not actively participated work process. The authority of worker headman over the workers was not derived from within the work relations but solely from his position in the hierarchical relations of the village community.

The agency of the mine workers can not be understood without considering the complex set of relations within the village community and between the village communities and the mine operators. Actually, the mine workers of the basin resorted to a variety of practices to improve their living and working conditions. Although they avoided direct forms of struggle with the mine operators and the companies, they tried to subvert the already established power relations in the work place through resorting to various means. This gave their practices a political dimension. Although they were generally assumed to be passive and guided by the local actors, they manipulated the already established work system between the mines and village communities to their benefit. Both the solidarity stemming from the village



community and from the workplace provided the foundation for collective action. Crew organization under the leadership of fellow worker headmen was typical of this.

Along with such organized form of action to take control of the work site, the mine workers resorted to various sorts of fragmented and unstructured practices. The means they used to improve their conditions were complex, dynamic, spontaneous and diverse. In such a wide repertoire of practices, they tried to utilize the symbiotic interaction between the mines and village communities, yet without challenging it. They subverted the established order in the basin from within, by many different practices. They transformed the opportunities that stemmed from such things as the crew organization, labor shortage or the health services, social aid, the visits of official bodies, petition mechanisms, into favorable situations. For instance particularly by the mid 1930s, when the mining companies were forced to increase coal production under the state pressure, the mine workers effectively used their means against the companies to increase their benefits. They utilized the area that the mine operators could not access without the help of the local actors. As long as the mine operators did not take control of villages and community networks, the mine workers used this area against them whenever they caught opportunity.

Alongside the means of local networks, the mine workers resorted to official channels to strengthen their stance. They turned to the representatives of the state such as Zonguldak deputies, the RPP local branch, and the *Amele Birliđi* to improve their living and working conditions. The RPP's local congress and the visits of Zonguldak deputies provided the mine workers with means to conduct their demands to the official level. RPP provincial congresses, party inspection committees of the RPP, inspections of the provincial organizations of the party passed their requests and complaints to the General Secretary of the RPP. Most of the requests were not met, but some of them became subject to investigation. And, even though the complainers could not achieve results through the official channels, they were some times

able to make the officials take action.

Numerous documents produced by the various official and civil authorities, experts, top executives of mining companies and several other inspection and assessment commissions illuminate the working and living conditions of the mine workers and their resistance practices.<sup>582</sup> The conflict in the basin together with the villagers and mine workers against the government officials and mining companies can be followed in the reports. The mine workers appeared in the reports as active subjects who strove for solutions in their favor. The complaints and requests submitted by the mine workers to the RPP's channels and the observations of the officials include numerous examples about the repressive living and working conditions. When the documents are examined, the experience of the mine workers and their activism come to light. The mine workers appear as subjects indicating their opposition to the severe working conditions. In their petitions they not only ask for the improvement of their working conditions, they also complain about tax laws, oppression, unlawful practices and the abuse of government officials. The complaints and requests stated in the reports give us a great deal of information about the tense relations of the mine workers with both the state and the mine companies.

### Wages and Over Work as Subjects of Contention

Pressure for over time and the uncertainty of wages constituted sources of tension between the mine workers and the mining companies. Particularly, in the late 1930s, the

---

<sup>582</sup> Both RPP deputies and representatives of RPP provincial organization had great deal of contribution in establishing elitist viewpoint. For the reports, see 8/11/1937 Catalog no. [PMRA 490 01 /721 464 2]; 16/1/1939 Catalog no: [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2]; 8/1/1940 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /721 465 1]; 7/8/1940 Catalog no. [PMRA,490..1.0.0/515.2065..4]; 24/10/1945 Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0/491.1978..1]. For the reports of inspection commissions of the companies, see *Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1936); *Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1937); *Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1938); *Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu* (Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1939); *Eti Bank Bilanço ve İdare Meclisi Raporu Sene 1939* (np: np, nd); *Eti Bank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (n.p: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940); *BUMH, Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1940 Yılı Raporu* (İstanbul: Fazilet Matbaası, 1941). For the reports of official, political and professional authorities; see 23/6/1938, Catalog no. [PMRA 030 10 /174 2061]; 31/3/1941 Catalog no.[PMRA: 30.11.1.0/ 114.24..1.]; 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3.]; and 24/10/1945 Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0/ 491.1978..1].

tension turned into open conflict. During the second part of the 1930s the mining companies exerted pressure on the mine workers to produce more than they had produced in the previous years. The main reason behind this pressure was the state's increasing demand for coal and the high production targets the government imposed on the companies. Naturally, the companies transmitted this pressure to the mine workers by imposing over time. In a short time, the production pressure with low wages became the subject of tension between the mine workers and the companies. The mine workers did not remain inertia. They responded to the pressure of the companies, resorting to the official bodies and made their complaints known.

In their 1937 report the RPP Zonguldak deputies described the cruel treatment of the Etibank administration towards its mine workers who, in response, had left the Etibank pits. Hence, the production rates had declined due the excessive pressure on the workers.<sup>583</sup> Similarly, the mine workers had not met the demand for over time work, as the EKI's director Bekir Vehbi Ergene stated in 1939. The workers had escaped from the pits when they were asked to work over time.<sup>584</sup> The over time work was not attractive to the mine workers for two reasons. First, most of them arranged their work duration in accordance to the total earnings they needed. The other deterrent factor was the tax burden on the wages. If their daily wages were set at the beginning of their work period they could calculate the tax cuts from their total earning. As the income tax increased in parallel with the increase in their total earning, the over time work became detrimental to the mine workers. To reduce the tax share in their total wage, hence, they arranged their work duration and rejected over time work.<sup>585</sup>

Along with tax deduction and over time work pressure, fines were another subject of discontent among the mine workers. The Director of the Basin Head Office, Nişbay, stated his impressions when he inspected the pits. He pointed out that the daily wages of the "poor

---

<sup>583</sup> 8/11/1937, Catalog no. [PMRA: 490 01 721 464 2], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1937, p.5

<sup>584</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3]. 3/12/1939 report, p.6

<sup>585</sup> Ibid., pp .3-4

workers" were already low. Nevertheless, the wages were cut by the engineers for various reasons, some times without informing the workers.<sup>586</sup> Another document proves Nişbay's impression. Araploğlu Emin from Çolakpehlivan village complained about Kömür-İş Company, claiming that although he worked by thirty-one days in July 1939, only twenty-two days of his work were registered, so he received pay lower than he had calculated.<sup>587</sup>

The low wage rates constituted another source of discontent among the mine workers. Although Law No. 151 required a commission to determine a minimum wage scale for all of the whole workers in the basin, the commission did not perform its responsibility regularly. Until 1940 the commission met only three times.<sup>588</sup> But still the companies did not adjust the real wages as required by the commission. The wages were determined by the companies in accordance to the market price of coal. The wages, hence, fluctuated above and below the minimum wage scale. In parallel to the increasing state intervention, a new minimum wage scale was determined by the commission in 1938. However, the minimum wage scale was not to the benefit of the workers. The workers were highly critical about the 1938 minimum wage scale. In 1939, the Kozlu workers of the Kömür İş and Türk Kömür companies complained to the wage commission that it determined minimum wages even under the real wages in the basin. Accordingly, although the hewers had been paid more than eighty piasters a day for many years, the commission had set the minimum wage for hewers at eighty piasters.<sup>589</sup> Some other workers who received wages at lower than the minimum wage scale criticized the companies for not complying with the 1938 scale. The mine workers of the Kozlu Incir Harmanı pit complained that company paid less than the minimum wages determined by the state.<sup>590</sup>

---

<sup>586</sup> Nişbay's Report, 23/6/1938 Catalog no. [PMRA 030 10 /174 2061], p.27.

<sup>587</sup> 8/1/1940 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939 ,p.14

<sup>588</sup> BUMH, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1944 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*, p. 134.

<sup>589</sup> 8/1/1940 Catalog no. [PMRA: 490.1.0.0 /721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939 p.14.

<sup>590</sup> Ibid., p.13.

Table 10. Average Daily Wages of the Zonguldak Mine Workers between 1933 and 1940

Years	Underground Wage (Piasters)	Surface Wage (Piasters)	Average Wage (Piasters)
1933	102	122	109
1934	97	127	107
1935	92	128	106
1936	96	128	104
1937	102	132	112
1938	109	127	114
1939	111	116	112
1940	115	114	115

Source: Yiğiter, p. 74.

The piece rate wage system continued to be a source of discontent and tension. Particularly, when the piece rate was set at the end of the work period, or at the middle of the month, after the overseer or engineer assured the performance of the workers, the workers were unable to estimate their wages and lost their control over the wage set up process. To encourage the mining crews, some of the companies paid in accordance to the minimum wage scale and to encourage particularly the mining crews, added bonuses for extra loaded cars.<sup>591</sup> The third method was to set up a piece rate at the beginning of the month. However, the wage cuts and fines made the total earning uncertain for all the piece rate workers, even those who knew their daily wages beforehand. Some of the companies imposed on the mining crews, production quotas to pay what they promised at the beginning of the work period. When the crew did not meet the quota imposed by the engineers, their wages were cut. For instance, the mine workers hired by the Italian Türk Kömür Company in the Kozlu pits accused the company of not realizing wages of the day when the workers could not meet their quotas.<sup>592</sup> Hence, the fine system brought intense discontent among the piece workers.

In one or another method, the piece rate payment system made wages uncertain for the underground workers. Even if they had a part in the piece rate set up, they lost control on the total sum at the end of the work period, due to the wage cuts, taxes and fines. Although the permanent workers could estimate their wages, particularly the rotational workers, working in different pits with different geological features could not know what they would earn.

<sup>591</sup> For the different measures in piece rate wage methods, see 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 3/12/1939 report, pp. 5-6.

<sup>592</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

Furthermore, most of the piece rate workers did not rely on the companies' accounting of the wages. Hence, the uncertainty in the wages was a source of tension among the mine workers. As EKI director Ergene stated out, they demanded to know their exact wages before starting working. One of the reasons behind their reluctance to work more was the uncertainty of the wages.<sup>593</sup>

The lack of confidence of the mine workers in the companies was derived from their inability to control their wages. For instance, mine workers from Ereğli Çaylıoğlu village complained about the mine engineers who were sent to the villages to recruit men. Accordingly, the companies or mine operators did not pay the amount promised by their engineers during the recruitment process.<sup>594</sup> The workers particularly complained about the arbitrary account of the company men on their wages. The overseers and engineers were the actors in the price set up. To increase their control in the calculation of the wages, the mine workers demanded a proper set of the wages and regular registration of the amounts they produced.

Furthermore, the daily wages of the first and last working days of a monthly shift were not realized and the workers who recognized this deduction objected to the situation. For instance, the workers of the Kömür-İş and the Türk-İş companies accused the companies of not paying the first and the last day of the work period.<sup>595</sup> Some of the workers complained about the date of payday, particularly those who worked for fifteen days a month could not leave the work site. For instance, the Ereğli Çaylıoğlu villagers demanded payment of the wages on the sixteenth day of the month.<sup>596</sup> To receive their total earnings they had to wait until the end of the month. The delay for payment became a means of making the workers to stay in the mines and to continue to work.

---

<sup>593</sup> Ibid., pp. .5-6

<sup>594</sup> 8/1/1940, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939 p.13.

<sup>595</sup> Ibid. p.14.

<sup>596</sup> Ibid. p.13.

Actually, the delay in wage payments was an ordinary practice to bind the workers to the pits. The workers suffered long delays of payment. Sometimes they could not receive their earnings at all. Particularly the small mine operators delayed wage payments. In 1934, the Zonguldak deputy Hasan appealed to the General Secretary of the RPP, informing the secretary that particularly the small mine operators deceived some of the mine workers, employing them for years without payment. Since the workers worked in the mines without being registered in the *Amele Birliđi*, they could not pursue their rights by appealing to the courts. The deputy requested the party prevent the misuse of those "poor, ignorant and gullible citizens."<sup>597</sup> In 1935, the mine workers of the Kilimli pits made similar complaints, accusing the mine operators of not paying the wages regularly. For instance, the workers of Naci Bey Pit complained that the mine operators paid neither their previous wages nor the new ones. So, they called for help of the RPP's provincial branch.<sup>598</sup>

The workers of the basin showed their discontent in various ways. For instance EKI director Ergene stated that, "the workers raise hell, when they were paid less than their ordinary wages."<sup>599</sup> The same was true for sea workers who conveyed the extracted coal to ships. In 1937, the sea workers complained about the eighty percent cut from their wages for their *Amele Birliđi* membership and the sea workers required to pay an amount equal to the cut from the mine workers' wages. The sea workers were more organized than the ordinary mine workers. Sea transportation was under their monopoly. Some of the workers demanded abolition of this monopoly and free the entry of other workers to the sea transportation services.<sup>600</sup>

Most of the examples above clearly show that the mine workers were more conscious and sensitive about their wages. As wages constituted an important part of the labor process,

---

<sup>597</sup>Catalog no. [PMRA 490 01/ 721 464 2], Zonguldak deputy Hasan's 13 March 1934 petition.

<sup>598</sup> 16/1/1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 Son kanun 1935, p. 96.

<sup>599</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3]. 3/12/1939 report, p. 5.

<sup>600</sup> 8/11/1937, Catalog no. [ PMRA 490 01.0.0 / 721 464 2], the inspection report of the Mardin deputy, 1936, pp. 11-12 .

supposedly the poor and ignorant villagers of the basin seem to have been more aware of their interests. The archives do not say anything about the occupational category or status of the workers who were able to make the official body aware of the wage disputes. However, there are no doubt they were underground workers, most of whom came from the nearby villages. In one way or another, the mine workers tried to take wages under their control. As the wage disputes show, the workers clearly requested the mine operators establish a properly working record system for wages. Due to the piece rate wage system, counting the numbers of cars loaded by the mine workers became a crucial issue. The records of the loaded cars directly determined the wages. Similarly, to protect their rights, the workers demanded a well run documentation system. For instance, the workers of the Gelik and Kandilli pits complained of the companies dismissing workers without valid reasons. They demanded the companies document the reasons for the dismissals.<sup>601</sup>

The official bodies and directors stressed the rarity of wage disputes and saw the documented complaints as individual cases of discontent.<sup>602</sup> The documented complaints of the workers represented a wide spread discontent of the workers about wage issues. Concerning the limited chances of the workers in delivering their complaints to official bodies, most probably there were many such complaints which remained undocumented or did not reach official bodies. Therefore, along with the quantity of such complaints their content reveals to a great extent the already existing tensions between the mine workers and the mine operators.

#### The Companies Retracing of the Forced Labor Regime and the Response of the Mine Workers

Until the mid-1930s the mining companies tried to solve the problem of labor recruitment together with the local actors within the informal local networks. As long as the

---

<sup>601</sup> 8/1/1940, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939, p.13.

<sup>602</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 3/12/1939 report, p. 5.



companies received adequate numbers of mine workers, they did not interfere with the local mechanisms of the recruitment process. However, by the mid-1930s, the state's increasing need for coal brought about a considerable production pressure over the basin. The mine worker became inadequate in number to meet the increasing demand in production. The labor shortage compelled the mine operators to find more workers to attain their production targets. At this moment their loose control over the labor market became problematic. The labor shortage accelerated the competition for the extra number of workers between the mining companies. Furthermore, the recruitment of workers began to impose a financial burden on the companies. Until mid-1939 the companies paid 85,000 Turkish Liras to the labor recruiters and other intermediaries in return for the labor supply.<sup>603</sup> As labor became short and competition increased, the mine workers turned this situation in their advantage, demanding more wages than in previous years.

The worker headmen came on the scene as the leaders of the underground crews. By 1939 nearly 15,000 mine workers organized around the six hundred to seven hundred worker headmen.<sup>604</sup> The companies became in a fierce competition to attract the worker headmen with their fellow villager employees. As the workers saw worker headmen as the protectors of their rights against the companies, they obeyed their authority with great trust. In order to bind the workers to their pits, the mine companies had to persuade first the worker headmen. Most of the company men hatred the worker headmen and described the informal recruitment as "worker trading." They accused the worker headmen of using the workers as their "capital."<sup>605</sup> The worker headman was defined as a "herdsman" driving their followers.<sup>606</sup> Such hate-filled

---

<sup>603</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report, p.1

<sup>604</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>605</sup> Ibid., p.1.

<sup>606</sup> For instance Yersel who was assigned to head of the recruitment office of the İş Bankası Companies, defined the worker headmen as "*sürü başları*," (herdsmen) and the recruitment process as "*sefalet trafiği*" (flow of the workers in misery). Yersel, pp. 13 and 19.

expressions clearly reflected both the elitist perspective of the ruling class and their view of the local forms of labor organization.

By the late 1930s the companies sought to take control of the labor market by eliminating the intermediaries between them and the mine workers. For this end first the İş Bankası companies established a recruitment bureau in 1938.<sup>607</sup> Following the İş Bankası companies, the other companies called for a cooperative solution. They soon came on an agreement to implement the system of attaching the villages to the mines from 1 August 1939 on. Binding particular villages to particular pits would eliminate the headmen from the recruitment process. The village-based allocation of the mine workers would at the same time restrict the free movement of the workers between the mines and, hence, would stabilize the work force. The companies expected to lower the wage rates, which had increased thanks to the labor shortage and fierce competition between the companies.<sup>608</sup>

Actually, the companies retraced the coercive means of the first forced labor regime. However, at this time they were deprived of the legal means to bind the workers. In a short time, their attempt ended in failure. The mine workers resisted the forced labor regime in reference to the legal rights the Labor Code of 1936 granted to the worker. Particularly the worker headmen organized their followers, stating that on the grounds of the 1936 Labor Law, every worker had the right to work wherever he desired. So, accordingly, nobody could compel the workers to work in a particular workplace.<sup>609</sup> The workers with their headmen clearly objected to becoming unfree labor. They legitimized their struggle against the companies' ardent desire about the forced labor on the grounds of the labor code, which originally had been formulated to keep labor under strict control. As a maneuver, the mine

---

<sup>607</sup> The İş Bankası companies appointed Kadri Yersel to the head of the recruitment bureau. The official recruiters of the bureau tried to attract the workers through promising high wages. However, due to the increasing competition to the other companies, the bureau seems to fail. See, Yersel, p. 11.

<sup>608</sup> For the companies' attempts to take control of the labor market via cooperative means, see 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report, pp. 1-2. Also see Yersel, pp. 19-20.

<sup>609</sup> Ibid, 4/12/1939 report, p. 1.

workers undermined the regime of labor control within itself, through appropriating its means in their favor.

In order to prevent the involvement of the companies in the recruitment process, the mine workers resorted to another channel. They gave petitions to the official authorities and demanded not to stay in the pits they had worked for years. They supported their objections on the grounds of work safety and wage levels. For instance, a foreman in Gelik resisted working in the Türk-İş pits, citing the high fire damp risk. In reality the Gelik pits were more risky in terms of fire damp than the Türk-İş pits. However, the foreman tried to use fire damp risk to his advantages. Some other workers submitted complaint petitions to the Zonguldak governor, stating that although they were paid two to three liras a day in the Gelik pits, they were paid only eighty piasters in the Kömür-İş pits.<sup>610</sup> The workers from Zonguldak, Devrek, Ereğli, and Bartın villages complained to the Zonguldak deputies, asserting that after the attachment of the villages to certain pits, the companies had decreased the wages and the workers had been forced to work in the pits in spite of the workers' objections.<sup>611</sup>

As the complaints indicate, as the workers became unfree laborers they also lost their bargaining power. The companies then did not hesitate to decrease the wage levels. The workers lost their freedom of choosing their work place and setting their prices simultaneously. However, the struggle for control of the recruitment process came to an end with the victory of the workers. The new recruitment system collapsed.

The companies then sought new means to make the mine workers unfree. As the dynamics of the labor market ran to the detriment to the companies, they looked for extra economic means to force the workers. By the late 1939, the directors of the companies called the Prime Ministry to enact law or governmental decree to bind the workers to the mines and

---

<sup>610</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report, pp. 2-3.

<sup>611</sup> 8/1/1940, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939, p.13.

to discharge the worker headmen in the recruitment process.<sup>612</sup> When the free labor exchange contradicted the interests of the companies and the state, binding labor via legislative power appeared to be the most effective solution. To ensure an adequate number of workers, the director of the Zonguldak provincial branch of the Economy Ministry recommended the government employ mine workers who had reached draft age, in lieu of their military service.<sup>613</sup> The compulsory employment of soldiers in the mines had already been evaluated in the in the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 1 September 1938.<sup>614</sup> The outbreak of the Second World War brought about the necessary grounds for the use of unfree labor. By the February 1940, all males above eighteen years age were forced to work in the mines by legal force.

To eliminate worker headmen in the recruitment and supervision of labor process, their function was to be allocated to the company men who developed loyalty only to the company. In 1937, a new school, the *Maden Çavuş Mektebi* (Mine Foreman School), was opened under the control of the MTA.<sup>615</sup> The creation of professional foreman cadres would put an end to the dependency of the companies on the local authorities. As part of the actual production process in the mines, the trained foremen, in short, was to become representative of the companies. Yet, as the 1939 meetings indicated, the problems of both the recruitment and wage payment systems remained unsolved due to the lack of trained supervisory cadres.<sup>616</sup> Throughout the early 1940s the decision makers were to continue to privilege training of the foremen for the establishment of a lower range of supervisory cadres loyal to the company.

---

<sup>612</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 4/12/1939 report. p. 3.

<sup>613</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>614</sup> For the decisions of the Council of Ministers see , 15/9/1938 Catalog no. [PMRA 030 18 01.0.0 0./ 84 85 6]

<sup>615</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0/ 2.11..3.], 3/12/1939 report, p. 19.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38.

## The Mine Workers Quest for Better Living Conditions at the Work Site

The social policy implementations of the 1930s did little to improve the living standards of the mine workers. The low cost production policy of the companies kept them from getting involved in a wide-scale social service. The companies continued to consider the mine workers as single when they calculated the wages and costs of social services. Despite some improvements in accommodation and nutrition conditions, the mine workers continued to live in misery. The official documents of the time indicated the poor living conditions of the mine workers. For example, despite the fervent construction activities in the second part of the 1930s, the director of coal basin, İzzettin Tuğrul Nişbay, complained that most of the workers continued to live in the huts they built such as those at Kilimli. The company owned worker wards near the mines of Kömür-İş, Türk-İş, EKL, Türk Kömür and Süleyman Sırrı could only accommodate a few hundred workers.<sup>617</sup> Hence, most of the workers continued to live in primitive huts in primitive poor conditions.

The report submitted by the RPP Zonguldak deputies to the party general secretary in 1939 noted that the workers still lived in very bad conditions. According to the deputies, since there were not enough shelters for all of the workers at the Kozlu Kömür-İş, Türk Kömür and Gelik mines, some of them had to sleep outdoors. Those in the shelters complained about bedbugs and other pests.<sup>618</sup> Likewise surface transporter workers complained that in the Kozlu wards they slept on bare concrete floors. They asked for bedsteads and flooring in order not to get sick.<sup>619</sup>

Such complaints were heard in 1940 as well. Correspondences about the inspection visit of Nazif Seçkin from the Health Council give a great deal of information about the living

---

<sup>617</sup> Nişbay's report, 23.6.1938, Catalog no. [PMRA, 030 10 /174 2061], p.28-29

<sup>618</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 721 465 1], Zonguldak deputies inspection report, 1939, p. 11.

<sup>619</sup> Ibid. ,p.12.

conditions of the rotational workers. Accordingly, except for a few workers' pavilions built as samples, the workers continued to live in crowded sheds in misery. They slept on clay floors and neither stoves nor bedsteads were available. Furthermore, one out of every five laborers slept outdoors. In summer, they slept under the trees and in the shade, but in winter two, three laborers working in shifts slept in the same bed, one after the other. In most of the buildings in which the workers stayed, there was either no bath or it did not work because there was no running water. So, in some cases the laborers were not able to take a bath for months. This lack of water was also the cause of health hazard in the toilets and in the vicinity.<sup>620</sup>

While some of the mine workers stayed in wretched huts, some commuted from nearby villages to the mines on foot every day. In his memoirs, Us described the workers he met when he visited the basin in 1938 among the procession of İsmet İnönü. He witnessed workers who reached the mine shafts after a four hour walk everyday. Us summarized the poor conditions of the mine workers by asking, "Who knows how many more there are like them?"<sup>621</sup>

Instead of accepting things the way they were, the mine workers from the nearby villages sought to improve their transportation means. During the inspection trips of the Zonguldak deputies in 1939, workers from Alaplı, Başveren and Çaylıoğlu villages complained about the bad roads to the mines at Ereğli, Çamlı, Kandilli and Kireçlik and pointed out that especially in winter they suffered while commuting.<sup>622</sup> The workers who used transportation means demanded the improvement of the transportation conditions. In a petition filed during the RPP's Zonguldak Provincial Congress held in 1935, laborers from the villages of Cumayanı, Kokurdan, Doğancılar and Muslu complained that while going to the Gelik mines, they got wet when it rained due to traveling in open trucks. They asked to be transported in

---

<sup>620</sup> 31.3.1941 Catalog no.[PMRA: 30.11.1.0/ 114.24..1]

<sup>621</sup> Asım Us, *1930-1950 Hatıraları: Atatürk, İnönü, İkinci Dünya Harbi ve Demokrasi Rejimine Giriş Devri Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Vakıf Matbaası, 1966), p.276

<sup>622</sup> 8.1.1940 Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 721 465 1], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1939, p.11

covered trucks.<sup>623</sup>

Alongside the accommodation and transportation problems, the nourishment of the workers remained a problem unsolved despite the companies' low charge for meals. Although all of the mining companies provided meal service, most of the workers did not esteem the service. Both the workers and the inspectors complained about the quality, hygiene and nutrition value of the food. For example, the 1939 inspection committee of Etibank reported that not only were the cafeterias were but also the quality of the food did not reflect the total sum spent.<sup>624</sup> More, since vegetables grown in Zonguldak did not meet the demand and purchasing vegetables from nearby towns was costly, vegetable consumption was limited.<sup>625</sup> In the beginning of 1940 seeing that the number of workers taking advantage of the culinary facilities of the companies was low, the Ministry of Economy instructed the EKI to take necessary precautions.<sup>626</sup>

Actually, the workers did not prefer the company food due to the high cost of the meals in respect to their low earnings. In his inspection visit of the party's local branches in 1936, Mardin deputy Edip Ergin, stated the problem of nourishment in relation to the workers' and eating habits and the desire to save money.<sup>627</sup> Accordingly, most of the mine workers supplied their food by their own means and brought fifteen day's provisions from their villages. However, their daily diet, which contained only flat bread made of corn flour, was not nutritious enough for the kind of effort they spent in the mines. One of the most important reasons why the workers did not prefer the company food was that they had to pay for it, and that the amount was deducted from their daily wages. Ergin stated that the idea of saving money drove the workers satisfy themselves with so little. So he warned the party that that if the food service were not free of charge, it would not be possible to change their malnourish eating

---

<sup>623</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 January 1935, p.96.

<sup>624</sup> Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu, p.20.

<sup>625</sup> BUMH, Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1940 Yılı Raporu (İstanbul: Fazilet Matbaası, 1941), p.32

<sup>626</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no.139, correspondence dated 4.3.1940.

habits. Similarly, in 1937 the Zonguldak deputies warned the government that the workers should not be allowed to make themselves live on the corn flour they brought from their villages. The proper nourishment of the workers should be provided to increase their productivity. Besides, proper nourishment was the right of the workers.<sup>628</sup>

Except for the Zonguldak deputies, who evaluated the proper nourishment of the workers from the point of worker rights, most of the elite accused the workers of not changing their eating habits. So as putting the question as a cultural one belonging to the realm of the peasant mentality, they reproduced their elitist vision on the villager nature of the workers. Instead of criticizing the companies' low cost social provisioning policies towards the mine workers, they perceived the problem as a problem of mentality, which should be changed either by education or, if necessary, by force. For instance, Us argued that it was necessary to convince the Turkish peasants to change their eating habits to make them work productively and live efficiently. Us regarded nutrition from the point of worker's productivity and considered it an issue of work discipline. In his opinion, since the mine workers were not aware of the fact that they had to eat well they ruined their bodies with malnourishment. Us recommended disciplinary measure to change their eating habits. Accordingly, since the mine workers tried to save their earnings, they allocated limited money for food. In this case, the best solution would be to force them to eat in the company cafeteria and feed them with daily rations like soldiers in the barracks. It was necessary to put their lives in order and to have them change their habits so as to increase their productivity, and therefore the coal production.<sup>629</sup>

In fact, Us's ideas on the mine workers represent the authoritarian seed of the elitist perception very well. In this perception the cultural domain of the mine workers became the subject of treatment via coercive or persuasive means. In the RPP Zonguldak provincial congress held in 1935, the party members suggested that the social welfare branch of the

---

<sup>627</sup> 8.11.1937 Catalog no. [PMRA, 490 01 721 464 2], Inspection report of Mardin deputy, 1936, pp. 10.

<sup>628</sup> See 8/11/1937, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0/721.464.2], Inspection reports of Zonguldak Deputies, 1937, p. 7



party and mine operators should form a commission in order to take action with the aim of changing the eating, drinking and dressing habits of the mineworkers.<sup>630</sup>

Conversely to the elitist perception of the official and civil circles on the problem of the disinterest of the workers in proper nourishment, the mine workers requested the improvement of the food service in quality and lowering of the meal charge. The workers who ate the company meals often complained about the quality and the quantity of the food. For instance, the workers at Ereğli, Çamlı, Kandilli, Zonguldak-Kömür İş, Türk İş, Gelik, Kilimli mines expressed that they were not satisfied with a cup of soup, one main dish, and one kilo of bread per day for 400 piasters a month. The workers at Kozlu Kömür-İş and Türk Kömür mines said that they had to buy additional food from one of the markets nearby since the meal was served only at lunchtime once a day. So, in addition to the 4 lira food expense deducted from their wages per month they had to pay additional 2.5 liras, which meant that they spent 6 liras on average on food. As a result, a worker earning 25 liras on average per month had to spend one fourth of his money on food. The workers also complained that the food they had in the cafeteria had no fat, sometimes it was rotten, and the bread baked on the premises was sour.<sup>631</sup> As the complaints prove, at least the workers who utilized the food service were highly concerned with the quality of the service.

Particularly, as they paid a sum from their total earning, they saw their demand for the improvement of the food service as just and right. Since they had to pay for their daily food, the workers became more sensitive to wage cuts for meals. One mine worker from Kurtlar village of Ereğli, named Pamoğlu Mustafa İzzet, for instance, claimed that even though he had missed the meals on August 10 and 11 at the cafeteria of the Kandilli mines the price

---

<sup>629</sup> Üs, p. 273.

<sup>630</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 497 2003.2], *CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı* 18 January 1935, p.38.

<sup>631</sup> 8.1.1940 Catalog no.[PMRA: 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], for the complaints of the workers about eating conditions as of 1939, see Inspection Report of Zonguldak Deputies Province, p.11.

for both meals had still been deducted from his monthly wages.<sup>632</sup>

Similarly, the complainers required a standard in the quantity of bread for which they paid. The bread made in the company bakeries with differing weights created a problem. Whilst the Kömür-İş Company provided 1100 grams of bread to the workers at the Kozlu mines, the workers at the İhsaniye mines had to be satisfied with 1000 grams of bread per day.<sup>633</sup> Workers put forward their complaints about bread during Prime Minister Refik Saydam's visit in 1939. Conclusively, the authorities decided to bake a new type of bread only for the consumption of mine workers.<sup>634</sup>

Health services were another source of discontent among the mine workers. They demanded the improvement of the services provided by the *Amele Birliği*. Although the *Amele Birliği*'s hospitals and clinics served the basin, the health services were far from satisfactory.<sup>635</sup> To improve the health services of the *Amele Birliği*, its management was centralized under the Basin Health Commission (*Havza Sağlık Komisyonu*). However, the *Amele Birliği* did not serve the family members of the workers who resided out of the Zonguldak municipality border. Most of the mine workers lived in nearby villages with their families. Considering that the mine workers from the nearby villages represented three-fourths of the work force, the majority of the workers' families had no access to health service. They only rarely received free health examinations and medicine distribution provided by the Zonguldak People's House.<sup>636</sup>

Although a regulation dated 12 December 1935 stipulated that the families of the workers living within the basin could receive free health care, it also required that the Health

---

<sup>632</sup> Ibid.

<sup>633</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> 4/12/1939, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..1.0.0 /2.11..3], 3.12.1939 report, p.14.

<sup>635</sup> Since 1923 the *Amele Birliği* was in charge of health problems of the mine workers. The *Amele Birliği* Hospital began operating in 1923. The hospital continued its health service under the name of Zonguldak Country Hospital in 1938, after construction of the annex with 80 beds. In that year, the *Amele Birliği* had one dispensary in each production area, at Merkez, Kozlu, Üzülmüş, Kilimli, Kandilli, Ereğli and Amasra. For the *Amele Birliği*'s health services, see Zonguldak CHP İlyön Kurulu, pp .87-88.

<sup>636</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], *RPP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı* 18 January 1935, p.38

Board arrange a booklet to make a selection of those families.<sup>637</sup> Since this booklet was not prepared, families living outside the municipality border of Zonguldak were deprived of medical services. Of course, it was a cause of discontentment among the mine workers. At the RPP Province Congress in 1939 the mine workers from Ereğli-Çaylıoğlu, Devrek-Perşembe villages complained that while one percent was cut for *Amele Birliği* fund from their total wages, the organization neither provided health service to their families nor sent a doctor or medicine to their villages.<sup>638</sup> The workers legitimized their request not through situating themselves in a position wishing grace or favors, but in reference to the wage cut. So, such a demand was right and just from their viewpoint.

From the same stance, the mine workers demanded the improvement of the health services and equipment as well. Particularly, the quality of services and the treatment of the health personnel were the targets of criticisms. In the Kandilli production area, the workers who suffered unsatisfactory health services expressed their discontent. For example Mehmet Ali Açıkalın, working as a civil servant in the Kandilli mines, complained that he had not been dispatched to another hospital when the X-ray machine at the *Amele Birliği* hospital had broken down. Other mine workers protested that the hospital staff mistreated the patients, did not treat them well and kept them waiting for long hours before health examinations.<sup>639</sup> The dispensaries were not much different. For example, even during malaria epidemics in the basin area, there were times when the Kilimli dispensary did not have quinine available. Another complaint put by the mine workers was the lack of health staff and doctors.<sup>640</sup>

While complaining about health services, the mine workers did not wait in silence for improvement of their conditions. In order to get access to the *Amele Birliği*'s health services, they resorted to the practices of quiet encroachment. They took advantage of the blind points

---

<sup>637</sup> For the regulation and the related provision on the health services for the workers' families, see Anıl and Meray, 2, pp.172-175.

<sup>638</sup> 8.1.1940 Catalog no. [490.1.0.0 /721 465 1], Inspection Report of Zongultak Deputies, 1939, p.13.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid., p.11.

<sup>640</sup> Ibid., p.12-14

in the registration system of the health services. As a rule, the *Amele Birliđi* gave health cards to the workers who began to work in the mines. While the organization maintained employment records through these health cards, the registered worker acquired the right of health care. As a rule, only workers with health cards were supposed to receive medical services since they paid a fee deducted from their wages. However, not all of the mine workers were registered. Such workers, in other words, cardless laborers illegally used other workers' cards and benefited from health care with the same card. It was naturally at the cost of the *Amele Birliđi* fund, since the cardless workers did not pay fees.

They also used the cards of deceased workers for health care, while there were some others who claimed to be dead although they were happily living in their villages. Another instance of quiet encroachment was when first employed workers received a health card without being examined to indicate they were "healthy and fit." Therefore, because of recklessness, a person who was crippled already when first hired was able to demand indemnity as if he had had an accident at work. Recklessness in the employment records availed the workers to jump at opportunities.<sup>641</sup>

Crime against property belonging to the mining companies constituted another practice of quiet encroachment. Stealing coal and other material belonging to the mines was the most widely practiced carried out by the mine workers or the ordinary inhabitants of the basin at the cost of the mine companies. The Zonguldak Gazette illuminates a variety of such crimes. For instance, it was reported in newspaper that five thieves had been arrested while selling the coal they had stolen from the Çaydamarı Maksut Bey mine and had confessed their crime.<sup>642</sup> In a hut in Kozlu where three workers lived, 138 sticks of dynamite and three cartridges had been found during the house search.<sup>643</sup> In Gelik, thieves had been caught with

---

<sup>641</sup> İzzettin Tuğrul Nişbay enumerates examples of improprieties at the *Amele Birliđi* health organization and misuse of system by the workers. For manipulation of the registering system, see 23.6.1938, Catalog no. [PMRA, 030 10 /174 2061], p.32-33.

<sup>642</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette* 31 January 1931

<sup>643</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 18 February 1936

nine lamps they had stolen from the Taşbaca mine belonging to Ereğli Company.<sup>644</sup> Moreover, when the gendarme outpost was closed in Gelik mines, public order became worse in the following years.<sup>645</sup>

It is hard to say that the mine workers' pressure on the official circles and the companies brought a considerable degree of improvement to their living and working conditions. However, the means to which they resorted made an improvement and legitimated their demand prove the invalidity of the elitist arguments about the mine workers. Contrarily they intervened in their living and working conditions as actors of their lives. They established their vision of what was just and what was unjust in reference to their rights as workers and as citizens. Similarly, the practice of quite encroachment was part of the similar just and unjust vision. As the losers in respect to the powerful, they redistributed goods and benefits through manipulating the utilities of the *Amele Birliđi* or stealing the properties of the mine companies.

### The State, Public Order and the Basin as the Realm of Daily Life

There was a complex set of relation between the mine workers and the state in the basin. As most of the mine workers were at the same time inhabitants of the villages scattered in the basin, their relation with the state was not limited to the coal production. As the ordinary inhabitants of the basin they came with interaction to the state in the mines and in the villages in various sorts. The state with its local representative engaged in the lives of the workers in both the mine districts and villages as the sole political and administrative body. In this relationship the workers, once again, appeared on the scene as the actors of their lives, at this time, in seeking to improve the living conditions in the villages.

The mine workers as the temporary residents of the mine site were a source of

---

<sup>644</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 14 August 1935

<sup>645</sup> 8/1/1940 Catalog no. [490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Inspection Report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.4.

anxiety for public security forces. The rotational nature of the work pattern made the mine workers live in between the mines and their villages with a continual motion. Due to the limited efforts of the companies to contain the lives of the mine workers at the work site, their social space remained beyond of the control of the companies to a great extent. At this time the control of the mine workers during their spare time became the concern of the state. As the guardian of the law and order in the mine districts and the city center, the official bodies came into contact with the mine workers in various circumstances.

Although most of the workers exhausted their energy through daily underground work and most of them preferred to stay in their barracks during their free time, the nearness of the mines to the settlement centers brought motion between the mines and Zonguldak, Kozlu and Ereğli. At this time the free movement of workers between the mines and city centers became a troublesome issue for the official bodies. Particularly the coffee shops were a source of discontent among the ruling elite of Zonguldak, where the mine workers spent most of their spare time. The high number of coffee shops indicated their popularity among the mine workers. Along with a few scattered coffee shops near the mines, there were thirty-five coffee shops lined up on Gazi Paşa Street in Zonguldak.<sup>646</sup> They performed various functions in the daily lives of the workers, as communication centers where the workers met their fellow townsmen and sent or received news about their relatives and families, as recruitment offices for the workers in seeking jobs, and as entertainment centers.

The coffee shops came on the agenda of the ruling elite in the context of gambling and alcohol consumption. They saw both as a threat to the public order and work discipline. For this reason, the RPP provincial branch applied to the governorship to outlaw gambling in the coffee shops.<sup>647</sup> Similarly in Bartın, the municipality forbade playing card games at the

---

<sup>646</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı, 1935, p.93.

<sup>647</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı, 1935, p.92.

coffee shops. But, it failed as the coffee shop proprietors filed a lawsuit and won the case.<sup>648</sup> Upon this, coffee shops as well as gambling continued to be part of the daily lives.

Another problem endangering order and work discipline was prostitution. Although no records are available related to prostitution among the official documents, it is not difficult to imagine that prostitutes contacted their customers in the bars and in the brothels scattered in the back streets. The demand made about dispersing the “impertinent women” settled in the quarters at the provincial congress held in 1935 hints at the level of prostitution in the coal basin.<sup>649</sup>

Given the fact that in average 15,000 men were on the hoof every month as mine workers, it is inevitable for ordinary crime to escalate. Particularly at the mine site there were both criminals and victims among the mine workers. Quarrels and fights among them sometimes ended in bloodshed and, murder. For example, in 1934 after the fight of two miners quarreling over a basket of coal, one of them killed the other and then was arrested by the security forces.<sup>650</sup> Bandits were another source of trouble for the mine workers and the gendarme. Especially, on the days when workers received their wages and headed to their villages, such crimes were frequent. In order to protect themselves on the road they traveled in groups. Yet the bandits from time to time achieved their goals by using guns.<sup>651</sup>

When the mine workers reached their villages, at this time, they were busy with robbers and saboteurs who caused the loss of animals and crops. The inability of the provincial government to establish public order made the villagers angry. The villagers lost their confidence in the local authorities when they could not prevent their haylofts from being set on fire or their herds from being robbed. The villagers showed great reaction to the crimes committed on their properties. As their means of production suffered, so did their subsistence

---

<sup>648</sup> 8.11.1937 Catalog no. [PMRA, 490 01 721 464 2], Inspection report of Mardin deputy, 11936, pp.1-2

<sup>649</sup> 16/1/1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı ,1935, p.93

<sup>650</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 12 November 1934

economy. For this reason they demanded stricter measures for robbers and saboteurs.<sup>652</sup> A report written at the 1938 province congress suggested an amendment be made to the law regarding theft for more severe punishment.<sup>653</sup> Yet the complaints continued throughout 1939, that showing the crime was not prevented.

The villagers suffered because their herds were robbed, their animals were poisoned, their haylofts and harvests were set on fire, their fruit trees and vineyards were damaged after dark on purpose, their fruit was stolen and because of such other incidents, none of which could be stopped by the existing law measures, just the contrary, multiplied.<sup>654</sup> On the other hand, when the complainants appealed to the official authorities and their names were declared, the persons charged threatened them more and set fire to their haylofts and poisoned their herds.<sup>655</sup>

The basin's inhabitants complained about disorder and the unjust practices of the public officials as well. Coercion of the local representatives of the state increased the tension in the state-villager relations. The people informed the RPP party representatives about their complaints on the repressive practices of the local officials, in a cautious mood, stressing that it was not the laws they were discontent with but the officials' arbitrary practices. According to them, the local authorities implemented the laws improperly, then caused trouble and suffering.<sup>656</sup>

Especially the forest guards constituted the main source of discontent. The implementation of forest laws and regulations caused a great deal of trouble between the forest guards and the villagers. In Safranbolu and Bartın, for instance, when the forest guards confiscated even the firewood during households moving from one house to another, a big

---

<sup>651</sup> For more examples of mineworkers who got robbed on their way back to their villages, see *Zonguldak Gazette*, 12 November, 1934; *Zonguldak Gazette*, 14 August, 1935.

<sup>652</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı , 1935, p.92.

<sup>653</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak Provincial 1938 Congress, Decisions and Approved Requests, p.1.

<sup>654</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies p. 21.

<sup>655</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-10.

<sup>656</sup> 8.11.1937, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490 01 /721 464 2], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies 1937, p.2



argument broke. Soldiers and noncommissioned officers who administered forest laws were the main target of the protests. The complainants argued that soldiers earning seven to eight liras per month were deprived of moral values due to low income, therefore they could easily condone timber smuggling.<sup>657</sup> The municipality in Ereğli complained that the forest guards caused trouble even during the shipping of licensed firewood and timber.<sup>658</sup>

The tax burden and forced labor imposed on the villagers in road construction (*Yol Mükellefiyeti*) further deteriorated the already tensed relation between the villagers and the state. Problems between the people and the civil servants occurred in several areas. During the 1935 provincial congress of the RPP, the local representatives of the villages informed the party center that the villagers under forced labor demanded to work on the road constructions nearby.<sup>659</sup> Some others mentioned that even though they had performed their duty on the road construction since they had not been given receipts, tax officers kept bothering them, so they wanted those receipts urgently.<sup>660</sup>

The villagers also expressed their discontent with the high taxes they paid without getting any services in return although they had promised. They clearly demanded the state improve of their living conditions in return for tax they paid. They saw their request for better living conditions to the state as just and right. The various requests and complaints indicate that there existed a village community in the basin in seeking to increase their benefits in return for being true citizens performing their duties for the state. The reciprocal relations between the state and the citizens, in their perspective, entailed the state to perform its duties as well. They also wanted to take part in governing their lives with the state. For instance, the villagers clearly reflected their desire to have a say on the use of the tax revenue they paid. In a 1939 inspection visit of the Zonguldak deputies, some of the villagers asked the tax

---

<sup>657</sup> Ibid. p.3

<sup>658</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.9.

<sup>659</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 December 1935, p.92.

<sup>660</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı ,1935, p.95

collections be examined since they had not received any services for many years. The village council (consisting of elderly men), on the other hand, suggested that they prepare the village budget themselves in order to assess the taxes they paid to the government.<sup>661</sup>

Some of the villagers suggested that the millers whose mills operated with water should not pay taxes for one or two months, during which no rain fell.<sup>662</sup> Some others claimed that even though they were taxed for animal breeding and telephone, they did not receive any such services.<sup>663</sup> The villagers also articulated that the services given by health officers whose salaries were paid out of the budget allocated for the village proved to be inefficient.<sup>664</sup> Additional tax burdens to their budget annoyed the villagers. They warned that their patience should not be tried. Since they had had a bad harvest season due to the drought in 1939, the villagers demanded the school construction to be postponed to the following year and its total cost be charged in installments spread over a few years.<sup>665</sup>

While discussing the management of taxes, the villagers expressed their tacit desire to participate actively in the control of their lives. They legitimized their demand not within a paternalist context where they were the passive recipients of the state's favor, but in reference to their citizenship rights, as tax payers. They showed a similar reflex for improving health conditions in the villages. The villagers reacted against epidemics and insufficient medical care in the area, demanding doctors, and medicine and health staff. The medical services available in the coal basin proved insufficient in the treatment of contagious diseases from which the villagers in the villages and in the mine districts suffered.

In the 1930s, syphilis and malaria were the most common diseases diagnosed. Combined with inefficient health controls, the fact that workers did not live in the mine area permanently but commuted from their villages accelerated the spread of diseases among the

---

<sup>661</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 721 465 1], Zonguldak Province Inspection and Study Reports, 1939, p. 2.

<sup>662</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak Province 1938 Congress, Decisions and Approved Requests, p.3.

<sup>663</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 721 465 1], p.10

<sup>664</sup> Ibid., p.7

families of the workers as well. The two syphilis treatment units, one at the Çaycuma dispensary, and the other at the Ulus syphilis institution, could hardly cope with the disease.<sup>666</sup> In all of the provincial congresses of the RPP held in 1935, 1938 and 1939, the general view was to increase the number of syphilis treatment institutions in the basin area. The 1938 congress highlighted that the disease had been spreading through all of the villages nearby, therefore treatment units had to be established as soon as possible.<sup>667</sup> Although a fight against both syphilis and malaria had continued in Zonguldak since 1935, it was not possible to employ efficient and sufficient medical staff because of budgetary constraints.<sup>668</sup> Moreover, besides the patients appealing to the health organization, there were many others out of touch who could not be monitored and continued to spread the disease. So as to increase the awareness of the people about syphilis Zonguldak Gazette published informative articles.<sup>669</sup> Nevertheless, the disease continued to be a threat to the basin inhabitants due to inefficient health exams, the presence of numerous workers on the hoof, and prostitution.

Besides syphilis, malaria was another epidemic seen in the basin area. In 1934, out of 4,723 patients treated at the health institutions 2,833 of them had malaria.<sup>670</sup> Four years later, in 1938 there was hardly a household left in Zonguldak that malaria did not visit. Therefore, quinine was in great demand.<sup>671</sup> The same year the Health Board in the basin instructed the mining companies and their directors to take the necessary steps against malaria,<sup>672</sup> and to monitor the foodstuffs and drinks against typhoid fever, which was rarely seen.<sup>673</sup> However, the circumstances were convenient for typhoid to multiply as drinking water sources were

---

<sup>666</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.15

<sup>667</sup> Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 January 1935, 16.1.1939 , p.52.

<sup>668</sup> Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak Province 1938 Congress, Decisions and Approved Requests 16.1.1939, p. 15.

<sup>669</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak 6.Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı , 1935, p.38.

<sup>670</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>671</sup> For articles about syphilis, see *Zonguldak Gazette* 11.2.1936, 18.2.1936, 8.8.1936.

<sup>672</sup> Zonguldak CHP İl Yön Kurulu, p.88.

<sup>673</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak Province 1938 Congress, Decisions and Approved Requests p.15.

<sup>674</sup> KUA , Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no.115, 5.10.1938

<sup>675</sup> Ibid., 8.9.1938

limited, there was leakage to those sources from the sewage system, and more, coal churns polluted the water.<sup>674</sup> Inevitably, the lack of drinking water in the basin area facilitated the spread of the typhoid just as happened at the beginning and end of 1936 at Safranbolu.<sup>675</sup>

Another epidemic that easily spread among the masses of workers working and living in unhygienic conditions was typhus fever. The disease recurred in the basin area from time to time, such as in 1930 in Amasra<sup>676</sup> and towards the end of 1933 in Zonguldak prison.<sup>677</sup> It was a disease common among the mine workers that affected the respiratory system and damaged the lungs. Given that the workers kept rotating and the fact that they had close ties with their villages, neither contagious diseases nor industrial illnesses could be taken under control, and thus continued to threaten the basin.

The basin inhabitants reacted against epidemics and insufficient medical care in the area usually by demanding doctors, medicine and health staff. While there were ten officers in the area in 1933, for instance, four of them had to be dismissed in 1934 because of insufficient budget. At the RPP provincial congress held the year after this issue was in the agenda,<sup>678</sup> the people living in the coal basin announced their demands for smallpox vaccination,<sup>679</sup> for more doctors, medical services in the villages, a maternity ward and childcare unit.<sup>680</sup> Another subject of complaint was the pollution in the riverbeds caused by coal residue. The responsible companies were asked to rearrange the riverbeds and to prevent the leakage of drain water into the spring water.<sup>681</sup> Since there was not enough drinking water served at the company cafeteria, and since they could only take a bath once every ten days or two weeks, the workers urged the authorities to solve the water problem.<sup>682</sup> All of the complaints put by

---

<sup>674</sup> 8.1.1940 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.11.

<sup>675</sup> For typhoid epidemics in Safranbolu, see *Zonguldak Gazette*, 9 January 1936 and 15 December 1936

<sup>676</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 6 July 19630.

<sup>677</sup> 16/1/1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], CHF Zonguldak 6. Vilayet Kongresi Zaptı 18 Son kanun 1935, p.53

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24

<sup>679</sup> 8.1.1940, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.7

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>681</sup> 16.1.1939 Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /497 2003.2], RPP Zonguldak Province 1938 Congress, Decisions and Approved Requests, p.3.

<sup>682</sup> 8.1.1940 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /721 465 1], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 1939, p.11.

the inhabitants of the basin were forwarded to the RPP general secretary through the official authorities. Although the basin population who used the complaint mechanism did not achieve their goals most of the time due to budgetary concerns, they were still able to accomplish something.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE COMPULSORY PAID LABOR ACT AND COAL

#### The National Emergency Law and the Establishment of the Forced Labor Regime

The Second World War marks a specific sub-period of history both for Turkey and the Ereğli Zonguldak coal basin. The war years brought about a significant transformation for Turkish society in social, political and economic life. Similarly, the war prompted a new period in the history of the coal basin with the nationalization of coal mining and the establishment of the compulsory labor regime. When the basin was nationalized in 1940 the existence of the government in the basin deepened. Both the Compulsory Paid Labor Act (CPLA) and the act of nationalization of the basin intensified governmental intrusion in each and every part of social life throughout the coal basin. In the beginning of 1940, when the war threat intensified, it became necessary to stabilize the labor force and to monopolize the management of coal production due to its strategic importance. So, the same year, the National Emergency Law (NEL) came into force, permitting consolidation laws to stipulate a compulsory labor regime. With the CPLA and the full nationalization of the basin under state control, the government intruded into the lives of the people in the coal basin both as a political power and as the sole employer.

Even though Turkey did not participate in the Second World War, the Refik Saydam government assumed the difficult task, preparing the economic and social life of the country

for a possible attack under the increasing war threat. The most urgent problems which the government had to solve were to prevent a decrease in agricultural production, to maintain the already insufficient level of industrial production, to keep commercial and transportation services alive, to be content with the available services and to provide a fair share of production.<sup>683</sup> Although the Refik Saydam and Şükrü Saraçoğlu governments represented two different policies of war economy during the period, they both faced with the common problems such as production decreases and increasing imports, which brought inflationary pressure on the masses, and the insufficient provisioning of food, fuel and clothing of the big cities.<sup>684</sup> However, the precautions they took only helped to diminish the problems rather than relieve them.

The war economy exercised by the governments against the war threat left profound traces in the memories of a generation in Turkey. The misery of the masses with scarcity and poverty increased in parallel with the rise of a black market, profiteering and a class of war rich. The military preparation mobilized the male adults of the country to the army. When most of the male adults were drawn from the agricultural areas, agricultural production decreased tremendously. In industrial sectors the situation was no better. The winds of war interrupted the etatist industrialization policies carried out in Turkey during the 1930s.<sup>685</sup> Because of the problems experienced in the importation of intermediate goods for investment and industry as well as the increasing defense expenses, neither investment plans in the industrial nor transportation sectors were implemented nor the plant constructions completed.<sup>686</sup> The kind of income distribution that appeared in the war years was in favor of property income and profits against wages, and market-oriented big farmers against small peasants.<sup>687</sup> Within this table,

---

<sup>683</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi (1938-1945)*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1986), p. 371.

<sup>684</sup> Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2002* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2004), p. 83.

<sup>685</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>686</sup> Koçak, Vo. II, p. 370.

<sup>687</sup> Boratav, p. 87.

masses of people suffered largely under the pressure of high inflation, the black market and food scarcity.

The NEL constituted the framework of the economic policies exercised by the governments during the Second World War. Although Turkey remained outside of the war, in the face of rising war threat, the NEL passed by parliament on 18 January, 1940. It aimed at controlling all economic and human resources in the country against a possible attack.<sup>688</sup> The law came in force on 19 February, 1940. It enabled the government to intrude in all fields of economy.<sup>689</sup> The law permitted the Cabinet to assume responsibility and exercise authority within the framework outlined by the law, such as in case of general or partial mobilization, in cases where the state was actively at war, or in cases of national emergency where a war was being fought between states of immediate concern to the Turkish Republic. Therefore, instead of passing a new law every time one law delegated the government the authority to take the economy under control.<sup>690</sup> It also enabled the government authority to regulate all laws pertaining to economy by issuing governmental decrees. In order to establish cooperation between the relevant ministries, on 20 February, 1940 Ministers of Defense, Finance, Agriculture, Economy, Communication and Commerce assembled a coordinating committee.<sup>691</sup>

The NEL which was put in to force in the beginning of 1940, exercised several regulations to meet the defense requirements, to relieve the problems of provisioning, and the supervising the production, consumption and distribution, as well as trading of goods and

---

<sup>688</sup> Laws similar to NEL were brought into force in several countries in the years preceding Second World War. The first step was taken by Italy on February 8, 1925. The law regulated the economy in the event of war. It was as was passed by parliament under the title of "National Organization at Wartime." In Czechoslovakia a parallel law, with the title "National Emergency Law" came in force on May 13, 1936. Similarly France enacted the "Law of Organizing People at War" on July 11, 1938. See Feridun Ergin, *Harp Zamanında Devletin Ekonomiye Müdahalesi* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1943), p. 48

<sup>689</sup> See the following references for the reviews on National Emergency Law: Baban Zade Şükrü, "Milli Korunma Kanunu," *İ.U. İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol.1. (1940); Seyfi Kurtbek, *Harp ve Ekonomi*, (İstanbul: 1942), Sedat Çumralı and Talat Karay, *Son Değişikliklere göre Şerhli ve İzahlı Milli Korunma Kanunu* (Ankara: Ulusal Matbaa, 1943). The place of National Emergency Law within the practice of National Emergency Law, see Koçak, Vol. 2 pp. 371-443.

<sup>690</sup> Koçak, Vol. 2., p.373

<sup>691</sup> Ibid., p. 388.



services throughout the country. In order to establish its control on both domestic and foreign trade, the government founded the Trade Office (*Ticaret Ofisi*), the Provisioning Organization (*İaşe Teşkilatı*) and the Petroleum Office (*Petrol Ofisi*) in 1941.<sup>692</sup> Under several Cabinet resolutions adopted by the coordinating committee, new regulations were made to take the production and consumption of agricultural products and food stuff under strict control. Accordingly, merchants would sell their stocks of grain, cotton and wool to public establishments in accordance with the prices determined by the government. Both the big farmers and peasants were required to hand over all of their products to the government with officially announced prices after they kept their share of fodder and seeds for personal use. The harvest collected from every village and the amount to be handed over would be determined by the state employees, right on the spot in the fields and during harvest.<sup>693</sup>

The NEL provided opportunities for the government to control workers as it did the merchants, industrialists and farmers. The government would be able to take severe precautions related to working life. The compulsory labor clause stipulated by the NEL made the government able to impose forced labor on the workers and to regulate production in many establishments in accordance to the necessities.<sup>694</sup> In line with the ninth article of the compulsory labor clause, in order to reach the targets set by the law, the government could furnish the industrial and mining companies with the necessary work force and specialists to increase levels of production and to make the necessary adjustments in work time that this increase required. To reach this ends, the government was granted with the authority to force upon its citizens compulsory paid work with wages equal to those of free laborers.

Article 10 forbade the workers to leave their jobs without a valid excuse or prior notification. Article 19 stipulated three hours overtime in addition to the eight hours daily

---

<sup>692</sup> Tezel, p. 260.

<sup>693</sup> Ibid.

<sup>694</sup> For regulations and business law stipulated by National Emergency Law regarding working life, see Orhan Tuna, "Türk İş Hukuku ve Milli Korunma Kanunu," *İ.U. İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol 1. (1940); and Hürrem Barım. *Ücretli İş Mükellefiyeti* (Zonguldak: Doğan Matbaası, 1941).

working when necessary. Therefore, with the regulations set by this law, workers lost their control over their work. Under the extra economic means of the political body they became unfree labor. As subjugated to the will of the political body, the workers lost their rights to choose their work place, wages, working hours and overtime.

The compulsory labor provision imposed severe penalties on those who would neglect their work obligations. Article 54 was about the fines and penalties who failed fulfill their obligations. Such law cases had priority over others to be in court. The amendments made to the NEL on 25 December, 1940, 19 December, 1941, 30 January, 1942 and 3 August, 1944 gave the government more authority to control the work life through increasing penalties.<sup>695</sup> Any such offense defined in Article 67 would be tried at special courts. Those courts were assembled on 3 March, 1942 as *Milli Koruma Mahkemeleri* (National Emergency Courts),<sup>696</sup> and were held in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and Zonguldak in the same year.<sup>697</sup>

After the NEL came into force, compulsory labor was put into practice first in the Zonguldak coal basin by a governmental decree on 27 February, 1940. A few months later, on 17 June, 1940 it was put into force in projects for road, square and harbor construction prompted by the Ministry of Public Works. On 18 February, 1941, it was imposed on those worked in non-agricultural fields, the unemployed residing in cities other than Istanbul and the farmers able to leave their hometowns when and if their work on their land permitted it. The employees of the *Maarif Matbası* (Publishing House of Education) came under the compulsory labor regime on 9 May, 1941. On 28 November, 1941 the mine workers at the Garp Lignite Mines, the lignite basins at Soma, Değirmisaz, and Tavşanlı and at the Etibank Lignite Mines became the subject of compulsory labor. All the men residing in Kütahya, Balıkesir and

---

<sup>695</sup> For amendments in National Emergency Law, see Hüsni Bengi, *Milli Korunma Kanun ve Kararları* (Ankara:Başbakanlık Devlet Matbaası, 1945), pp. 66-71.

<sup>696</sup> The courts were established by the approval of the decree no. 293 by the coordination committee on February 26, 1942. For the text of decree on National Emergency Courts see, *ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>697</sup> Koçak, vol. 2, p. 455 and p. 465.

Manisa and those who had worked in mines before were drafted to supply the necessary number of mine workers at the Etibank Lignite Mines.<sup>698</sup>

The compulsory labor regime started in the Zonguldak Ereğli coal basin on 27 February, 1940 when Resolution Number(RN) 2 of the Coordination Committee was issued in the *Resmi Gazete* (Official Gazette) under the title of "*Ereğli kömür havzasındaki istihsalatın artırılması için ücretli iş mükellefiyeti tesisi*" (Establishment of the compulsory paid labor to increase production in the Ereğli coal basin). RN 2 consisted of four sections and twenty articles which regulated the qualifications and wages of workers, the summoning system, the working conditions and terms of signing sick, and the arrangement of the compulsory labor organization.<sup>699</sup> Thus, the risk of labor shortage which would endanger coal production during the war period was to be eliminated via radical means.

Article 2 of RN 2 defined the qualifications of the obliged workers. In this respect the compulsory labor would be implemented for those residing in Zonguldak province. Accordingly, those who had more or less experience in mine works, or those who were old enough to work, and had a family with a work tradition in the mines, or unemployed citizens all came under the compulsory labor obligation. In addition, artisans, qualified persons and workers from other provinces, those who with skills and qualifications useful in the mines were included in the obligation. "Other provinces" meant Trabzon, Rize and Giresun areas from which workers had traditions of working in the basin's mines. However, since the statements which defined the places of residence, age limit, sex and duration of work experience were not clear, the compulsory labor regime was realized with much trouble and misuse.<sup>700</sup> When the

---

<sup>698</sup> Anıl and Merey, Vol 2, pp. 81-84. For the implementation of the compulsory labor act in various work fields, including mining sector, and a general evaluation of working conditions in the Second World War in relation to the National Emergency Law, see Ahmet Makal, " 65. Yılında Milli Korunma Kanunu," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 102 (2005), pp.55-92.

<sup>699</sup> For the full text of Resolution number 2, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 177-181.

<sup>700</sup> Immediately after the implementation of the compulsory labor practice, some of the citizens held obligated raised objections, using the leeways in the law, claiming that they were made to work unfairly. Zonguldak Criminal Court Member Hürrem Barım sets examples of such cases filed according to the leeway in resolution number 2. For list of examples, see Barım, p. 9 and pp. 27-30.

deficient and irrelevant points of the resolution were corrected and complemented in the following years the compulsory labor regime was implemented more effectively.

On 18 February, 1941 Decree No 256 reduced the minimum age limit of workers from eighteen to sixteen.<sup>701</sup> Decree No. 336 was put into force on 25 May, 1942 to complement the deficiencies of the preceding resolution and to intensify the punishments.<sup>702</sup> With the amendments, the obliged worker was defined as male. With a communiqué, the maximum age of obliged was limited to fifty-three. With a decree enacted in 1942 the scope of workers dependent on the compulsory labor order was extended. Instead of the phrase “unemployed” the amendment indicated “any men above sixteen who were not engaged in any business throughout the year.” In addition, the village headmen and the religious functionaries in the basin were excused from compulsory labor in order not to cause any interruption in their public services.

Decree No. 336 stipulated severe sanctions for workers not fulfilling their compulsory duties, or fleeing. Accordingly, such obliged workers would be dispatched to the mines to which they were assigned by gendarme force if necessary. The decree also limited the terms of release from compulsory labor with natural disasters such as floods, blizzards, storms, earthquakes and fires, and in case of the death of close relatives or any illness of the obliged reported by the official health services.

According to Article No. 15 of RN 2, the Ministry of Economy assigned the Economy Directorship of Zonguldak to follow up the compulsory labor regime within the borders of the province. The Economy Directorship set up the Compulsory Labor Follow-Up Office (*İş Mükellefiyeti Takip Müdürlüğü*) in order to deal with the compulsory labor process, to enlist permanent and seasonal workers and to determine the period of work rotation, to summon the workers to the mines and to call for the police force to dispatch the workers to the mines if

---

<sup>701</sup> For the full text of Resolution, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, p. 256.

<sup>702</sup> For the full text of the decree number 336, see Anıl and Merey, Vol 2, pp. 272-275

required. The duty and authority of the office were determined by communiqué number 5/3756 dated on 17 May, 1940.<sup>703</sup>

The inhabitants of five counties Merkez, Bartın, Devrek, Ereğli, Safranbolu, and 731 villages of Zonguldak were put under the compulsory labor regime.<sup>704</sup> Male residents between the ages of 16 and 53 of Zonguldak province were enlisted by the local registry offices as well as the draft offices. Those lists then were compared with lists provided by the village administration and civil authorities. Then, after the men to be excused were eliminated as advised by the village headmen, the final list was announced to the public.<sup>705</sup>

The chief engineers of each mine district reported to the production group management the number and qualifications of the workers they needed, and the group management passed those reports to the follow-up office.<sup>706</sup> According to the requirements vacancies were announced in the villages and obliged workers were dispatched to the mines by the village headmen. The village headmen acted as the agents of the Follow-Up Office in the villages. They were in charge of delivering the villagers who were obliged to work in the mines by the month's end. For this duty, the village headmen were paid a three to ten lira fee per month, depending on the distance between the mines and the village.<sup>707</sup>

The compulsory labor regime echoed the first forced labor regime under the Dilaver Paşa regulation. Similarly, on grounds of military necessity, the basin came under the second forced labor regime in the service of the state's own needs. The mine workers of the basin once again became unfree labor via extra economic means, losing their rights to the free exchange of their labor. Considering the intricate relations between the different local actors and the mine companies at the work site and the labor market, the mine workers had begun to

---

<sup>703</sup> For duties and authorities of the Compulsory Labor Follow-up Office see the communiqué in Anıl and Merey, pp. 185-189.

<sup>704</sup> BUMH, *Etibank Maden İşletmelerinin İşçi Meseleleri ve İktimai Teşkilatı Hakkında 1941 Yılı Raporu* (Ankara: Ankara Basım ve Cildevi, nd.), p. 13.

<sup>705</sup> Özeke, *Türkiye Sanayinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi Problemleri* (İstanbul: İsmail Akgün Matbaası, 1948), p. 20

<sup>706</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>707</sup> Liability of the village headmen as defined in the compulsory labor regime, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, p.186.

made use of the labor shortage in favor of themselves in the late 1930s. Further, under the crew organization with the leadership of the worker headmen the mine workers had become organized labor, seeking their collective interests in the labor market. The attempt of the companies to revive forced labor in 1939 was curbed by the crew organizations. However, the ardent desires of the companies that who called for state intervention in the labor market via legal instruments were realized under the compulsory labor act of the war years.

This time, as it had been the case in the Dilaver Paşa regulation, the forced labor regime was legitimized in reference to the state's urgent need for coal under the extraordinary conditions of the war. Once again, working in the mines was defined as a military service of citizens to their nation and the state. The basin's inhabitants, who felt themselves unlucky thanks to their residing with the borders of the basin, did not respond to the forced labor regime with patriotic feelings. In a short time, the basin turned into an arena of struggle between the state and its citizens. While the state battled its citizens via legally legitimate means of coercion, its citizens battled the state via a wide variety of instruments that stemmed from their tradition of making use of the law.

#### The Forced Labor Regime in the Service of the Nations

There is a clear connection between the militarization of states towards their citizens/subjects and the increase in coercion over the working classes. The war threat or the actual war situation reflects only the more intense and more visible form of such coercion. When necessary for the ardent interests of the ruling classes or the state itself, the governments did not hesitate to restrict the free exchange of labor based on the free will of the worker. Despite the fact that waged labor arose as the component of the new mode of production with the industrialization wave of the nineteenth century, it did not bring free labor

immediately. Differentiating free labor from waged labor can illuminate the rise of free labor as the outcome of the labor struggles against the new ruling classes of capitalist societies.<sup>708</sup>

In the first half of the twentieth century, particularly with the rise of nationalism in the inter-war years, unfree labor came onto the agenda of various governments in relation to the treatment of the young with work discipline under the control of the state. In parallel with the militarization of social life in the interval between the two world wars, the compulsory labor and forced labor regime was enforced in various countries. For that purpose, work organizations were established in some countries in the inter-war period. The organizations were legitimized as attempts to prevent unemployment or to train young population with a work ethic in the service of the nation. As a result, the youth were forced to work in public works of various kinds. Such practices mainly involving young males provided labor for the sectors in need<sup>709</sup> while, on the other hand were disciplined in line with militarist-nationalist ideologies.<sup>710</sup>

Prior to the Second World War the work organizations in Greece preferred volunteer workers. But for the labor service organizations in Bulgaria and Germany, obligation was essential. As Bulgaria was forced to diminish its army under the provisions of the Neully Treaty, it passed a law in 1920 which stipulated that adolescent men not recruited work in civil service, and put them under military-like discipline. Hence, starting from 1921 Bulgarian young men were trained in military regiments in organizations named "Trudovak" for eight months and were prepared for public works and transportation services.<sup>711</sup> Service organizations in Germany, which were active before 1933, were based on voluntary work. But after Hitler came into power, a law came into force in 1935 obligating young men to work in the labor camps for

---

<sup>708</sup> For such a debate on the rise of the free labor as the part of the labor struggle against the new ruling classes and the state in the western societies, see Steinfield, pp. 1-26

<sup>709</sup> During Roosevelt period, Civilian Conservation Corps which were established in the United States in 1933 as a part of New Deal policy had spent efforts through the 1930s to solve the unemployment of the young population in America, and to reduce the destructive effects of the Great Depression. The young labor force was oriented to production areas. "Roosevelt's Tree Army A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps", <http://www.cccalumni.org/history1.html> [20.7.2005]

<sup>710</sup> For the examples of such practices in the various countries and their evaluations from a nationalist perspective, see, Muhlis Ete, "Bizde ve Başka Memleketlerde İş Mükellefiyeti," *Türk Ekonomisi* 10 (15 April 1944), p. 315.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid.,p. 316

six months before enlisting for their military duty.<sup>712</sup> At the camps affiliated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs young men were employed for public works and road construction while being inculcated with National Socialism. On the other hand, school children were sent to villages during summer vacation to engage in agricultural activities at early ages. Germany prepared its economic mobilization program for war, according to which both women and children were assigned tasks.<sup>713</sup>

After the breakout of the Second World War, compulsory labor practices came to supply the labor forces required by war economies. It was not only Turkey where the government exercised anti-labor policies in regard to the work life during the war. In countries either at war or under the threat of war the majority of productive labor power was enlisted in the army, so, to be able to continue production, all the remaining people had to be mobilized. Anybody capable of working behind the frontlines was forwarded to industrial and agricultural production areas. All males who had been unemployed before the war were put to work together with women, children and the elderly, who were not considered within the labor market under ordinary circumstances.<sup>714</sup>

The German state excused all working men over thirty-five from military service so that they would be kept in their jobs. Additionally Germany employed hundreds of thousand of Italian, French, Polish and Czechs in the war industry, either voluntarily or compulsorily.<sup>715</sup> Under Nazi rule immigrant labor and convicts, prisoners of war, citizens of occupied lands and Jewish population were obligated to work.<sup>716</sup> When Germany relocated the workers of occupied countries to be utilized in German industrial and agricultural sectors, the labor forces

---

<sup>712</sup> Ibid., p. 317

<sup>713</sup> Ömer Celal Sarc, *Harp Ve Ekonomi, Profesör Cemil Birselle Armağan'dan Ayrı Bası* (İstanbul, Kenan Basımevi ve Klise Fabrikası, 1939), pp. 373-374.

<sup>714</sup> For use of woman and child labor in England, Germany and Japan, see Alan S. Milward, *War, Economy and Society 1939-1945* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1979), pp.219-221.

<sup>715</sup> Feridun Ergin, pp. 90 and 92.

<sup>716</sup> For labor force reserves in Germany, see Milward, pp. 221-228.



in those countries dropped tremendously.<sup>717</sup> Japan, on the other hand, supplied the labor force required for its war industry from Korea, China and other Far Eastern countries. Similarly, the British government worked all women at certain ages in addition to using prisoners of war.

All governments made amendments to laws pertaining to working hours in order to work the laborers longer hours during the war period. They not only extended working hours, but also enabled around-the-clock production with implementing the work shift system.<sup>718</sup> The British War Cabinet resorted to several regulations in order to organize the labor force in line with the requirements of the war economy. In September 1939, two acts, namely the Control of Employment Act and the National Registration Act passed by the Cabinet enabled the government to control the labor supply. On 5 June, 1940 it became forbidden for the workers employed in machinery industry, construction work, and agricultural production and in the mining sector to change their workplaces without permission. The Conditions of the Employment and National Arbitration Order put into force one month later, in July, outlawed strikes and lock-outs aside from a few exceptions. In March 1941 all reserves and women were included in compulsory labor. With the Essential Work Order enacted in 1942 workers would not be allowed to quit their jobs and employers would not be able to fire any workers unless approved by the Ministry of Employment.<sup>719</sup>

Work force active in the coal industry was subjected to special regulations because of the significance of coal energy in the war industry as well as in railway and overland transportation. Warring countries added more obligations for their workers so that the coal production would continue and increase incessantly. The problem experienced in the coal industry was not only the result of the huge numbers of men being transferred to the frontline.

---

<sup>717</sup> For instance, nearly one million of French workers labored for industrial and agricultural production in Germany throughout the war. Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>718</sup> For the regulations pertaining to working hours, see *ibid.*, p. 219.

<sup>719</sup> Ergin, pp. 91-92.

The mine workers reacted to the heavy working conditions and compulsory labor with low performance. One other reason for the low productivity was due to the mechanization of production, effective since the late 1920s, which caused the rapid consumption of coal reserves, and led to a decrease in production.<sup>720</sup>

Countries at war came up with several ideas in their attempts to solve the labor problem in the mines. Japan put seven thousand war prisoners to work in the mines. Germany made use of Russian prisoners as well as French and Polish mine workers. All warring countries excused mine workers from military service to keep them in production. They even called retired miners back to work.<sup>721</sup> Britain implemented compulsory labor provisions to secure coal production during the war period. When the Essential Work Order was passed by the British Cabinet in 1941, the mine workers who changed their field of work or retired, volunteers, and the ones who fought on the frontline were all called back to work in the mines.<sup>722</sup> Work groups, called Bevin Boys, consisting of teenagers, were also sent to the coal mines. Men in their sixties, even seventies, were obligated to work as well. Workers were not allowed to leave the mines unless a health report approved by official health care unit was acquired. Likewise, mining companies were not allowed to fire one single worker. Although compulsory labor, which became effective in 1942 and continued to be implemented until the war ended, provided the labor force for coal production it did not help accomplish high productivity as expected.

During the inter-war years, the mine workers did not forget the memory of their hard struggle against their employers. After the outbreak of the Second World War working conditions in the mines worsened. Even though the labor scarcity incited by the war industry had doubled the wages, real increase was quite less when wartime inflation and high prices

---

<sup>720</sup> Milward p. 231.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid.

<sup>722</sup> For wartime implementations on compulsory labor and in coal production in England, see W.H.B. Court, *Coal* (London: Longmans, 1951), pp. 138-143, pp. 296-323.

were considered. The patriotic discourses used throughout the war to keep masses of people mobilized were far from preventing strikes in the coal mines. When U.S mine workers in 1941, and British mine workers in 1943 and 1944 went on strike, it was only possible to stop them by police force and by severe sanctions regulating working life.<sup>723</sup>

The reasons prompting mine workers to go on strike in the French-Belgian basin under German occupation in 1941 were long working hours, the pressure of high production, losing their acquired rights and the pressure applied on labor unions. The mine workers protested against wages being diminished by high inflation, living conditions being worsened and famine. While some strikes were organized, most of them were disorganized and short-term. However, going on strike was not the sole way of resistance. Workers developed new ways of protesting heavy working conditions in the mines, such as irregular attendance, low performance and quitting their job for other sectors. Strikes and protests in occupied France inevitably gained patriotic grounds; mining companies serving the German war industry were accused of being collaborators. Mine workers found several ways of sabotaging the production such as demolishing the water pumps.<sup>724</sup>

In Zonguldak, mine workers could not resort to organized resistance against the compulsory labor regime. Instead, they appealed to a web of daily practices. Although they avoided direct forms of struggle they gained some success in subverting the law through various other means. Along with organized forms of action stemming from the local community relations, they attempted to undermine the forced labor regime with various fragmented practices. Most such practices were spontaneous and diverse. In such a wide repertoire, they attempted to subvert the forced labor system from within.

---

<sup>723</sup> For mine workers' strikes, see Milward, p.231-232.

## The Composition of the Work Force in the Basin during the War Years

The amalgamation (*füzyon*) act which put all of the coal mines under the state's direct control enabled the state to monopolize and stabilize coal production as the main energy source of two strategic sectors, the defense system and transportation. On the other hand, compulsory labor act solved the problem of the labor shortage, which had turned into a crisis in the late 1930s. After the nationalization of the basin, the government assigned EKI to manage the whole coal production process with its labor force so that it secured the production of this strategic material under a public enterprise against the war threat. The nationalization of the basin was stipulated by Law No. 3867 dated 30 May, 1940. The law authorized the Council of Ministers to decide on the date of the enforcement of the law. On the grounds of the law, the government was granted the right to decide on the exact time of the enforcement of the law by a governmental decree, which would nationalize all or part of the coal mines in the Ereğli basin under state control. The uncertainty in the enforcement date and the extent of the law indicated the government's indecision. Likewise, the Council of Ministers issued the decree on 15 October, 1940, five months after the nationalization act. The decree permitted all mines and coal washing factories run by several companies to be nationalized together with their full equipment and to be managed by EKI.<sup>725</sup>

The five-month delay of the decree interrupted the production in the basin. After the Zonguldak deputies paid a visit to the basin in September 1940, they reported that the delay which caused ambiguity prompted negligence of the required preparations and maintenance works; thereby possible technical problems might be faced following the nationalization act.<sup>726</sup> Since the private mining companies had been aware of the preparations for nationalization act since 1939, they had given up long-term investments and only processed productive seams

---

<sup>724</sup> For the strikes in 1941 under the power of Vichy Government and German occupation at French basin, see Darryl Holter, *The Battle for Coal, Miners and Politics of Nationalization in France, 1940-1950* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1992), pp. 49-55.

<sup>725</sup> For text of Nationalization Act and the related governmental decree, see Anil and Merey, Vol. 2., pp. 155-160.

and neglected the necessary preparations for the continuation of production. As a result, when Etibank took over the coal basin by the end of 1940, it confronted to several problems due to the heavy negligence of the previous mining companies.<sup>727</sup> Difficulties in supplying equipment and timber associated with the problems of the forced labor which led finally to an interruption in the production in 1942. Nevertheless, after taking certain measures in the following two years, Etibank succeeded in increasing its production more than in the prewar period.

EKI owed its success in the war period to the opportunities which the NEL provided. Considering the lack of mechanization, the only way to increase coal production was the intense use of labor. Upon the enforcement of the law, the Coordination Committee made resolutions to regulate the conditions of coal production, distribution and sales which would allow the government to control the coal basin. As for the resolution made on 26 February, 1940, all sales either to domestic or foreign markets would be made by a sales cooperation to be established by the existing mining companies in the basin, the prices would be determined by the government, and the Ministry of Economy would outline production programs to prevent the coal production to be interrupted. Last, Etibank would be in charge of shipping, stocks and the distribution of coal to the local market.<sup>728</sup>

With the measures taken at the beginning of 1940, coal production increased to considerable extents. While the annual production of unwashed coal was 2,696,935 tons in 1939, it reached 3,946,245 tons in 1947 when compulsory labor was totally outlawed. Yet it was not easy to achieve the desired results immediately. EKI management came under strict criticisms since it did not meet the expected amount of production between 1940 and 1942. Despite the compulsory labor order, even though the amount of coal production increased in

---

<sup>726</sup> 20/1/1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 721.467.1], Inspection Report of Zonguldak deputies September 1940, p. 97.

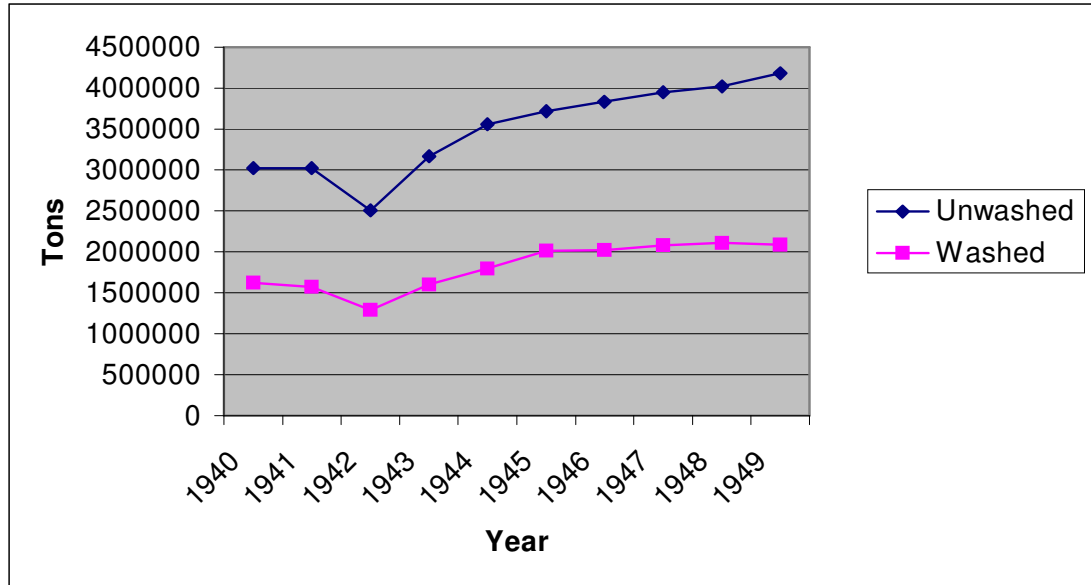
<sup>727</sup> Kadri Yersel, *Madencilikte Bir Ömür Anılar Görüşler*, (İstanbul: Maden Mühendisleri Odası, 1989), p. 19.

<sup>728</sup> For the resolution dated February 26, 1940 made by the Coordination Committee which regulated coal production, sales, distribution and price of coal, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 181-183.

1940, EKI's share in the total coal production remained as 33.98%.<sup>729</sup> Due to the technical, managerial and financial problems experienced in 1941 and 1942 production under the EKI management almost stopped.

When problems with pillars came to the fore during the first months of 1942, annual coal production lagged behind the amount achieved in 1939. EKI had difficulties in the purchasing and shipping of materials and pillars put to order in European countries.<sup>730</sup> The means of production such as railway engines, railway car wheels, underground machinery and ventilators which did not function properly, could not be replaced. Therefore, the use of deteriorated equipment increased the production costs. The constant decline in labor productivity made the situation even worse.<sup>731</sup> Setbacks in the implementation of the compulsory labor that occurred between 1940 and 1942 delayed the immediate supply of sufficient labor force. Finally, the lack of timber intensified in the beginning of 1942 and brought coal production to a complete halt.

Table 11. Unwashed and Washed Coal Amounts 1940-1949



Source: T.C. Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, *Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949* (Zonguldak, 1950), p.1.

<sup>729</sup> For distribution of total amount of production among the companies in 1940, see TC. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, *Madenlerimiz 1940-1941* (Ankara, 1943), p. 40.

<sup>730</sup> BUMH, *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1941 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (n.p.:İdeal Matbaa, 1942), p. 8

<sup>731</sup> BUMH, *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1942 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (Alaeddin Kırıl Basimevi, 1943), p. 32.

This interruption in coal production prompted the authorities to take immediate action. The two resolutions enacted in 1942 aimed at disciplining the terms of production. İhsan Soyak, an experienced executive, who had worked in the İş Bankası mining companies in the 1930s both as an engineer and top manager, was appointed as EKI General Manager. With the resolution on 25 May, 1942, the compulsory labor regime and its sanctions became more severe. Measures taken in that year proved fruitful in a short period of time. By 1943 coal production reached over 3,000,000 tons. However, compared to the amount of washed coal with the unwashed coal, it seems that the total coal amount which was proper to use declined when coal was cleaned from rubble and stones. Hence, the real increase in total amount of coal production remained constant.

Apart from the technical and managerial measures, the relative increment in production was achieved largely by the use of compulsory labor. Throughout the war years, Zonguldak became the most populated province in Turkey owing to the compulsory labor regime. According to the statistics of 1938, while Zonguldak was the third city after İstanbul and İzmir in accommodating high numbers of workers, in 1943 it had the highest number of workers.<sup>732</sup> Compulsory labor was practiced in the Ereğli basin in 1940 and the next year it was in force at the other mines run by Etibank.<sup>733</sup> By 1943 the majority of the laborers worked in different mines in Turkey as forced labor. The statistics of 1943 indicate that 42,523 of the total workers in Turkey, in other words, 15.46 percent of the registered work force worked in mines and stone quarries under legal coercion.<sup>734</sup>

---

<sup>732</sup> For statistical figures, see Orhan Tuna, "İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* Vol. 6 (October 1944-January 1945), p. 338.

<sup>733</sup> As per Coordination Committee Resolution number 220, compulsory labor regime was also established in Soma, Değirnisaz and Tavşanlı lignite basins run by Etibank Garp Lignite Mining Company, effective as of November 28, 1941. The full text can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 81-84.

<sup>734</sup> Tuna, p.338.

EKI made use of several sources throughout the war years to supply more workers and to stabilize the work force. Before the compulsory labor regime the number of workers did not exceed 18,000.<sup>735</sup> Following the regime the daily number of workers rose to 29,770.

Table 12. Daily Number of Workers in 1941-1949

Year	Work days	Underground Workers	Surface Workers	Workers in Plants and Workshops	Total
1941	351	12,108	2,252	6,944	21,304
1942	340	11,633	3,402	7,251	22,286
1943	343	13,788	3,254	9,293	26,335
1944	346	14,778	3,557	9,787	28,122
1945	340	15,663	3,973	10,134	29,770
1946	340	15,128	2,593	10,294	28,015
1947	330	15,928	2,484	9,806	28,218
1948	332	15,399	2,199	9,549	27,147
1949	330	15,414	2,040	10,343	27,797

Kaynak: T.C.Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, *Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949* (Zonguldak, 1950), p. 19.

Between 1940 and 1947, the total number of workers available per day differed from 21,000 to 30,000. Even though the figures dropped with the annulment of the compulsory labor in 1947 they did not decline pre-war levels. Number of workers from the villages of the basin was over 15,000 by 1945. Although the compulsory labor regime slackened after the war, the numbers of underground workers did not decrease significantly.

Apart from the underground workers, other laborers working in shipping, the production of coke and briquette, and in cutting timber were also subject to the compulsory labor regime. According to the work order all of the obliged workers were grouped into two, as rotational and permanent workers. While rotational workers mostly concentrated underground jobs, permanent workers worked at preparatory jobs in mines and at surface jobs.

Rotational workers were first made to work in the mines for one month, and then with the amendment made in 1942, they were kept in underground work for 45 day shifts. Since the permanent workers were not subject to rotation they continued working with a couple of days off a month. In addition to the overseers, foremen, headmen and technical staff there were also soldiers and prisoners obligated to work in the mines in the permanent worker

<sup>735</sup> BUMH, *1944 Yılı Raporu*, p. 126.



category. Last, there were a few voluntary laborers working in the category of "unrestricted worker." The free workers came mostly from the surrounding provinces and different regions of Anatolia, working in the mines one half month to two months at a time.<sup>736</sup> In total there were approximately 40,000 underground mine workers, in rotational groups of 15,000 from the basin's villages. 12,000 mine workers from the eastern part of the Black Sea region, on the other hand, worked in three groups in two to three months shifts. Thus, together with the permanent workers obliged to work, the entire work force available to work during the war years reached 60,000 men.<sup>737</sup>

Eighty percent of the rotational workers were from the villages of the basin.<sup>738</sup> As of 1941 the total number of workers in Zonguldak province dependent on the compulsory labor regime was 23,028, all coming from Bartın, Devrek, Ereğli, Safranbolu and Merkez and their villages. The workers were divided into two shifts so that agricultural work in the villages would not cease while one group went to the mines.<sup>739</sup> All males living in the basin between ages of sixteen and fifty-three were subject to compulsory labor. Although the Labor Law that came into force in 1936 did not permit men under eighteen to work in the mines, the compulsory labor regime stipulated adolescents under eighteen to work as well. By 1940 youth who were sixteen and seventeen were dispatched to the mines. We come across lists of adolescents under the age of eighteen in EKI's records. In a letter dated 9 March, 1940 EKI demanded that the companies put men born in the years 1339-1340 (1923-1924) to work in subordinate duties outside the mines.<sup>740</sup> Consequently until the 1942 amendment of the Coordination Committee, which brought the minimum age limit down to sixteen, men under eighteen were employed in the mine works by the state illegally.

---

<sup>736</sup> For work categories through the war years , see BUMH, *Maden İşletmelerinin İşçi Meseleleri ve İktimai Teşkilatı Hakkında 1941 Yılı Raporu*(Ankara: Ankara Basım ve Cildevi), p. 10.

<sup>737</sup> Özeken, *Türkiye Kömür Ekonomisi*, p. 192.

<sup>738</sup> BUMH, *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1943 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (n.p: Ideal Matbaa, 1944), p. 92.

<sup>739</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri 1941 Yılı Raporu* p. 13.

<sup>740</sup> KUA, *Evrak İrsalat Defteri*, no. 139, Correspondence date: 9.3.1940.

The villagers of Zonguldak mostly were assigned to jobs directly involved in production underground, therefore they assumed the heaviest and the most dangerous duties among all workers. Prior to the compulsory work the male population only in the villages near the mines preferred to work for the mining companies. However, after the enforcement of the law the inhabitants of distant villages who had no tradition of mine work, such as the villagers of Ulus, Eflani and Safranbolu, began working in the mines. And those workers were the ones who complained and ran away from the mines the most.

Despite the compulsory labor regime a significant number of the male population registered within the basin borders were excluded from the practice. While 8.9 percent of the male population of Zonguldak province worked in coal production in 1935, the ratio increased only to 14.9 percent in 1945.

Table 13. Comparison of Mine Workers of Zonguldak to Male Population 1935-1945

Years	Male Population of Zonguldak Province	Mine Workers	Ratio of Mine Workers to Total Male Population
1935	158.508	14.222	8,9
1940	178.866	21.361	12,1
1945	199.005	29.770	14,9

Source: BUMH, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Raporu*, p..24.

When the majority of the male population was excluded from the compulsory labor practice and few of them continued as voluntary laborers, this disrupted the work discipline among the compulsory workers in the mines, who complained of favoritism. By 1944 the percentage of voluntary workers was 14.5 per cent. Yet other workers from the same villages were compelled to work in the mines in the category of compulsory worker. This contradiction indicates the inconsistencies in the compulsory labor regime and wide spread favoritism.<sup>741</sup>

Another instance of such inconsistency was seen among the unemployed who were subjected to the compulsory labor order as well. The decree issued in 1940 stated that the unemployed among the basin population were subjected to compulsory labor. That group could only be vagabonds and idle men. Albeit no evidence is found in the dispatch list of EKI

indicating that the men defined as unemployed or vagabond worked in the mines, we come across a letter about compulsory labor being imposed on such men. A summary of a correspondence dated 15 July, 1941 points out that forty-eight unemployed men from Bartın were put to work in the mines.<sup>742</sup> The authorities did not take into consideration the complaints of the basin inhabitants accusing the gypsies of theft and similar crimes, or their request for such people to be put to work in mines. Under these circumstances, people who were defined as unemployed and vagabond must have kept working in the mines until the definition was changed to “any men above sixteen who were not engaged in any business throughout the year.”

The second group of obliged workers was from Trabzon, Rize and Giresun. EKI consigned its engineers to the region in order to supervise the dispatch of the workers.<sup>743</sup> Workers from eastern Black Sea region who had the custom of working in the mines were employed to work alternately in groups of 4,000 to 4,500.<sup>744</sup> As their tradition the workers from the eastern Black Sea region continued to work in preparation jobs and drift developments in the mines. Albeit under the forced labor regime, they were well paid and highly respected by the EKI executives in the war years as well.<sup>745</sup>

There were a few prisoners who served out their sentences while working in the mines. Convicts worked in the lignite mines at Değirmisaz, in the sulfur mines at Keçiborlu and in the copper mines at Ergani. In 1944 and 1945, the number of convicts employed in several mines operated by Etibank differed between 1,500 and 2,000.<sup>746</sup> Convict workers did not only work in mines. According to the statistics, kept in 1944 and 1945, during the Second World War, the

---

<sup>741</sup> BUMH, 1944 Yılı Raporu, pp. 130-132.

<sup>742</sup> KUA, *Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri*, No 107, Correspondence date, 15.7.1941.

<sup>743</sup> KUA, *Evrak İrsalat Defteri*, No 139, An instruction written 10.3.1940 to the Trabzon, Rize and Giresun provincial authorities informed the beginning of compulsory labor practice and required the administrative staff to assist Engineer Faik Birkan who was commissioned to the region.

<sup>744</sup> The content of the document sent to EKI was about 4,566 workers who were under the compulsory labor regime in Trabzon and its surroundings. KUA, *Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri*, no. 37, correspondence date: 18.4.1941.

<sup>745</sup> BUMH, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Raporu*, p. 25.

<sup>746</sup> Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı*, 1942-1945, Vol. No 15 (İstanbul: Hüsniyatı Basımevi, 1946), p. 170.

number of convicts worked in mining, construction, tailoring, trades, and agriculture and so on was 6,000 to 6,500 on average.<sup>747</sup>

Convicts employed at Ereğli mines completed two days of their sentence at the end of every work day. This way their prison term was shortened. By 1945, 650 out of 1,000 convicts at Zonguldak Gökgöl Prison worked in the mines at Asma and the remaining 350 at the Kozlu mines. The ones who worked at Kozlu were accommodated in the guesthouse of EKI.<sup>748</sup> Fugitives among these convicts who were mostly sentenced for murder were rare.<sup>749</sup> The convicts worked six days a week in three shifts. The shift leaders were appointed by the management in charge of the dispatch of the convicts to the mines. They worked under the command of mining engineers and were supervised by headmen and a prison functionary during the working hours. In order to be easily spotted among the mine workers, convicts wore different colored overalls; one half had navy and the other half had brown.<sup>750</sup>

Although some of the convicts worked at ground level, most of them were employed underground and in construction work because of their physical strength.<sup>751</sup> The provisioning and accommodation expenses of convicted workers were met by EKI. As per the agreement made between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Economy, the wages paid to convicts were ninety percent of what was paid to non-prisoner workers. Their wages were deposited into a bank account to be paid to the convicts when their imprisonment ended.<sup>752</sup> In addition to their daily wages they received monthly bonuses as well.<sup>753</sup>

For the EKI management, employing convicts was a positive approach for the betterment and professional training of criminals. Yet EKI set criteria for the recruitment of

---

<sup>747</sup> Ibid.

<sup>748</sup> Safa Ş. Erkün, "Kömür Havzamızda Hükümlülerin Çalıştırılması," *İş Dergisi*, Vol.XI, Sayı:45 (May, 1945), p. 23.

<sup>749</sup> Gerhard Kessler, "Zonguldak ve Karabük'teki Çalışma Şartları," *İ.Ü. İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol.IX (April, 1948), p. 181.

<sup>750</sup> Erkün, pp. 23-24.

<sup>751</sup> For the work place and jobs of the convicted in the war years, see Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, *Reisicumhur Hazretlerinin Havzayı Teftişlerine Ait Notları 11/12/ Şubat-1944*, TKİ, İhsan Soyak Archive, no. 18

<sup>752</sup> Kessler, Çalışma Şartları, pp. 180-181.

<sup>753</sup> Erkün, pp. 23-24.

convicts. In order to achieve a certain level of security and job performance, EKI preferred to eliminate convicts who had committed robbery or theft, and who were not fit for mine work.<sup>754</sup> After paying a visit to the EKI management in 1947, the Prime Ministry Inspection Committee found the employment of convicts inappropriate due to their low performance, compared to non-prisoner workers.<sup>755</sup> But EKI suggested regulations be made to improve the performance of convicts instead of giving up this inexpensive labor source.<sup>756</sup> Consequently the employment of convicts continued until the general pardon in 1950. After the convicts were reprieved no more convict workers were recruited in the Ereğli coal basin.

During wartime soldiers constituted another source of manpower in the mines. A law passed by the parliament in 1939 enabled mine workers to postpone their military duty if they volunteered to work in the mines. With the outbreak of the Second World War the youth reluctant to go into the army applied to mining companies even though they had no experience.<sup>757</sup> In the war years in order to make men appealing more and to prevent loss of man power, the practice of deferment from military service continued. Therefore, the use of soldiers in the mines and compulsory labor regime intermingled. When the office staff and workers employed by the mining companies were called for duty, their military service was deferred provided that they continued working in the mines.<sup>758</sup> The resolution passed by the Cabinet on 26 August, 1942 stated that workers employed by the EKI and the Garp Lignite Companies who benefited from the practice of deferment from military service would be summoned for duty for one year and that they would serve that period by working in the mines.<sup>759</sup>

---

<sup>754</sup> Correspondence from EKI General Management to District Attorney General about convict workers on 10.4.1946, Private Archives of Ekrem Zaman.

<sup>755</sup> BUMH, *1947 Yılı Raporu*, p. 25.

<sup>756</sup> Ereğli Kömür İşletmeleri Müessesesi, *1947 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporuna Cevap*, (Ankara: Etibank, 1948), p. 11.

<sup>757</sup> Çatma, p. 120.

<sup>758</sup> For paragraph 24 of article 25 of the law 1076, which regulated the deferment of reserve officers among in the call list, and clause 1 of article 64 of the law 1111, which regulated calling and deferment of reserve privates, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 82-83.

<sup>759</sup> For the decree issued on 26.8.1942, , see Catalog no. [PMRA 03018 01 02/ 99 79 2].

With Decision No. 35911 of the Ministry of National Defense, on 8 September, 1942 the military service duty of 37,254 laborers who had worked or were currently working in the mines would be deferred for one year in return for continuing to work in the mines.<sup>760</sup> Nevertheless, in the meantime, the ones who had previously worked in the mines but had quit working by that time were called back to their jobs as well. Even if any among those were found to be overage or without any work experience, they were not excused from work. As a result, by 31 March, 1943 a total of 46,370 men had become workers in the mines with the status of regulars (*muvazzaf*) and reserves (*ihtiyat*).<sup>761</sup>

The resolution of the Ministry of National Defense also imposed serious sanctions on the soldier-workers who ran away from the mines or failed to perform well. On the grounds of the resolution, the rights of the deferment of the workers were cancelled and they were sent to Demirkapı and Çatalca for heavy labor. They worked there under the management of Enforcement Headquarter (*Tahkim Komutanlığı*) as penalized soldiers. The aim was to deter the workers from fleeing.<sup>762</sup> But it was later realized that such kind of penalties solved nothing but affected production because of the loss in the number of workers. That is why in 1943, two Mine Service Battalions (*Ocak Hizmet Taburu*) were assembled at EKI and Garp Lignites Enterprise. The punished reserve, hence were to serve out their sentences while working in the mines under the military rule of the service battalions.<sup>763</sup>

In the post war years, the practice of employing mine workers in the status of soldier in the mines continued. Starting from October 1946 mine workers born in the Zonguldak provincial area were permitted to perform their military service as soldier workers. Mine workers enlisted in the army were called back to the mines after completing their six-month basic training to continue their military service, hence the loss in work force was prevented. In

---

<sup>760</sup> TTK, İhsan Soyak Archive, File no. 46, T.C. M.M. Vekaleti Ordu Dairesi 3 Ş.2. Ks. Number 35911, Ankara , 8.9.1942

<sup>761</sup> 16.4.1943 EKI report in Ekrem Zaman Private Archives, Zonguldak.

<sup>762</sup> Etingü, p.114.

<sup>763</sup> 28.10/1943, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..10.0.0 46.297..35.]

its report of 1947, the Inspection Committee suggested the maintenance of the employment of worker soldiers in the mines as they performed better than the civilian workers.<sup>764</sup> As the EKI management was not willing to give up on the use of reserves, it also applied to the Ministry of Economy, frequently requesting to come to an agreement with the government on this issue in principle.<sup>765</sup> With the approval of the government, this practice continued in the Ereğli mines until 1962.<sup>766</sup>

Owing to the compulsory labor regime from March 1940 on, the problem of the labor shortage of the pre-war years was solved partially. Despite the fluctuations in the first years of the practice due to the high numbers of fugitives, towards the end of the war numbers of the workers increased.<sup>767</sup> Even after the annulment of the compulsory labor practice, the number of workers per day never dropped down to figures as low as those in the pre-war period. Thus, the compulsory labor regime furnished the certain number of workers for war conditions. It even brought a certain degree of stabilization in the number of the work force as the outcome of the fact that the compulsory labor regime accomplished mobilizing a significant number of workers from villages who had not been accustomed working in the mines. Some of them joined the permanent labor force. After the abolition of the forced labor regime, the rotational nature of the work pattern was preserved and the cycles between the mines and the villages were regulated to stabilize the flow of the work force in definite numbers.

#### The White Collar Workers, Over-Employment and Criticisms of EKI Management.

There was also a small proportion of work force composed of civil servants and EKI employees. From 1940 on, the nationalization act and compulsory labor regime made EKI the

---

<sup>764</sup> BUMH, 1947 Yılı Raporu, p. 25.

<sup>765</sup> EKI, 1947 Yılı Raporuna Cevap, p. 11.

<sup>766</sup> Çatma, p. 172.

<sup>767</sup> BUMH, 1940 Yılı Raporu, p. 21.

biggest public enterprise in the country with the greatest number of workers.<sup>768</sup> However, in a short time it became the target of criticisms for its inefficiency of administration, technical and accounting departments, for its lack of coordination among these departments, for unnecessary paperwork, for lack of statistics and for over employment. The 1941 report of the Inspection Committee recommended an immediate reorganization of EKI.<sup>769</sup> The excessive number of staff at EKI was frequently underlined in inspection reports as an urgent issue. Even the number of cleaning staff taken over from other establishments after nationalization and the total number of EKI civil servants were not known.<sup>770</sup> It had to manage approximately 40,000 workers per month with such a disorganized managerial structure. Since the establishment struggled to run the entire company with an overpopulated staff without sufficient job descriptions it failed in this task.

Although the number of permanent staff 1,100 to 1,900 during the war years, together with the contractual and cleaning staff, the number of nonproductive employees was much higher.<sup>771</sup> For instance, while the number of total staff was 1,200 at the beginning of 1942,<sup>772</sup> it increased to 1,381 by the year end.<sup>773</sup> Among the administrative staff of EKI there were foreigners as well. In 1944 the Inspection Committee reported that foreign engineers had insufficient knowledge about regulations and that they took more responsibility than their capability, therefore they should work rather in the field of production, and their positions should be covered by Turkish engineers.<sup>774</sup>

The compulsory labor regime was one of the main reasons of the overpopulation. The highest number of staff in EKI was in the departments of administration and official affairs and

---

<sup>768</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>769</sup> For critical remarks about low productivity in EKI, see BUMH, *1940 Yılı Raporu*, pp. 5-8 ve pp. 73, 74.

<sup>770</sup> BUMH, *1941 Yılı Raporu*, p. 8.

<sup>771</sup> For the numbers of EKI's permanent staff between 1941 and 1949, see BUMH, *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi, 1949 Yılı Raporu*, p. 7.

<sup>772</sup> BUMH, *1942 Yılı Raporu*, p. 5.

<sup>773</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>774</sup> Ibid., p. 9.



the compulsory labor office.<sup>775</sup> The second overpopulated department was social affairs, in charge of the feeding, housing, health care and cultural affairs of the workers.<sup>776</sup> The excess of employees at EKI continued to be criticized after the war. The executives of an American company named Eavenson and Auchmuty had been invited to Turkey in 1947 to evaluate how to increase productivity and cut costs in the coal basin. They compared Zonguldak with the basins in America and Europe. In their report they indicated that production cost per ton in Zonguldak was quite high in spite of the low labor cost. Most of the operating cost derived from over employment in the enterprise. Experts criticized the employment policy, pointing out that majority of the staff was unproductive and inefficient, that the executives occupying significant positions were unqualified, and that the managers and engineers rarely went down to the mines where the actual production took place. The opinions of the experts were in favor of getting rid of excessive employees among the nonproductive staff of EKI.<sup>777</sup>

Compared to the mine workers' living and working conditions, EKI paid much higher wages, offered better housing and supplied better food to the white collar workers. Both the Inspection Committee of the Prime Ministry and the American Company particularly criticized the high wages of the administration staff and civil servants in comparison to the manual workers and advised a wage raise for the workers involved directly in actual production fields.<sup>778</sup> With the end of the war EKI had to review its employment policy. The company faced two major problems in the post-war conditions. One was to eliminate excess staff, the other was to take precautions against labor shortage after the annulment of compulsory labor. EKI tried to solve the over employment problem by reducing its administrative staff in 1948 and 1949. However, the stabilization of the manual work force after the annulment of the forced labor regime was much more problematic than the reduction in administrative cadres. To

---

<sup>775</sup> BUMH, *1944 Yılı Raporu*, p. 4.

<sup>776</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>777</sup> Ihsan Soyak Archive, File no. 60, Report on Kozlu Mines Supplemental Studies (Zonguldak Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Zonguldak, Turkey), Eavenson and Auchmuty reports, dating 2 May 1947 and 26 June 1947.

keep adequate numbers of workers in the mines, EKI revised its wage policy and social policy towards the mine workers, to attract them to stay at the mines after the introduction of free labor.

#### Annulment of the Compulsory Paid Labor Act and the Question of Labor Supply

During the war years, the problem of keeping the mines in operation with certain levels of coal production was solved through the forced labor regime. However, by the end of the war, it was not possible to keep the workers in the mines by force in reference to the war threat. Towards the end of the war, the EKI management began to think about the employment problem in the mines in the post-war period. Although the mine workers worked at low productivity rates during the war years, since the main purpose was to maintain production with workers in high numbers whatever its human cost, the officials kept the forced labor regime out of criticisms. With the end of the war, the EKI management began to search for ways to maintain and even increase the production rates of the war years with a cheap and obedient work force.<sup>779</sup>

However, the post-war reaction of the mine workers, those were compelled to work under a coercive labor regime, made the EKI management anxious about the state of post-war labor. The managers could not guess the number of workers who would work voluntarily after the annulment of the compulsory labor law. Although the forced labor regime had extended mining jobs among those who had not worked before in the mines and had intensified the work tradition among the rotational workers who had previously worked irregularly, it was expected that the majority of the compulsory workers would disassociate and would prefer to go back to their farms. In respect to the most optimistic guess the proportion of such workers who would leave the mining works was no more than thirty

---

<sup>778</sup> Ibid., For Inspection Committee reports, see BUMH, 1942 Yılı Raporu, p. 9 and 1944 Yılı Raporu, p. 9 and pp. 136-137.

<sup>779</sup> BUMH, 1946 Yılı Raporu, p. 13

percent.<sup>780</sup> Yet, the management did not have a clear vision on the post war labor quantity and hence hesitated to renounce the forced labor practice.

EKI did not put an end to the forced labor immediately after the end of the war, despite the fact that the compulsory labor act was annulled by Decision 654 passed by the Cabinet on 19 August, 1946.<sup>781</sup> It was not until the end of 1947 that the decision was realized. The official bodies made a plan for the transition to the free labor regime. According to Decision 654, the compulsory labor regime would be annulled on 1 September, 1947. Until that date, while the work obligation of some workers would be abolished, most of them would continue to work in the mines. According to the decision, all of the villages of Safranbolu and Ulus and some of the villages of Bartın and Ereğli would be excused from forced labor regime immediately. However the “male population within Zonguldak city between the ages of 16 and 45 who have had some experience in mining work or who are not engaged to any trade or business throughout the year permanently” would be obliged to continue their work in the mines until 1 September, 1947.<sup>782</sup>

The same amendment put an end to the compulsory labor regime for permanent workers and for workers from the villages of Trabzon, Giresun and Rize by August 1946. Although the number of obligated workers in the permanent category was limited, EKI did not wish to lose that labor force as well. Partial abolition of the regime for certain categories and groups from certain regions would bring problems. The EKI management desired to maintain the regime for all the compulsory workers, regardless their status and places of origin. It claimed that it would not be fair that in the same village while the obligation for some was over, some others would still be bound to work under the compulsory labor regime. Indeed EKI just tried to extend the practice as long as possible.

---

<sup>780</sup> Correspondence marked as “confidential” from EKI to the Ministry of Economy dated April 9, 1947, Private Archives of Ekrem Murat Zaman.

<sup>781</sup> For the full text of Cabinet decision K/654, see 19.8.1946, Catalog no. [ PMRA 030.18.01.02. 111.52.15].

<sup>782</sup> Ibid.

In order not to lose mine workers from nearby villages who had been registered in the permanent category in 1940, EKI transformed their status from permanent to rotational workers to skip the requirement of the 1946 decision. Therefore, through manipulating the records, EKI violated the 1946 decision and tried to keep its permanent mine workers under the compulsory labor regime. However, the Ministry of Economy warned the EKI management in a letter dated 27 February, 1947 about the unlawful acts and asked them to persuade the permanent workers to continue working in the mines rather than playing with the worker records.<sup>783</sup>

By 1946 EKI began to search for ways to prevail on the workers to maintain their work in the mines after the abolition of the forced labor practice. Social services came onto agenda of the EKI management, one of the most effective means to persuade the workers. After the war, EKI had to replace coercion with consent through expanding social services and increasing wages. In this line, by 1946 EKI began to implement several social policy measures. To stabilize the existing work force and to attract new workers to the mines, EKI began to pay a certain amount of bonus as incentives to the workers according to the total days they had worked. It also enriched the social services, providing clothing for its permanent workers, enabling the ones in need to buy grain at low prices, and establishing health care units for the families of the workers from the basin's villages. To increase the number of permanent workers in the mines, it directed its social services at particularly those who tended to work for long duration in the mines, rather than the short cyclical work period of the previous decades.

Alongside the effort to increase the number of the permanent workers, EKI tried to eliminate its dependency on the local networks for labor recruitment. To this end, it decided to establish recruitment offices in the counties of the basin to diminish the power of the local

---

<sup>783</sup> Letter, dated 27 February, 1947, sent by Ministry of Economy, Mining Department to EKI. Ekrem Zaman Private Archive.

intermediaries. One other step EKI took was to cooperate with the organization of the Ministry of Labor to recruit workers from the eastern Anatolian provinces.<sup>784</sup> Yet EKI was reluctant to give up on the advantages the local middlemen provided. In the in-house submitted by EKI management to the Ministry of Economy on 9 April 1947, EKI recommended a middle way for the recruitment process, which would involve both the establishment of a recruitment office and the local middlemen.<sup>785</sup> Accordingly, EKI would set up its own employment office. The recruitment staff would be composed of head functionaries, functionaries and recruitment agents. The recruitment agents would find workers from villages and they would receive 1 piaster per payment per day made to the workers they found. So, to increase his earning the recruitment agent had to find workers who would work for longer periods of time. The longer they stayed in the mines, the more the recruiter agents earned.

What EKI did was to utilize the previous local networks in the recruitment process, in a more complicated and controlled manner. Hence, while accessing the labor market via local agents, EKI eliminated the bargaining power of the previous local actors, through turning them into semi-official company agents. However, the Ministry of Labor and the Labor Placement Bureau (*İş ve İşçi Bulma Kurumu*) desired to establish a bureau affiliated to the Labor Placement Bureau of the Ministry of Labor. The ministerial authorities preferred civil servants to recruitment agents to get in touch with the villagers.<sup>786</sup> However, neither the Ministry of Labor nor the Labor Placement Bureau was effective in solving the problem of labor recruitment in the basin. For instance in 1948, while half of the workers found by the Bureau agreed to work in the mines, the other half rejected working in the mines.<sup>787</sup>

---

<sup>784</sup> 1946 Report of Inspection Committee, BUMH, *1946 Yılı Raporu*, p. 14

<sup>785</sup> In-house rule on calling and dispatching of alternate workers sent by EKI to the Ministry of Economy as a confidential correspondence on April 9, 1947, Private Archives of Ekrem Murat Zaman.

<sup>786</sup> Protocol signed on March 25, 1947 between the Ministry of Labor, Labor Placement Bureau, Mardin Office and representatives of EKI, Private Archives of Ekrem Murat Zaman.

<sup>787</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

Upon the end of compulsory labor in 1947, EKI attempted to provide labor force through both local and institutional sources. It maintained the facilities provided by the local traditional networks in the recruitment process. It also set up an employment department in 1948. The department kept the register of the applicants and assessing the conformity of the workers determined if they were fit to work in the mines or not. Apart from the applications of the mine workers EKI tried to cover its need of manpower through recruitment bureaus opened in highly populated towns such as Devrek, Bartın, and Çaycuma. It assigned semi-official agents to persuade men to work in the mines.<sup>788</sup> The village headmen, on the other hand, continued to serve EKI in finding manpower from villages in return to a commissions for every mine worker they provided. The total sum of monies to be paid to the village headmen and dispatch clerks was anticipated as 220,000 liras in 1948.<sup>789</sup> The village headmen and the local party members continued to persuade or coerce their villagers to work in the mines. The influence of local networks in the recruitment process lasted until 1961.<sup>790</sup>

#### The Post-War Labor Policies of EKI and Social Services

During the war years and afterwards, the worries of creating a permanent and stable work force in the basin continued among the ruling circle. While the forced labor regime provided an abundant number of laborers, all the authorities in the basin were well aware of that this was a temporary solution. They knew that after the annulment of the forced labor regime they would be confronted with the question of creating a stable and professional work force. The housing policy once again appeared on the agenda of EKI as a means of creating a professional mining community. During the war years, while meeting the immediate housing

---

<sup>788</sup> 1948 Report of General Inspection Committee, BUMH, *1948 Yılı Raporu*, p. 25.

<sup>789</sup> (EKI) 1948 Work Program, TTK, İhsan Soyak Archive, File no. 7, p. 2.

<sup>790</sup> Roy, Delvin. "Labor and Trade Unionism in Turkey: The Ereğli Coalmines," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Volume 12, Number 3, (October 1976), p. 137.

needs of the workers through building dormitories, EKI followed a housing policy compatible in the long run with creating a stable and also malleable work force. For the same end, it also began a training program to create a skilled labor force. In both housing and training of the workers, EKI pursued two distinctive policies in accordance to the skill levels of the workers. Through housing and training certain amount of workers the company attempted to create a skilled, permanent, high salaried and loyal segment within the work force. The vocational schools had already been established in the basin before 1940. During the war years their programs were improved and a number of experienced workers or young employees benefited from these schools and constituted nucleus of the middle range technical and supervisory cadres of the work force. On the other hand, the unskilled, manual workers who constituted the largest segment of the work force were kept in their villages. This segment was involved in an elementary education program containing arithmetic, writing and reading, and civics. It was aimed to create a true worker affiliated with his nation and his occupation.

During the war years EKI management and the official authorities continued to discuss the housing problem of the basin's workers in the line with the discussions held in the 1930s. By the end of the 1930s and in the initial years of the 1940s two different projects were competed. As discussed in the previous chapters, Granigg's project of settling mine workers in company owned worker village had found support in the late 1930s. The project was brought up again by the inspection committees of Etibank in the 1940s. In 1941, for example, the inspection committee emphasized how significant it was to obtain permanent housing for mine workers together with their families. In this report, the permanent settlement of workers was discussed in relation to the formation of a professional worker community. The villagers' continual ties to their village and lands were pointed out as the main obstacle in creating a professional mine worker.<sup>791</sup>

---

<sup>791</sup>BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri ve İctimai Teşkilatı Hakkında 1941 Yılı Raporu*, pp. 23-24.

Similar concerns were voiced in the 1942 report of inspection committee.<sup>792</sup> According to the report, it was difficult to imagine permanent manpower while workers lived in bachelor conditions. In order to provide productive and qualified workers, pursuing mining as a profession, the committee recommended the permanent settlement of the mine workers in the vicinity of the mines. Similarly, another report of the inspection committee echoed Granigg's recommendations. It was suggested to settle the workers near the mines so as to answer the permanent and qualified labor issue. They were to be provided together with their families with small scale gardening and small scale cattle raising. In line with these recommendations, by the early 1940s, housing projects for married workers were prepared to be started promptly.<sup>793</sup>

Actually, the idea of housing for the workers in the company village was discussed in an academic circle in reference to generate a productive and qualified manpower in the service of industrial sectors in Turkey. The settlement of workers in company compounds was seen as an instrument which would guarantee the reproduction of the labor force and would discipline the daily course of the workers' lives in accordance to the requirement of work life. For instance, in the second issue of the monthly *Çalışma* published by the Ministry of Labor, several articles debate the worker's village project. In one, Orhan Alsaç pointed out that, to increase worker productivity, it was a must to deal with the off time of the workers apart from their working hours. Alsaç recommended the containment of worker's lives in all of its dimension. Company controlled compounds would solve the social problems of the workers within a disciplinary social network created by the company itself. He suggested that in such a company village the free time of the workers would be controlled via houses with gardens. Hence, designing different type of houses and apartments for bachelors and married workers within compounds as well as baths would contribute in generating a productive and disciplined

---

<sup>792</sup> BUMH, 1942 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu (n.p: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1943), p. 64.

<sup>793</sup> Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, 1942 Hesaplarımızı Tetkik Eden Komisyon Raporu, p.19, in TKİ, İhsan Soyak Private Archive.



labor force.<sup>794</sup> Similar opinions were also expressed by İhsan Atabarut in the same issue of the journal.<sup>795</sup>

However, there was another circle regarding the settlement of the workers in permanent resident with suspicion. For instance In the January 1946 issue of *Çalışma* journal, Zonguldak deputies Rebii Barkın discussed the worker village project in regard with the Zonguldak mine workers. He recommended keeping the mine workers in their respective villages. Accordingly, the problem of a qualified and stable labor force in the mines would be solved through improving the means of transportation for the daily travel of the workers between the mines and the villages. In addition, the workers' commitment to mining would be enforced by means of social policy measures such as providing workers social services.<sup>796</sup>

Indeed, Barkın's recommendation represented a project alternative to Granigg's worker village project. This second project prevailed over the company housing project in the 1940s. The second project was built on the basis of keeping the villager workers in their villages. Mainly, the Zonguldak deputies of RPP stood for it. In one of their inspection reports, the deputies pointed out that since no appropriate land was available for families in the vicinity of the mines, a worker village project would be costly. The deputies believed it would be better to connect the villages of Zonguldak, Ereğli, Devrek and Bartın to the mines and head counties by constructing paved roads rather than detaching the villagers from their homes. Accordingly, through assigning villages to certain mine districts, this project would restrict the free movement of the workers between different mine districts and would stabilize the labor force.<sup>797</sup> Furthermore, the deputies recommended the establishment of a patronage relationship between the mine workers and the state within which the state would satisfy all economic,

---

<sup>794</sup> Orhan Alsaç, "İşçi Evlerine Dair," *Çalışma Journal* no. 2 (November 1945), pp. 50-56.

<sup>795</sup> İhsan Atabarut, "İşçi Evlerinin Sosyal Esasları Hakkında," *Çalışma Journal* no. 2 (November 1945), pp. 57-60.

<sup>796</sup> Rebii Barkın, "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında Kalifiye İşçi Davası," *Çalışma Journal* no. 3 (January 1946), pp. 15-20.

<sup>797</sup> 20.1.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.], Report of Zonguldak deputies after their inspection in September 1940.

social and cultural requirements of the workers and in return the workers would devote them in the service of the state. Accordingly,

The reason why our villagers have found it necessary to be bound to an *ağa* was a necessity in both economic and security purposes. The government of the Turkish Republic had eliminated such a need for security purposes by taking influential measures. Even denouncing such a failure is painful, it must be admitted that we have not been able to eliminate the economic necessities and this is not so easy at all. The villagers seek to assign themselves to a patron, whom they believe will be able to meet their most urgent requirements whenever they need. This is the fact that should be kept in consideration as a principle in solving the labor question. In other words, the government should act as the patron of the mines, mine workers and their villages. This would be the only solution to get rid of the labor question in a short time.<sup>798</sup>

What the deputies sought was to create an unfree worker community under the full control of the state, through reconstructing the patron-client or indeed master-servant relations between the workers living surrounding villages and the state. Hence, the state would situate itself in the existing local hierarchical web, though functioning as the *ağa* of the people. In solving the question of free labor, the deputies of the Republic clearly appropriated the old power relations in new forms with new purposes. For this end, the management of every mining district would take the responsibility of the villages assigned to them, conducting their economic, social and cultural problems as well.<sup>799</sup> Indeed, what the deputies recommend was binding the villages to the mines through putting their social space under the full control of EKI. The project was more suited in the paternalist vision of the time, which veiled the desire of making workers unfree, rather than servant under the control of EKI.

The future of Granigg's project came to light when in 1941, EKI's attempt to expropriate of a village to build a workers village encountered the objection of the villagers. EKI had applied to the governor's office to expropriate Cumayanı village to build a worker village for the mine workers of Gelik and Karadon districts. The villagers of Cumayanı in Kilimli expressed their reaction to the Zonguldak deputies against the expropriation attempts of EKI.

---

<sup>798</sup> Ibid.

<sup>799</sup> 20.1.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.], Report of Zonguldak deputies after their inspection in September 1940.

The deputies reported that the villagers had complained about dispossessing their lands which would force them to migrate and would lead to their misery.<sup>800</sup> Then the attempt of EKI ended in failure. The villagers' opposition warned the authorities about the potential danger of the worker village project. Such a project would create not only a homogenous mining community with a potential of class struggle, but also a village community in rebellion against the forced deportation from their villages.

Then, binding villages to the mines via a road web appeared to be more viable solution than a worker village. The road project was supported particularly by Zonguldak deputies. In their inspection reports dated 23 March, 1942, they continued to mention the project of connecting villages to the mines with paved roads. In their view, generating permanent manpower did not require forcing workers to break their ties with their villages and settling them around the mines with their families. In order to generate permanent and qualified workers, wages should be raised before all else. And betterment of city roads would facilitate the commuting of workers between the mines and their homes.<sup>801</sup>

By the mid-1940s the road project received priority in the reports of the inspection committees. The 1944 inspection report raised criticisms against the worker village project similar to those of the Zonguldak deputies.<sup>802</sup> The committee condemned Granigg's project of building workers villages because of its high cost. Furthermore, it claimed that detaching workers from their villages and settling them in a new compound would bring social and political upheaval in the region. Critics asserted that the confiscation of land for building worker villages would destroy the lives of villagers and would lead to significant social unrest. Accordingly, the workers who lived in an area of 100 km long and fifty km wide would be able

---

<sup>800</sup> Ibid.

<sup>801</sup> 3.12.1942, Catalog no. [ PMRA 490..1.0.0 /722.470..1.], Report of Zonguldak deputies after their inspection dated 23.03.1942.

<sup>802</sup> BUMH, Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1944 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu.

to travel daily between the mines and the villages via rails and buses after the construction of road connection between the villages and the mines.<sup>803</sup>

Likewise, the 1947 inspection report articulated parallel opinions. Accordingly, the worker who attended work regularly and showed high performance was the ones able to go home every night and able to keep his ties to his daily social environment. Means of transportation would serve such an end, bringing the workers closer to their jobs. When the road connections were accomplished, the rotational work pattern would disappear gradually, and it would give rise to a worker community in high productivity and with a love of mining.<sup>804</sup>

By the mid-1940s, the project of connecting the villages to the mines by constructing roads took the lead versus Granigg's project. On the other hand, Granigg project was not abandoned totally. Both projects articulated the two-sided housing policy of EKI, one for unskilled workers and the other for skilled one. The 1944 management program of EKI (*Amenajman Programı*) included a plan in regard to the housing question of the workers. According to the new housing plan, the priority was given to settlement of qualified workers such as foremen, technicians, headmen and permanent underground workers. To this end, it was planned to improve company quarters for the settlement of certain segments of the work force. According to the new housing plan, on the other hand, the unskilled workers who kept their ties with their villages would continue living in their homes and their transportation would be facilitated with paved roads and railway.

However, in the second part of the 1940s the housing program of the 1944 management program began to be a target of criticism. The management program of 1944 suggested the construction of 14,300 more houses in addition to the present 3,000 buildings. The investigation committee of Etibank criticized the program in 1947 on such grounds that in the mining districts the territory was neither available nor convenient to build some 14,000

---

<sup>803</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>804</sup> BUMH, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Raporu*, p. 26.

houses with gardens. Furthermore, generating a mass of workers in Zonguldak would be risky both socially and politically. Last, after the exhaustion of the coal in the mines such a large scale company village would become a burden and an inert investment.<sup>805</sup>

The 1944 plan necessitated a solid budget as well. Since such budget was not provided, the plan was put in practice on a limited scale.<sup>806</sup> However, in 1948, after obtaining a loan from the United States in line with the Marshall plan in 1948, the housing project gained financial support. Meanwhile, the objectives of the 1944 plan were narrowed. On the grounds of that creating a homogenous mining community would give rise to a class identity and to class struggle, the plan was changed to build only 4,000 houses with gardens instead of 14,300. Consequently, it was decided that twenty-five percent of the workers would live in the EKI compound and the unskilled workers from surrounding villages who constituted nearly fifty-five percent of mine labor force would commute from the villages to the mines via road connections in the region within a diameter of thirty-five km. In this way eighty-five percent of the work force would become permanent and qualified mine workers who would not be able to unite against the company in a class struggle. Hence the policy of housing that EKI articulated prevented the rise of a mine worker class in unity and solidarity.<sup>807</sup>

Along with the housing of the workers in line with the creation of a permanent work force, EKI improved the vocational schools in the basin. Although professional training had already begun by the mid-thirties, the number of trained staff was insufficient to meet the demand. By mid 1935 MTA was charged with the establishment of the vocational training in the basin. In 1937 MTA opened the Mining Vocational School (*Maden Meslek Mektebi*) and during the war period the school was improved by the establishment of two branches, one was

---

<sup>805</sup> BUMH, 1947 Yılı Raporu, p. 23; and 1949 BUMH, *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1949 Yılı Raporu*, pp. 33-71.

<sup>806</sup> The housing project of 1944 Management Plan was put in practice in 1944 and house construction for qualified workers began by 1944. For the realization of the housing project, see "Havzanın İmar Tesis ve Teçhizine Ait Bazı Notary," *Maden*, 1 (1945), pp.38-40.

<sup>807</sup> For 1944 General Management Project and 1948 Renovation Project, see Ahmet Ali Özeken, "Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçiyi Barındırma Problemi," *Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları*, Book III, pp. 103-130; and Rahmi Akıncı, "Zonguldak Kömür Havzası Hakkında Bilgiler", *Maden*, 7-8 (1947), p. 55

for the training of mining technicians and the other for the training of mining overseers.<sup>808</sup> Following them, in 1941 the Zonguldak Mining Technician School was established in 1941. Students who finished the school with the highest grades were interviewed by a committee set up by MTA to have on-the-job training for six months in a mining company either abroad or in a local company. Graduates of the Apprenticeship Courses began in 1942. The students were employed on ground jobs and EKI's workshops. Apprenticeship courses were directly managed by the production department of EKI.<sup>809</sup> In 1945, the Art School was opened. It trained mechanics, carpenters and blacksmiths for EKI's workshops.<sup>810</sup>

In the war years, although the training of manual workers came on the agenda of EKI, it was not institutionalized. The rotational work pattern and the forced labor practice made the training of manual workers nearly impossible. Under the forced labor regime, no workers had a worry to improve their profession. Forced working, low wages, hardship mining, and the lack of social security were some of the reasons why workers were uncertain and slack towards mining.<sup>811</sup> In 1937 the companies were required by law to establish courses for mine workers. These courses were maintained in the war years, although inefficiently. The attendants were grouped into two as literate and illiterate, they were taught the same curriculum as of that the public schools. While the number of total literate workers was 412, total of illiterate workers was 8,433 in 1941.<sup>812</sup> However, production pressure and the unwillingness of students to attend disrupted the courses. The courses functioned mostly as a place of official speeches to the workers.<sup>813</sup>

It was during the post-war period that workers received primary education. In 1946, eighty-six teachers were in charge of teaching reading and writing, civics and basic arithmetic

---

<sup>808</sup> BUMH, 1944 Yılı Raporu, p. 133

<sup>809</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, p. 90

<sup>810</sup> BUMH, 1946 Yılı Raporu, p. 103

<sup>811</sup> BUMH, İşçi Meseleleri, p.20.

<sup>812</sup> Sadrettin Enver, Zonguldak Kömür Havzamız (Ankara: Etibank Yayınları, 1941), p.84.

<sup>813</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu p. 90.

to 20,000 workers.<sup>814</sup> The worker's primary classes lasted until 1949. The Worker Reading Book (*İşçi Okuma Kitabı*) of the courses taught reading to the workers. The book also taught the attendant students the ways of being proper workers and citizens. Work ethics, love of work, work discipline, hygiene and safety regulations were the major topics of the book.<sup>815</sup> A text in the reading book said, "A good worker obeys the command. He respects his superiors. He obeys order. He works hard, fills his wallet. A good worker does not have accidents. He is useful to his country. A clean worker is healthy. He accomplishes a lot of work. He earns plenty of money. He marries and has offspring. He lives comfortably. A dirty worker is sick; he can neither work nor live happily."<sup>816</sup>

In the Technical Advice section of the book there were pictures showing what-to-do and what-not-to-do with brief, easy-to-remember command such as "Wait for your turn in the lift. Stand still. Do not make noise. Pay attention to the pictures. See the possible dangers. If you are disabled, you will stay away from your job. You will become unable to work for the rest of your life. The one who was careful, will survive and work. The reckless one dies and the light of his house/family fades forever."<sup>817</sup> The book described the ideal worker as one who devotes himself to his country, obeying the rules, loyal to his work, respectful to his superiors. He is a worker whose living depended on his work and he is the head of his family who takes care of his family as long as he earns money and he has job security.

Actually, EKI did not allocate its resources to the training of unskilled workers. As long as the production process remained labor intensive, underground workers acquired their skills through informal apprenticeships in the work process. On the other hand, EKI initiated company owned primary schools in the basin. During the 1947-1948 semesters, there were

---

<sup>814</sup> BUMH, 1946 Yılı Raporu, p. 102.

<sup>815</sup> Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Kültür Sevisi, *Maden İşçisi Okuma Kitabı*, (np.: Osmanbey Matbaası, 1947)

<sup>816</sup> "İyi işçi emir dinler. Büyüğünü sayar. Nizam güder. İş bol. Kesesi dolu olur. Kazaya uğramaz. Memlekete faydalı olur. Temiz işçi sağlam olur. Çok iş başarır. Bol bol para kazanır. Yuvasını kurar, çocuğu olur. Rahat yaşar. Pis işçi hasta olur, çalışamaz, yaşayamaz". Ibid. pp.52-53;

<sup>817</sup> "Kafeste sıranı bekle. Doğru dur. Şamata etme. Resme dikkat et. Başına ne gelir anla. Sakat olur, işten uzak kalırsın. Ömrün boyunca çalışamazsın...Sakınan yaşar, çalışır. Dikkatsiz olan ölür, ocağı söner" Ibid. pp.45-46.

five elementary schools under the supervision of EKI. The schools were located in different production areas, in Üzülmmez, Kılıç, Kilimli, Gelik and Kandilli. The history of the oldest one, Üzülmmez elementary school, indicated the development of Zonguldak as an company city. The school was established in 1927. It was financed by Ereğli and Türk-İş Companies in the thirties and was taken over by EKI management after the nationalization of the basin.<sup>818</sup>

Owing its survival to coal production, Zonguldak had always been a company city. The companies in the city functioned as a municipality, providing public services such as local transportation facilities, medical services, public education, and as such services which originally belonged to the state. After the establishment of EKI, the city came under the full control of the company. With its flag, its currency valid in *Ekonomas*, its Follow-up Office, its social services to the residents, most of whom were EKI's workers or personnel, the company appropriated economic and at the same time political power, acting as a state within a state. With the state's support, EKI took over the state's public responsibilities as well.

For instance, all affairs of the educational staff at EKI's primary schools, such as their appointments, promotions, transfers and exchanges were handled by the local branch of the Ministry of National Education. However, their salaries were paid by EKI. The company also provided the school building, all inventory and teaching materials. Yet a standard educational system and curriculum was followed as in all elementary public schools.<sup>819</sup> The elementary schools of EKI were neither categorized as public nor private schools. Although the Etibank inspector committee recommended in their 1948 and 1949 reports that it would be better to transfer the EKI's schools to the Ministry of Education, in the following years the exceptional status of the schools remained unchanged.<sup>820</sup> The raised objections did not change the

---

<sup>818</sup> For the locations of elementary schools see. BUMH, 1949 Yılı Raporu, pp.99-100. History of Üzülmmez Elementary School can be found in Özalp, Namık Özalp, pp.44.

<sup>819</sup> Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporuna Cevap (Ankara: Etibank, 1948), p.21.

<sup>820</sup> BUMH, 1948 Yılı Raporu, pp. 57 and BUMH, 1949 Yılı Raporu, p. 5.



situation and the state council gave EKI' schools private school status in the end.<sup>821</sup> The EKI private schools educated the children of EKI employees and workers as well as those of local people for a long time. The company served free lunches to the children and provided them with free transportation as well. Most of the graduates of the schools filled vacant positions in EKI as office staff, headmen, timecard readers, mechanics, grader and lathe operators, drivers, electricians, guards, carpenters and mine workers.<sup>822</sup>

---

<sup>821</sup> Although the Ministry of Economy categorized those schools as private schools, the teachers of the schools were subjected to Ministry of National Education. This duality some times brought disputes. When one of the teachers of those schools suffered due to this duality, he appealed to the state council and eventually won the case. Then the schools gained private status under the full control of EKI. Özalp, p. 44.

<sup>822</sup> For the list of occupations which the graduates of Üzülmöz elementary school took , see Özalp, pp. 50-116.

## CHAPTER 8

### LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS UNDER THE FORCED LABOR REGIME AND THE MINE WORKERS QUEST FOR IMPROVEMENTS

#### Accommodation Conditions of the Mine Workers during the War Period

The compulsory labor act brought a huge number of people to the basin. By 1940 the daily number of total workers in Ereğli basin rose the approximately from 18,000 of pre-war years to 28,000 in the war years.<sup>823</sup> Considering the rotational work system, EKI had to manage nearly 40,000 mine workers with continual motion between the mines and the villages. The most urgent issue EKI faced in the war period was transporting, accommodating and feeding almost all of these people. While accommodation was provided for a few qualified permanent workers by means of a number of facilities, the provisioning and housing of rotational workers remained a major problem.

EKI had to meet the accommodation and provision of the workers with its inadequate infra structure and the budget. Both the nationalization of the basin and the compulsory labor regime gave EKI the responsibility of managing a rather large area with huge numbers of workers, which EKI could not overcome with its present organizational structure. In order to overcome the problems of housing and provisioning EKI had already established a social service unit before the outbreak of the war. Even in the prewar years social services of EKI

---

<sup>823</sup> According to the 1941 Report of Inspection Committee, the workers worked in the Ereğli mines in 1940 comprised eighty-two percent of all mine workers in Turkey. BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri*, p. 7.

had comprised the most expensive item in the budget of the organization.<sup>824</sup> During the war, the health care, accommodation, provisioning and transportation requirements of the workers rose in parallel with the increase in the numbers of the workers. The deficient budgets, lack of construction materials, and inadequate transportation facilities made the situation worse. In these conditions, EKI provided the workers with various social services on a limited scale. It aimed at meeting first the urgent requirements of these overpopulated workers.

During the war years, the cost of social services rose in parallel with the enlargement in the scope of social services aiming at helping the increasing numbers of workers. The social service unit of EKI grew in the war years. It was reorganized under the name of the Group Directorship of Social Affairs (*Sosyal İşler Grup Müdürlüğü*). The directorship endeavored to meet the requirements of the workers by dealing with their health care, clothing, physical exercise, self-defense and cultural needs apart from their food supply and accommodation.<sup>825</sup> It enlarged with new units, including a supply bureau in charge of bakeries, sale cooperatives and worker cafeterias, and an accommodation bureau in charge of the lodging of workers. In a short time it became one of the largest units at EKI.

The maintenance of coal production at any cost mentality associated with over-employment and high production targets set the limits of social services of EKI during the war years. EKI desired maximum production of coal through meeting the most urgent requirements of the workers at the lowest costs which brought indeed high levels of human suffering. By 1940, workers were sent to the mines before their housing, provisioning and medical care needs were arranged. The narrowness of social services deteriorated the living and working conditions of the workers who had no choice but had to work in the mines under the forced labor regime. As the villages of the basin supplied nearly eighty-five percent of the

---

<sup>824</sup> Eitibank, *Eitibank Mahdut Mes'uliyetli Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesinin 1939 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* (n.p: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940), p. 18.

<sup>825</sup> For the figure, BUMH, *1942 Yılı Raporu*, p. 64.

obliged workers, the villagers of the basin constituted the highest proportion of the total labor force in the mines that suffered the most.<sup>826</sup>

The limited social facilities offered to the villager workers became ineffective due to various reasons. One was the rotational work system. Since workers constantly commuted between the mines and the villages it was not easy for instance, to control the contagious diseases they caught. In addition, workers not abiding by disciplinary regulations refused to stay in worker dormitories, to practice hygiene or to eat in company cafeterias. Hence, for one or another reason, the workers under the forced labor regime suffered a great deal of housing, provisioning and health problems. They were forced to work for minimum wages. They suffered from contagious diseases. They had to share their beds with other workers in dormitories due to there being far too many workers and a limited number of beds. The living conditions associated with the hardness of the mine work pushed the workers to find ways to escape from the work site.

There is no doubt that the white collar employees of EKI had better living conditions than the manual work force due to the discriminatory social policy of EKI. During the war years, EKI continued its housing projects, some of which were realized in the same period. In line with this project, while the technical, administrative and supervisory staff was settled in one-storey houses with gardens or company quarters reserved for the personnel of EKI, the obliged workers were accommodated in low cost worker dormitories as bachelors. Even though a few of the permanent workers, such as foremen and headmen, benefited from the company housing, the majority of them stayed in worker dormitories as rotational workers. Some other permanent workers rented apartments near the mines or stayed in inconvenient

---

<sup>826</sup> 20.1.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.], inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, dated September 1940.

sheds they built themselves. Most of the free workers also stayed in worker quarters and some in rental housing or in unfit barracks.<sup>827</sup>

During the war years, EKI managed to attain low cost accommodation for its workers through constructing new worker dormitories. Several dormitories were constructed in different production districts of the basin.<sup>828</sup> By 1943 the number of worker dormitory reached 119 in twenty-three different production areas. Within the workers compound eleven coffee houses, twenty-three cafeterias, twenty shower units, eleven *ekonomas* (EKI's sale cooperatives), nine bakeries and thirteen laundry rooms served the workers.<sup>829</sup> But considering the numbers of workers, the facilities were far from the adequate. Only after war were improvements attained and in 1946, seventy-five percent of the workers were able to be accommodated in workers' compounds.<sup>830</sup> Until that time, particularly in the first years of the compulsory labor regime, the housing demand of many workers could not be met.

Particularly in the initial years, the workers' complaints about insufficient housing were at their height. While the number of workers increased the number of beds in the dormitories was insufficient. For instance, in 1940, workers transmitted their complaint to the RPP provincial congress that when they came to take their shift at the beginning of every month, they were not given accommodation immediately and they became ill because they had been forced to sleep outdoors.<sup>831</sup> The inspection reports of Zonguldak deputies further proved the inadequate housing conditions of the workers. In their report dated February 1941, the RPP Inspection Committee of the deputies underlined the urgency of the situation, informing the Party General Secretary that in Kandilli there were sixty workers per dormitory which had

---

<sup>827</sup> For different types of accommodation according to the working period and compulsory working status of groups of workers, see Saffettin Pinar, "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasının İşçi İskan Politikası," *İş Dergisi*, 10, no. 38 (April, 1944), pp.29-31.

<sup>828</sup> For the lists of dormitories constructed in 1940,1941 and 1942, see 20/04/1943; Catalog no.[PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.] CHP 10. Vilayet Kongresi, 1942; for the construction activities in 1943 and 1944 Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, Reisicumhur Hazretlerinin Havzayı Teftişlerine Ait Notlar 11/12 Şubat-1944, TTK, İhsan Soyak Archive, no.18.

<sup>829</sup> Inspection Reports provide information about the worker dormitories built in the years of 1942, 1943 and 1944, e.g. number of dormitories and beds. See, BUMH, 1942 *Yılı Raporu*, p. 64; BUMH 1943 *Yılı Raporu*, p. 81 and 138. For the distribution of worker dormitories to the production areas, see 20.4.1943, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.]. Booklet, 1942 Yılı CHP 10. Vilayet Kongresi Kitapçığı.

<sup>830</sup> BUMH, 1946 *Yılı Raporu*, p. 97.

<sup>831</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

maximum of fifteen-to-twenty men.<sup>832</sup> Workers at the Gelik mines were not in any better condition than the Kandilli workers. EKI's record shows that some workers at Gelik became sick because they had to sleep outdoors.<sup>833</sup> The Inspection Committee, too, highlighted the same issue in its report to the Party General Secretary. The committee members emphasized that the Gelik workers had long suffered in tight and badly ventilated sheds.<sup>834</sup> However, the decision makers did not reply to the complaints in the workers' favor. Blaming the workers' attitudes, the Ministry of Economy stated that, although there were enough beds in the wards those workers who avoided discipline and hygiene measures preferred to sleep outdoor in summer time.<sup>835</sup>

Actually, EKI used the dormitories as a means of control, trying to discipline the eating and cleaning habits of the workers. Particularly, the unhealthy conditions of the dormitories invited diseases, some of which were contiguous and threatened the whole of the basin. For this reason, EKI tried to establish strict rule for hygiene. They were made to take showers, change their underwear and clean their overalls before going in the dormitories and those who did not obey were subject to punishment. Workers' cleaning habits and the trouble they put up with for cleaning purposes led them to violate the hygiene regulations. For instance, the overalls and underwear of the workers had to be cleaned under high vapor pressure of lice or any other pests. However, since most workers had only one set of underwear they either had to be naked until their clothing was dried or put their clothes on when wet. On the other hand, even if they wished to, the workers could not wash up properly because of water cuts in the shower units. They had to clean up before using the eating facilities as well. Otherwise they were not given food coupons.

---

<sup>832</sup> 20.1.1942, Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1].

<sup>833</sup> Incoming document dated 6.9.1941 about illness of workers at Gelik mines, in KUA, 9.8.1941-13.8.1941 *Evrak İrsalat Defteri*.

<sup>834</sup> 21.7.1942, Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 /722.469..1].

<sup>835</sup> 24.10.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490.1.0.0/ 491.1978.1.]; the complaint letter handed to RPP Secretary General Mahmut Şevket Esenal by RPP Zonguldak Administrative Board Member Ali Rıza İnçalemdaroğlu. The reply of the Minister of Economy dated 26.6.1944.

Such military discipline in the dormitories forced the workers to find accommodations outside the company circles. Those who did not want to obey the severe health and hygiene measures left the dormitories, preferring to sleep outdoors under the bushes and the trees or in shacks. The shacks had even more miserable health conditions than the dormitories. Workers who survived in shacks slept next to their pickaxes, using logs as pillows, baking their bread over the fire they burned on tin cans, washing up by the brook and not changing their clothes. Despite the unsanitary conditions of the shacks, it would take some time for workers to get used to living in EKI compounds because of their objection to hygienic measures.

The rules and regulations in the dormitories did not serve to prevent contagious diseases among the crowd of workers through meeting minimum hygiene requirements. It also intended to discipline them by exercising company regulations. The reason those accommodation facilities were called worker dormitories, worker barracks or worker quarters was to give the impression of military or school conditions. Professors Gerhard Kessler, from the Department of Economy at Istanbul University, made the same observation when he visited the workers dormitories in the basin.<sup>836</sup> Kessler described the dormitories in which the workers were accommodated as barracks, with no landscapes or family picture on the walls. All of the dormitories were clean and tidy, with nothing personal belonging to the workers. The cafeterias were kept clean, but with no decorative elements, such as table cloths or curtains.<sup>837</sup>

This was related not only to the extra-ordinary conditions in the basin. Perceiving the mine workers like soldiers or bachelors at the work site constituted the very idea of the dormitories. As long as the workers left their families behind and worked in the mines for short periods of time, they did not develop personal relations with the places in which they stayed. The low cost production policy of EKI entailed the organization of mine workers' accommodation as if the workers were single. The low wage economy of the companies,

---

<sup>836</sup> Kessler, *Zonguldak ve Karabük'te Çalışma Şartları*, p. 181

<sup>837</sup> Ibid.

including EKI, provided social facilities to a limited extent. Under the constraints of the war years, EKI had to accommodate high numbers of workers as quickly as possible. The dormitories served this end at low costs. However, the accommodation of workers in dormitories was not unique to the war conditions. It was rather a policy with a long tradition going back to the social policies of the Ereğli Company as early as the late nineteenth century. EKI followed the same tradition before and after the Second World War.

### Moving between the Mines and the Villages: Transportation Difficulties and Workers' Requests

Throughout the war period, EKI sought to organize the cyclical movements of the rotational workers between the mines and the villages. The transportation of nearly 40,000 workers was one of the most challenging problems EKI faced with the inadequate transportation infrastructure. Needless to say, the basin's villager workers bore the heavy burden of the transportation problems. Both travel to the work site and returning to the villages were painful experiences for the workers. When the work period came, the workers gathered at meeting points and waited for trains or trucks to take them to the mines. Sometimes while waiting for the trains or trucks they had to sleep outdoors for a couple of days. Particularly in winter and on rainy days this meant to arrive at the mines already ill. After they arrived at the work site, the difficulties did not end. This time they had to wait the dormitories were vacated by the previous rotation group, which meant being without shelter for another couple of days before starting to work.<sup>838</sup>

Distressed by the transportation difficulties, the workers began to pressure the political bodies for the immediate betterment of the roads and transportation means. During

---

<sup>838</sup> 942 Yılı CHP 10. Vilayet Kongresi.



the inspection tours made by the deputies both in 1940 and 1941 and the RPP provincial congress they brought up their transportation problems. Some of the complaints were about the trouble the workers went through at the meeting stations. Since there were no waiting lounges the workers had to wait for the trains outside for two or three days, and by the time the men arrived at the mines, they were ill. The workers also complained about the arbitrary behavior of the compulsory labor follow-up clerks, who made them wait for two days without valid reasons and not dispatch them to the trains immediately. The Zonguldak deputies reported the complaints of workers were kept waiting for days at the Kokaksu station. The deputies recommended to the RPP General Secretary that a waiting lounge be provided for the station. The deputies urged the General Secretary that the Ministry of Transportation (*Münakalat Vekaleti*) be prevented from the arbitrary treatment of the follow up officials, which harmed the people.<sup>839</sup>

Despite the many complaints about the waiting stations, the waiting lounges were not provided. Almost 4,000 obliged workers from Bartın and Devrek continued to wait for the train in cold and rainy weather for many days on their way to the mine districts.<sup>840</sup> Just like in Kokaksu, similar trouble was seen at Cebeci station, where workers from Bartın were dispatched to the Zonguldak mines. Since there were no barracks in Cebeci, the workers from Bartın made an application asking to meet at different stations. The Ministry of Transportation approved their application.<sup>841</sup> In the following years waiting lounges were built in Kokaksu, Cebeci and Tefen stations and the workers' problems of waiting outdoors was solved partially.<sup>842</sup>

However, the conditions of the roads were far from adequate for the constant shipping of people and mining supplies. The transportation of heavy mining supplies also deteriorated

---

<sup>839</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, September 1940

<sup>840</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, summer 1941

<sup>841</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>842</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

the railways and dirt roads. The ruined roads made transportation extremely difficult. The workers from Bartın complained about the Kokaksu rail line, which did not allow any passage, particularly in winter.<sup>843</sup> Because of the insufficient roads and railways, the workers had great difficulty while traveling between their villages and the mines or between the mines and the town center. The workers who were dispatched from Ereğli to the Zonguldak mines complained about the difficulties they had on their journey. The difficulties multiplied when transporting the injured co-workers after mine accidents or patients even to the nearest hospitals. The workers from Ereğli urged that the coastal road from Ereğli to Zonguldak be constructed immediately.<sup>844</sup>

In addition to the Ereğli workers, the workers from Çaycuma claimed that that their town was one of centers of mine workers. On this ground, they requested the extension of the suburban railway line between Zonguldak and Filyos to the Çaycuma train station. The people of Filyos, on the other hand, protested that although the mine workers were entitled to discounted tickets, no discount was applied to the train fair from Filyos to Zonguldak. Listening to the complaints, the deputies stated the issue in their reports and asked that an investigation be made into the officers in charge about this unfair discrimination.<sup>845</sup>

The mine workers also protested about the vehicles they traveled during their transportation. During the congresses held in 1940, workers from the Gelik mines complained that they became ill from travelling on open wagons. In the party congress, they asked for closed wagons. The related ministry promised to take the request into consideration.<sup>846</sup> Similarly, in the 1941 town congresses of the RPP, the Zonguldak residents complained about the over crowding of the wagons which were reserved for EKI personal but served a high number of mine workers as well. They also requested safety checks of the wagons. The reply

---

<sup>843</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog No: [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /513.2061..2.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 8/10/1942.

<sup>844</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, September 1940

<sup>845</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, September 1940

<sup>846</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

they received was that the wagons would be improved.<sup>847</sup> The mine workers of the Kozlu pits requested to use the transportation facilities of the railway between Kozlu and Zonguldak, which was reserved primarily to transport coal cargo.<sup>848</sup>

In one or another way the mine workers from the surrounding villages attempted to improve their transportation conditions, making the political bodies aware of difficulties in traveling between the mines and villages. Most of their requirements were not satisfied immediately. However, throughout the years the complaints regarding transportation difficulties decreased in parallel with the improvements in the existing lines and the construction of new ones. It is obvious that EKI had to improve transportation conditions since roads were vital for particularly the transportation of coal and mining supplies. Whenever the budget allowed efforts were made to improve all roads and railways. For the improved circulation of supplies, coal and labor power, EKI gave privilege to road construction in the following years.<sup>849</sup>

#### The Provisioning Policy of EKI and Nutrition Conditions of the Mine Workers

During the war years one of the most urgent problems EKI confronted was supplying provisions. Serving hot food was started in the 1930s by the mining companies of İş Bankası and it continued through the 1940s. But the food shortage in the war years brought great difficulties in the provisioning of the workers of the basin. In 1942, Zonguldak deputies reported that serving food for the 20,000 workers a day was quite troublesome for EKI, and they requested a solution for the enterprise in easing their problem.<sup>850</sup> Yet even though EKI faced difficulties in providing flour and other main materials due to heavy war conditions, it

---

<sup>847</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>848</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945.

<sup>849</sup> For the plan of road construction in the basin and classification of planned roads in accordance to their significance, see 11/8/1942, Catalog no. [PMRA, 030 01 159 128]

used its entire means to meet the workers' need for food. Having checked the 1942 account sheets of EKI, the inspection committee reported that while the ration of bread had been 1100 grams until the end of 1942, it had been reduced to 750 grams by October 1 the same year. The committee also indicated that the productivity of workers had dropped significantly in that same time.<sup>851</sup> Provision problems continued in 1943. In this year, the wheat stock of the Soil Products Office (*Toprak Mahsulleri Ofisi*) dropped tremendously in August and September and the flour stock of EKI came only to meet a forty-eight hour demand. Since this shortage occurred at harvest time, the basin population faced a serious scarcity of bread.<sup>852</sup>

Along with the food shortage and inadequate nutrition, the workers had to pay toll for meal. Trying to lower the cost of the food supply, EKI served three meals a day to workers for four liras per month. The meals included a cup of soup, bread and a main course. The waged meal service did not attract the mine workers. Since workers did not wish to spend their already low wages for their ration, many of them did not prefer eating at the company cafeteria. They cooked their own food with the materials they had brought from their villages. But, since nature of their work required physical strength and power, their low calorie diet was detrimental to a great extent. Many of them returned home at the end of their work period having lost weight.

Unlike EKI's workers, since the number of workers was relatively less at the other mining companies of Etibank, the workers there paid according to their wages. At the Ergani copper mining, company workers receiving up to 200 piasters per day and at the Guleman Chromium Company the ones paid under 150 piaster could have free meals. They only paid for the bread.<sup>853</sup> Although most of the workers at EKI earned more or less the same wages they were not given the same opportunity due to their high numbers. The low cost production

---

<sup>850</sup> 28.8.1943, Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 513.2061..2], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, dated March 23/ 3/ 1942.

<sup>851</sup> Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, 1942 Hesaplarımızı Tetkik Eden Komisyon Raporu, p.19, in TTK, İhsan Soyak Archive.

<sup>852</sup> BMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu,

<sup>853</sup> BUMH, İşçi Meseleleri, pp. 25.

policy made Etibank follow a discriminatory social policy among the companies under its management. The mine workers of the basin were forced to work in the mines under legal coercion, yet could not receive meals free of charge.

In the war years, the nutrition of the mine workers came on the agenda once again in the line of productivity and the workers' loyalty to their work and the company. The authorities began to issue the possibility of free meals.<sup>854</sup> Accordingly, free meals would strengthen workers' ties with the company and provide them better nourishment and therefore would improve their health and social status. In light of such views, EKI began serving free meals in regards to a resolution passed by the Council of Ministers in September 1942. Later on, starting from November 1946 married workers who requested would be allowed to take their ration home, though uncooked.<sup>855</sup>

EKI workers were not the only one to benefit from the meals served at the company cafeteria. Enlarging the scope of social services, EKI began providing free bread and food for school children, boarding students of the vocational school and poor children.<sup>856</sup> Most of the children of the workers ate at the EKI cafeteria. Apart from food service EKI also sold groceries, bread, clothing and other basic consumer goods to the workers and the office staff at *ekonoma*. By 1942 there were fourteen *ekonomas* in service in several production areas.<sup>857</sup> Although *ekonomas* were established to serve EKI staff, many people outside the company were allowed to do their shopping at low prices there by using discount coupons. There were also bakeries either run by EKI or by a contractor which baked the bread required by the cafeterias and for the workers and staff.<sup>858</sup>

The EKI's low cost provisioning policy was reflected in its food services in the company cafeteria. Considering the hard working conditions in the mines, the mine workers needed

---

<sup>854</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>855</sup> BUMH, 1946 Yılı Raporu, p. 99.

<sup>856</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>857</sup> BUMH, 1942 Yılı Raporu .p.67.

high calorie foods to meet their physical efforts. In the initial years of the meal services, the calorie of the meals provided by the EKI cafeterias foods was far from adequate. Later, the calorie count of the daily meals for the underground workers was arranged higher than that for the other workers. Bread was considered as a complementary energy supply. The official statistics indicate that both the weight of the bread and calorie amount taken per day increased throughout the war years. The daily calorie requirement for workers was estimated as 3,000-3,500. When the calorie amount of one meal was low, it was supplemented with bread. In 1942, while the mine workers received 750g of bread, the weight of bread given to the office staff was 300g. Then, as of October 1942, the weight of bread was increased and for mine workers it became 900g and for others, 750g.<sup>859</sup> Later, in 1944, the daily bread ration for underground workers was increased 975g.<sup>860</sup>

Table 14. Total Calorie Amount of Daily Rations

Year	Underground Worker	Surface Worker	Rest
July 1942	3,290	2,932	2,215
May 1943	3,654	3,295	2,220
January 1943	3,651	3,292	2,217
July 1944	3,807	3,269	2,194

Source: BUMH, Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1943 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu (İdeal Matbaa, 1944), p. 83.

The daily menus mostly included thick soups and dishes of beans, chickpeas, pounded wheat, lentil and some other pulses. The menus never changed throughout the wartime.<sup>861</sup>

Table 15. Weekly Menu, 1941

Days	Morning soup	Lunch	Dinner
Sunday	Bulgur with flour	Garbanzo beans with meat	Bulgur Pilaf, Compote
Monday	Lentils with flour	Beans with meat	Bulgur Pilaf, Compote
Tuesday	Bulgur with flour	Garbanzo beans with meat	Rice Pilaf
Wednesday	Beans with flour	Lentils with meat	Bulgur Pilaf
Thursday	Lentils with flour	Beans with meat	Bulgur Pilaf, Compote
Friday	Bulgur with flour	Garbanzo beans with meat	Macaroni
Saturday	Beans with flour	Lentils with meat	Bulgur Pilaf

Source: 19/3/1941, Zonguldak havzasındaki kömür madenlerinde çalışan işçilere verilen yemeğin tahlil edilmesi, Catalog no. [PMRA, 30...10.0.0 / 167.160...3]

Since no vegetables were grown in Zonguldak they were brought from the counties nearby, such as Bartın. But the high shipping cost added to the sales prices of greengroceries, which

<sup>858</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, ,p. 85.

<sup>859</sup> BUMH, 1942 Yılı Raporu, p. 65.

<sup>860</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, p. 93.

were already high.<sup>862</sup> Yet, according to EKI, vegetables were not essential for the diet of workers.<sup>863</sup>

The food served was far from being nourishing and of high quality. Although workers were supposedly given three meals a day, their intake of food equaled only two meals. The governor of Zonguldak, Halit Aksoy, drew up a report addressing the prime ministry in 1941 depicting the daily diet as well as the living and working conditions of workers as follows:

The laborers in the coal basin, whose shift started at 5:30 and finished at 10:00, have soup served in the morning after their mine shifts are over... From 12:00 until 14:00 in the afternoon they eat one main course with rice, which is indicated in the menu as two courses. Then the workers go back to the mines at 14:00 and after working for eight hours without a break, they go to bed without eating anything. So, there is no late food service for the mine workers. The night-shift on duty from 24:00 until 6:00, eat soup before taking a rest in their dormitories, then they wake up around 12:00 and before going underground they have their lunch and dinner ration at one meal. In short, recent inspections has confirmed that a laborer has to put up with heavy mine work by eating a cup of soup and an unsatisfactory meal within twenty-four hours.

As a result, since underground workers who were subject to heavy labor are not provided with sufficient rations of cooked food as is recording in diet tables and the minimum calorie requirement, rotational laborers put to work in the mines are noticed in recurrent inspections, to lose weight by the end of one month when they return to their villages.<sup>864</sup>

Aksoy ended his words with calling the attention of the RPP, to the miserable accommodation and nutrition conditions of the underground workers.

Aksoy particularly complained about the food service of EKI in terms of its quality and quantity. When he had inspected the cafeterias he had ordered food samples to be sent to the laboratory of Ankara Health Institute for chemical analysis. The results had indicated that the cooking oil, meat stew, dry beans and lentil were not edible.<sup>865</sup> The acid level of the oil was rather high and grains were so stale that they had lost their nutrition values. The analysis

---

<sup>861</sup> For amount, type and cost of consumed food supply, see 1943 Annual Plan, File no. 83, İhsan Soyak Archives 1944 Annual Plan of Ereğli Mining Company, and notes during the visit of the President to the basin area, February 11-12 1944, File no. 18.

<sup>862</sup> BUMH, *1940 Yılı Raporu*, p. 32

<sup>863</sup> In a summary of correspondence in EKI records it was stated that even though laborers in the basin were not given vegetables, this did not affect their health. See EKI Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 13.4.1942-30.6.1942, Date of brief of correspondence, 12.5.1942.

<sup>864</sup> 19.3.1941, Catalog no.[PMRA, 30..10.0.0 /167.160..3], Governor Halid Aksoy's letter, 3.3.1941.

<sup>865</sup> 19.3.1941, Catalog no.[PMRA, 30..10.0.0 /167.160..3], Analyze results, 18.3.1941

report had advised against the use of the oil and grains unless obligatory.<sup>866</sup> In another report submitted to the prime ministry on 22 February, 1941 the claims of governor Aksoy were confirmed and it was also emphasized that the total caloric intake of the workers per day was lower than 3,500.<sup>867</sup>

During Aksoy's visit, the workers complained to him that the food was not satisfactory and not filling. Aksoy also verified that significant amounts of food were being stolen from the kitchen pantry. He found out that the ration of workers' food diminished mysteriously during the process it was brought from the pantry to the table. When weighed it turned out that the weight of the cooked food served at the mines of Kokaksu, Gelik, Asma, İhsaniye was less than that of the food served at the Kilimli cafeterias. The kitchen staff at 63 mine cafeterias in Üzülmüş was caught on the spot adding more ingredients to the meals in attempt to increase their weight just before they were weighed.<sup>868</sup> The findings of the inspection committee proved that the kitchen staff stole most of the food supply rationed for the workers. As a result, when the rotational workers completed their term, they went back to their villages worn-out and starved.<sup>869</sup>

The Inspection Committee reports included many statistics ranging from the number of workers eating at the cafeterias to the number of meals served throughout the year. However, the nutritional problems of workers were mostly neglected.<sup>870</sup> Sabire and Hulusi Dosdoğru, a couple who practiced medicine during the war years in the basin, informed the public about the facts, portraying the working and living conditions of the laborers in articles in the *Tan* newspaper in 1945.<sup>871</sup> According to their observations during the winter of 1943, the bread made for the workers contained flour, water, salt and an ingredient called *malay*, which has no

---

<sup>866</sup> Ibid.

<sup>867</sup> 31.3.1941, Catalog no. [PMRA, 30..10.0.0 /167.160..5]. report of Minister of Health and Social Welfare to the prime ministry , February 22, 1941.

<sup>868</sup> For several examples from the inspectors' reports , see 19.3.1941, Catalog no.[PMRA, 30..10.0.0 /167.160..3].

<sup>869</sup> Ibid, letter of Governor Aksoy's.

<sup>870</sup>For some examples indicating how Inspection Reports stated the provisioning problem of workers, see BUMH, 1942 Yılı Raporu, pp. 65-67; BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, pp. 83-86; BUMH, 1946 Yılı Raporu, p. 97-99.



nutritional value. The black olives served were sour, the fava beans were boiled but hard like pebbles, worms were visible in the chickpeas and the ground wheat was mixed with stones. Doctors even noticed that workers were forced to eat a kind of dish made of fava beans which was normally used as fodder. But the authorities, hearing this, instructed that the stock of fodder which was purchased accidentally be used up. The doctors also warned that workers who were worn out due to malnutrition and heavy labor had immune deficiencies and suffered from infirmity, anemia, lassitude because of the lack of vitamins and minerals.<sup>872</sup>

Certainly, the provisioning problems of the war years were not limited to the work site. In their villages the workers experienced shortages of salt and basic food materials. After they reserved the government's share from the grain stocks, the remaining amount did not meet their requirements; they especially complained of the lack of wheat and corn seed.<sup>873</sup> Particularly, villagers living in forest areas, deprived of lands, suffered from a shortage of food and hunger more than the other villages. In 1945, RPP deputy, Rebii Barkın reported that since they could not stand hard times during famine, many people in Ulus, the most destitute village of Zonguldak, had committed suicide in 1941.<sup>874</sup>

Actually, suicide was the most extreme and the last resort of the workers and the villagers. Before it, they tried to improve their nutrition conditions via transmitting their complaints to the official bodies. The workers' complaints about food did not come to an end until the end of the war period. Although the free food service relieved the workers by the end of 1942, this time the quality and quantity of food became the targets of the workers' complaints. During the visit of Zonguldak deputies in 1942, when workers complained that the daily ratio of 750 grams of bread was not enough for them, the deputies reported that the

---

<sup>871</sup> Dosdoğru, Sabire-M. Hulusi Dosdoğru, *Sağlık Açısından Maden İşçilerimizin Dünyu Bugünü* (İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1990).

<sup>872</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>873</sup> For seed shortage in the villages, see September 1940 reports of Zonguldak deputies in 20.1.1941, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.] and a letter sent to RPP General Secretary on 3.10.1943 in 3.8.1944, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..10.0. /723.471..1.].

<sup>874</sup> 2.11.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA,490..1.0.0 /723.473..1], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945

bread ratio of underground workers should be increased for their nutrition.<sup>875</sup> The complaint gave its fruit and the weight of bread was increased.

The workers did not stop complaining. Since the bread and food cost was supposed to be added to their wages, they believed they were entitled to demand higher quality.<sup>876</sup> But the Ministry of Economy insisted that the total amount of caloric intake per man was sufficient, while on the other hand, it was promised that the amount food would be increased and the quality would be improved.<sup>877</sup> Indeed, the company adopted a payment-in-kind (*ayni ödeme*) strategy, assessing the provisional services it provided to the workers as part of the wages. Hence, EKI kept wages at low and made the workers meet their requirements from the company cafeterias and from the *ekonomas*, the sales cooperatives of EKI. By compelling the workers eating in company cafeterias and shopping at *ekonomas*, the EKI management became able to control the expenditures of the workers and their wages as well.

In a short time, the workers found a trick, manipulating the *ekonoma* services in their favor. The workers and EKI personnel shopped from the *ekonomas* with special tokens valid only there. The coins functioned as an advance; their monetary value was later reduced from the workers' and personnel's monthly wages. Occasionally workers tried to earn additional income by manipulating discount sales facilities they obtained from EKI. They sold the coins to shopkeepers and townspeople, and hence turned coins into cash. In return, the shopkeepers or townspeople who received coins were able to do discount shopping in the sales cooperatives.

An advertisement published in the *Zonguldak* daily in 1943 indicates the wide use of this trick by whole of the basin. Under the title "To the Attention of Honorable People, Merchants and Shopkeepers of Our Town," EKI warned the people that *ekonoma* coins were

---

<sup>875</sup> 3/12/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA, 490.1.0.0 /722.470..1.], Inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies, 23.3.1942

<sup>876</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], 1943 Inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies

<sup>877</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak Deputies

only for EKI employees.<sup>878</sup> The wideness of the manipulation compelled even EKI to change the coins from time to time to control their circulation. Actually, while turning the coins into cash what workers were doing was turning their wage-in-kind into cash. Or, in other words, they turned a social service they had already paid for an individual benefit. They hence increased the total sum of their earnings into cash by turning upside down EKI's payment-in-kind practice.

### Diseases, Epidemics and Health Conditions in the Basin

Overcrowd dormitories, malnutrition, and hard and long working hours inevitably brought serious health problems and epidemics to the population in the basin. Although workers were healthy when they arrived from their villages, since their immune systems were affected by malnutrition and the poor living conditions, they easily caught diseases or industrial sicknesses. There were many components menacing the life of the workers during their work period. The lack of potable water; infections spread by pests such as lice, fleas, ticks; malnutrition; heavy work; long hours spent in a damp and unventilated underground environment; the lack of hygiene in living quarters, and contamination were some of them.

In a communiqué sent to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare by the Minister of Economy on 31 March, 1941, the reasons why the living standards of workers did not reach an optimum level were stated as follows: due to high investment costs, the EKI was unable to reserve a budget for the construction of the necessary installation and infrastructure. Moreover, such improvement required a long time. Further, the management cadres had a mentality which ignored the living conditions of the workers. Finally the “no matter what it cost, production should continue” mentality of EKI led to ignorance of the living conditions.<sup>879</sup> Consequently, production pressure prevailed over the living conditions of the workers. Only

---

<sup>878</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 30 January 1943

<sup>879</sup> 31.3.1941, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..10.0.0 /167.160..5.]; communiqué sent by minister of Economy to the minister of Health and Social Welfare.

when the poor living conditions of the workers became a threat to the maintenance of coal production would the urgent measures take place.

In a similar line, the authorities became concerned with health problems when they endangered the number of workers in the mines and threatened coal production. Although there were some concerns about the health conditions of the workers, they could not prevail over the high production targets. For instance in the inspection reports, industrial health and hygiene issues were evaluated as an essential part of the rationalization of the production process. Accordingly, in such a working environment where a mass of workers undertook heavy work, industrial diseases and health problems could only be prevented by properly running health units. It was significant to have health units which took precautions against industrial diseases and accidents. For the continuation of production, ill-health, which led to loss of labor and human suffering, should be prevented.<sup>880</sup> However, under the pressure of the war threat, workers' health was considered in the context of not labor productivity but maintenance of production without interruption.

Since workers kept their ties with their villages, epidemics easily circulated between the mines and the villages. Typhus, scabies, malaria, syphilis and other venereal diseases, variola, measles, mumps were the most common diseases.<sup>881</sup> There were also industrial diseases such as anthracosis and silicosis associated with the respiratory system.<sup>882</sup> Because anthracosis destroyed the lungs, tuberculosis easily spread among underground workers.<sup>883</sup> Such illnesses were more frequent among workers who had been working in the mines for eight to ten years, particularly in drift developing jobs. Because they did not wear masks, they inhaled nothing but dust throughout the long working hours.<sup>884</sup>

---

<sup>880</sup>BUMH., *İşçi Mesleleri*, p. 27.

<sup>881</sup> For wartime epidemics, see Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, pp. 13-20.

<sup>882</sup> For anthracosis, see, *ibid.*, pp. 32-34

<sup>883</sup> For the relation between anthracosis and tuberculosis, see *ibid.*, pp. 35-38.

<sup>884</sup> *Ibid.* p.32-34.

Anthraxis triggered tuberculosis. As most of the underground workers spent long hours in stuffy, dusty and damp environments without sunlight, they easily caught tuberculosis and other lung diseases. An analysis of records of pulmonary X-rays between 1938 and 1944 in the Central Hospital of EKI Health Organization indicates rapid acceleration of tuberculosis cases throughout the war years.<sup>885</sup> The Central Hospital served over 50,000 workers and their families with a capacity of 170 beds and it did not have an isolated dormitory for tuberculosis cases.<sup>886</sup> Although a sanatorium was planned to be built in 1941 at a location between Devrek and Zonguldak, the construction project was not started due to financial troubles.<sup>887</sup>

Table 16. Most Common Diseases and Number of Cases in the Basin, between 1941 and Mid-1944.<sup>888</sup>

Diseases	1941	1942	1943	1944 (First six month)
Malaria	1.185	793	960	348
Stomach disease	766	625	549	-
Enteritis	453	318	249	-
Rheumatism	216	280	210	-
Pneumonia	218	237	197	-
Tuberculosis	128	271	128	60
Different kinds of tuberculosis	77	220	117	181
Avitaminosis	322	221	9	-
Typhoid Fever	49	98	56	4
Smallpox	-	3	83	26
Meningitis	4	5	2	4
Typhus	2	3	83	91

Source: Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, Reiscumhur Hazretlerinin Havzayı Teftişlerine Ait Notlar 11/12- February-1944, TTK İhsan Soyak Archive, no.18, Zonguldak) and ; Dr. Orhan Sanus, "EKİ Sağlık Kalkınması", *Maden* 1, 1945, p.35.

The number of cases included both the workers and the out patients who went to the clinics. Since the figures are limited to the patients treated at clinics, we can conclude that the number of patients was quite high when considering the ones who received no treatment at clinics.

Typhus was the most common disease in the basin during the war years. As a war and misery disease transmitted by lice, typhus spread both among the workers and the basin population rapidly. The first symptoms were diagnosed in 1942 and the next year it turned into

<sup>885</sup> The number of registered tuberculosis case increased to 960 in 1944 from 121 in 1938. For the figures, see Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, p.36. However, since medical examination of workers was not conducted at regular intervals true size of tuberculosis must have been higher than the figures indicated.

<sup>886</sup> Ibid. p.36

<sup>887</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri*, p.31; BUMH, *1948 Yılı Raporu*, p. 47 and p. 57.

<sup>888</sup> The figures are obtained from two sources. However there are no available figures for some diseases at some years. (-) marks lack of data rather than lack of disease at the regarding year.

an epidemic threatening the whole population of the basin.<sup>889</sup> All of the fatalities of the disease were family members of the mine workers. The epidemic especially broke out during the winter. From 1 January, 1943 until 1 March, 1945 thirty typhus cases out of the 212 listed died.<sup>890</sup> Considering there were many other workers and family members unregistered, the number of casualties was much higher.

By the beginning of 1944, forty percent of mine workers were diagnosed with typhus.<sup>891</sup> Village clinics began vaccinations the same year, inoculating nearly 30.000 people within the first six months. Still, preventive health measures were insufficient. The monthly flow of workers between the mines and villages made it difficult to control the disease and hastened its spread.<sup>892</sup> Although health measures were taken during the incubation period of the disease, it was impossible to stop the epidemic altogether; sooner or later symptoms of typhus were diagnosed among workers. Moreover, workers who commuted between their villages and mines missed the health examinations and further spread the disease. Meanwhile, since free workers coming from the eastern Black Sea region were employed without any health examination, they also transmitted various diseases to the basin.<sup>893</sup> The lack of control or insufficient control of the people arriving in the basin through Zonguldak harbor or by other means of transportation made the fight against typhus difficult.<sup>894</sup>

One major cause of the typhus epidemic was inadequate sterilizing and bathing facilities in the worker dormitories. EKI tried to take the epidemic under control by using all available financial sources, building additional workers dormitories, sterilization and shower units, forcing the workers sleeping outdoors to move into the dormitories, and administering

---

<sup>889</sup> Date 19.4.1944, *Tifüs Mücadelesi Hakkında*, Report of EKI to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Ekrem Murat Zaman private archive, Zonguldak.

<sup>890</sup> Sabire Dosdoğru, "Zonguldak kömür Havzasında Lekeli Tifo," *İstanbul Üniversitesi*, Vol 9, issue 2 (1946), p.175.

<sup>891</sup> *Tifüs Mücadelesi Hakkında*.

<sup>892</sup> For the summary of correspondences about typhus cases, see KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, File date: 11.6.1940-26.18.1940; Correspondence about "Çerkeş village typhus cases" by company and mines management in 20/7/1940; Evrak İrsalat Defteri, File date : 5.7.1944-1.9.1944; "three typhus cases," written by manager-on-duty EKI in 26/8/1944.

<sup>893</sup> For reasons of typhus epidemic, see Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru. pp. 13-15.

<sup>894</sup> *Tifüs Mücadelesi Hakkında*

vaccines. By 1943, the company began practicing strict hygiene regulations. When new rotational workers arrived, they were made to take baths and have their hair cut. They were provided with outwear to put on outside the mines and all their clothing was sterilized with high vapor pressure.<sup>895</sup>

However, hygienic measures did not protect the workers from typhus. Since sanitary regulations could only be practiced at the dormitories under the supervision of the mining company, other workers beyond control continued transmitting the disease. Workers accommodated in the company compounds were sterilized regularly and made to take baths, but those who were not able to find a proper place to stay and lived in shacks with no running water continued infecting others. The proximity of the mines to the residential areas facilitated the contact of the workers with the town population living in Kozlu, Kilimli and Zonguldak. So the epidemic began threatening the townspeople as well. EKI stated that the measures to be taken to prevent public health were limited. Accordingly, to stop contact between the local people and the mine workers working nearby residential areas like Liman, Sahildirek, Çaydamar and Üzülmöz, it was impossible to forbid free movement either by law or by practice. In order to prevent the whole population from catching lice, it would be more practical to change the hygiene habits of the people and force them take baths in public baths, instead of prohibiting the contact of workers and the ordinary people.<sup>896</sup>

To warn the town's people against typhus, the government began to make announcements in the newspapers. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare warned the people in 1944, instructing them to obey hygiene regulations, to take baths in free public baths, to try to avoid environments where lice existed, to report the persons who had symptoms of the disease or indications of lice to the nearest local authorities or security forces

---

<sup>895</sup> Ibid.

<sup>896</sup> Ibid.

in order to take measures against typhus.<sup>897</sup> Although the epidemic was taken under control only with great efforts in 1944 and 1945, it was still seen in the following years.

In addition, the parasite disease was common among the mine workers as well. In the mines, the lack of water service compelled the workers to drink impure water, which spread intestine parasites easily. Since potable water was not available during their continuous eight-hour shifts, the workers had to drink the water springing from an unknown source through the mine walls. Furthermore, urinating in any nearest spot accelerated the transmission of parasites among the workers.<sup>898</sup>

Typhus fever was another epidemic brought by the poor working and living conditions in the war years. It began affecting the basin population from the initial years of the war period. Being easily transmitted by contaminated water, typhoid fever became a threat for both the basin population and the mine workers where potable water was limited. In 1941, when the authorities analyzed the water sources throughout the basin, they found that in many of the mining districts, the company workers were provided with contaminated water to drink.<sup>899</sup> Thirsty workers, who were not able to find water to drink during the underground work, ran to the remote streams. However, the contamination levels in the stream water rated high because of the debris coming out of the mines, the waste of industrial plants and sewage water from the dormitories. Test results indicated that the water contained high amount of sewage water, germs and coli bacillus. Hence, the authorities called for urgent action to refine water in order to prevent typhoid fever cases.<sup>900</sup> Nevertheless, the negligence of the company management caused typhoid fever to spread rapidly. The lack of potable water and contaminated water sources accelerated the spread of the disease, particularly in Kozlu. Dr.

---

<sup>897</sup> "Lekeli Hummadan Korunalım," *Zonguldak Gazette*, October 1, 1944.

<sup>898</sup> Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, p. 20

<sup>899</sup> For the water analyses in the basin, see 31.3.1941, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..10.0.0 /167.160..5.] ; Correspondence from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to the Ministry of National Defense dated February 1941. For the problem of drinkable water, also see BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri*, p. 31.

<sup>900</sup> Ibid.



Reşat Tanyeri informed Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın in his 1945 inspection tour that a few years earlier, water with a high rate of bacillus had caused an epidemic similar to yellow fever in Kozlu. The doctor had prevented its rapid spread only after cutting the water of all the taps.<sup>901</sup>

Similarly, typhoid occurred in Zonguldak in 1942 and caused a great panic among the Zonguldak people. The city administration took some measures and tried to control the atmosphere of panic. In the 25 September 1942 issue, a local gazette, *Ocak* reported rumors among the people about the spread of several epidemics in the town.<sup>902</sup> In the same article, the mayor cleared up the rumors, affirming that they had monitored the health condition of basin inhabitants carefully and they had set up three vaccination desks at different locations, and when the people of the surrounding villages came to town to apply for bread coupons, they were first vaccinated. By late 1942 wide spread vaccination measures were in place. In the November 28 issue, the gazette reported that state employees and local people had been vaccinated.<sup>903</sup> In the following days, school children had also been vaccinated.<sup>904</sup>

A smallpox outbreak which spread in the same years could only be controlled with an intensive inoculation program. All of the townspeople and workers were vaccinated in Zonguldak. During the period between 1 January, 1943 to 15 March, 1944 out of eighty-three small pox cases hospitalized, nineteen of them lost their lives. Apart from smallpox, there were twenty-one chicken pox cases detected people during the same period. The smallpox epidemic was only staved off at the beginning of 1944, owing to the intensive vaccination program again.

---

<sup>901</sup> 2.11.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1 ], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945

<sup>902</sup> "Hastalık Şaiyaları Asılsızdır," 25.11.1942, *Ocak*.

<sup>903</sup> "Mecburi Aşı," November 28, 1942, *Ocak*.

<sup>904</sup> "Okullarda Tifo Aşısı," November 30, 1942, *Ocak*,

Table 17. The Number of Vaccines Administered by the Health Organizations between 1941 and 1947

Vaccines	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
Typhoid fever	53,239	64,794	91,992	74,626	69,564	64,054	23,958
Typhus				45,342	62,589	33,353	16,137
Smallpox		61,954	280,832	89,272	29,208	26,387	16,488
Cholera							35,836

Source: Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1942 Yılı ve 1946 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporları, EKI 1947 Senesi Faaliyet Raporu, EKI 1948 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu

The basin health organization fought against the epidemic diseases which threatened thousands of villagers and workers. But, EKI's high production concerns hindered the taking of all of the necessary preventive measures. Since EKI was concerned about including more workers in the labor process as quickly as possible, workers were enlisted in the mines and accepted to the dormitories without proper health control. For instance, even though medical examinations were required when workers were employed at the Ergani Copper and Şark Chromium Mining Companies, EKI dispatched workers to the mines without having them medically examined. Hence the workers without health examination transmitted contagious diseases easily.<sup>905</sup> The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare complained about EKI not taking the necessary health measures while hiring new workers in the mines. Accordingly, even though the Ministry cautioned EKI several times that no workers should be allowed to join the labor force unless they were vaccinated against smallpox and typhus, and that already employed workers should also be vaccinated, the EKI did not show careful attention due to the fact that health measures interrupted the production. Therefore epidemics could not be taken under control owing to the EKI's production mentality.<sup>906</sup>

Another difficulty which diminished the effect of the preventive measures was the evasion of the workers from the vaccination teams. For instance, in June 1940, some workers were recorded in the EKI files as fleeing to their villages when the typhus vaccines were administered.<sup>907</sup> In the end, while the vaccination helped to bring contagious diseases under

<sup>905</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Mesleleri*, p.28.

<sup>906</sup> 31.3.1941, Catalog no. [PMRA 30..10.0.0 /167.160..5.]; Communiqué dated February 22, 1941 from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to the Prime Ministry.

<sup>907</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 11.6.1940-26.18.1940; record date on 27.6.1940

control to some degree, since the living and working conditions of the workers did not change much, epidemics continued threatening the basin even after the war years.

During the war period, the basin people were threatened by various other diseases, one of which was measles. Outbreaks of measles were seen especially during winter and spring among adult workers, even among those who were in their late thirties.<sup>908</sup> Alongside measles, the number of malaria incidents chiefly climbed in Zonguldak center and in the surrounding mines. Malaria was a long lasting disease which had been present in the basin long before the war period. The authorities took some preventive measures, one of which was to filled all the holes near the mines with diesel fuel.<sup>909</sup> However, it continued to be a great fear of the basin people. The workers and the villagers who waited out malaria season with great fear pleaded for help from the government in the RPP's provincial congress.<sup>910</sup> Nevertheless, inadequate amounts of quinine made treatment almost impossible and led to the deaths of malaria patients. Sometimes, as was the case in Ulus County in 1945, whole regions were put under quarantine and additional health officials were appointed to towns to fight the disease.<sup>911</sup>

Scabies and other skin diseases were quite common both in mines and in villages. They threatened the entire basin population as much as other epidemics. Because there were not enough beds for the workers in the dormitories, the men who worked in three different shifts a day had to share the beds alternately and this accelerated the spread of all contagious diseases, especially of scabies. Moreover, since patients could not be secluded from the rest of the workers, their treatment became impossible. The disease was also transmitted to the nearby villages by the continual movements of workers in between.

---

<sup>908</sup> Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, pp.15-16

<sup>909</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no. 139. Brief of communiqué "filling the holes with diesel where malaria cases were diagnosed.", dated 30.3.1940.

<sup>910</sup> 20.1.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1]; Inspection report of Zonguldak deputies to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in September 1940.

<sup>911</sup> 2.11.1945, Catalog no.[PMRA,490..1.0.0 /723.473..1].

For instance, in 1941 scabies is known to have spread to Safranbolu, Devrek, Bartın and Ereğli as well as the surrounding villages.<sup>912</sup> The villagers demanded the urgent prevention of the disease, asking for medicine and medical staff.<sup>913</sup> However, the shortage of medicine and the inadequate number of medical staff made it difficult to take the epidemic under control. Zonguldak deputies indicated in 1942 that scabies was common in the villages of the town and that the villagers spread the disease while working in the mines. The deputies exacted preventive measures and the urgent purchase of medicine for the villages.<sup>914</sup> However, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare pointed out the desperation of the government, stating that the number of cases climbed particularly during when cleaning agents and laundry detergents were almost finished. Accordingly, the disease could be prevented if only hygienic regulations were practiced and clean underwear was provided. But, as the minister admitted, in the prevailing circumstances to achieve the desired result would be almost impossible.<sup>915</sup> Under such circumstances the complaints of basin population did not cease until the war's end.

The health staff was in serious difficulties in their fight to control epidemics. Sometime they only send back the patients rather than curing as was the case in leprosy. The only preventive measure taken against leprosy was to expel the patient from the mines. For instance, some villages of Devrek were filled with lepers. The patients were neither monitored nor received treatment as required, but abandoned to their fate.<sup>916</sup> Another threat which could not be easily controlled was syphilis. While the leprosy epidemic was concentrated in certain areas, syphilis was common throughout the basin. Many counties could not overcome the disease although they were part of the campaign against it. It was not easy to monitor and

---

<sup>912</sup> 31.3.1941 in Catalog no.[PMRA 30.10.0.0 /167.160.5]. Report sent to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

<sup>913</sup> 20.4.1943, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1]. Petitions submitted to the County Congress held on 22.12.1940 .

<sup>914</sup> 3.12.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /722.470.1]; Inspection report of Zonguldak deputies, 23.3.1942.

<sup>915</sup> In *ibid.* Communiqué from Dr. Hulusi Alataş, the Minister of Health and Social Welfare to RPP General Secretary on 3.6.1942.

<sup>916</sup> Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, p.19

diagnose syphilitic cases there for most of them had not been treated.<sup>917</sup> Furthermore, because of the inadequate number of medical staff, this congenital disease continued to spread rapidly among the villagers.<sup>918</sup>

In production areas where the mass of workers lived away from their families venereal diseases easily spread through prostitution. Clandestine whorehouses in contact with the worker community were enough for such diseases to be transmitted among the population.<sup>919</sup> Licensed brothels were not in a much better situation. There only congenital diseases were kept under control. However, as *Zonguldak Gazette* pointed out in 1946, since the Health Board only paid attention to venereal diseases, but ignored epidemics such as tuberculosis, women with tuberculosis infected their clients easily.<sup>920</sup>

In addition to prostitution, alcohol consumption was also high throughout the basin. According to the observations the Dosdoğru couple made, although liquor sales were forbidden in the mining region by law, sales continued both in the town center and in production areas.<sup>921</sup> Mine workers who earned low wages could not afford liquor but alcohol consumption was common especially among the administrative staff, skilled workers, state employees and bureaucrats who were paid higher salaries.<sup>922</sup>

During the hard times of the war period when the flow of workers from the coal mines and villages was at high levels, the local health unit gave medical services to nearly the whole population of the basin with highly a limited medical infrastructure and budget.<sup>923</sup> The total

---

<sup>917</sup> See consequent correspondences referring medical check-up of syphilitic workers, KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 11.6.1940-27.8.1940; and 9.8.1941-13.8.1941.

<sup>918</sup> Demands of villages particularly further away from the town center of Zonguldak were not met due to limited budget, 20.4.1943, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1].

<sup>919</sup> Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, p. 16.

<sup>920</sup> "Genel Evlerin Murakabesi," *Zonguldak Gazette*, 10 April, 1946.

<sup>921</sup> Dosdoğru and Dosdoğru, p. 16.

<sup>922</sup> Ibid. p.54. In response to the letter of Dosdoğru published in *Tan* Gazette in 1945 which referred the high liquor consumption throughout the basin, Ahmet Naim wrote an article in *Zonguldak Gazette* under the title of "Havza İşçimiz İçki Kullanmaz." In the article he denied their claims and criticized their exaggerated assertions published in other issues of *Tan*; *Zonguldak Gazette*, on November 14, 1945.

<sup>923</sup> In the war years the health organization served the basin population in the Central Hospital in Zonguldak. It also had one small clinic at Kandilli, and one dispensary in six different towns, Kozlu, Kilimli, Üzülmüş, Ereğli, Bartın and Devrek. By 1943 total medical staff was 115. There existed only twenty eight doctors. The rest composed of pharmacists, nurses, health officers and laboratory assistants. BUMH, 1943 *Yılı Raporu*, p. 86.

number of beds in the health units was not more than 250. While the beds in village dispensaries were mostly unoccupied, in the Central Hospital two patients often shared one bed.<sup>924</sup> In the following years, both the number of beds and medical staff increased in accordance with the increase in health problems. However, medical staff and technical inefficiency were always the focus of complaints among the basin population. During the 1940 inspection tour of the Zonguldak deputies, workers complained about the health staffs, asserting that the doctors were inconsiderate, patients were not welcomed at the clinics, and people who could not go to the dispensary did not receive medical treatment. And they wanted the medical services that they paid for to be under the control of EKI.<sup>925</sup>

Despite some improvements, the health organization was incompetent at solving the health problems of those living in the villages. In order to prevent the loss of manpower in the mines, medical services had to reach all of the villages from which most of the underground workers were provided.<sup>926</sup> So, in 1941 the Village Health Organization (*Köy Sıhhat Teşkilatı*) was opened to assist the central health organization.<sup>927</sup> The organization was supervised by a commission of three members, a chief physician, a compulsory labor follow-up director and a provincial director of the Ministry of Economy. The main scope of the organization was to monitor the medical condition of the mine workers and minimize their absenteeism due to the ill health. The organization provided the villagers with medical services through traveling physicians and health officers. In fact, the health organization was established as a part of compulsory labor practice. It was chiefly responsible for obliged workers and their family members. The rest of the villagers received medical services only in case of emergency.

---

<sup>924</sup> Dosdoğru-Dosdoğru, p. 37.

<sup>925</sup> For the complaints, see 20.1.1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0 /721.467..1] September 1940 report of Zonguldak deputies; and 20.4.1943, Catalog no.[PMRA 490.1.0.0 /722 471..1]. Complaints gave a result. Thereupon, with a resolution number 2/18562 passed by in 1942, all the medical unit began to be supervised by EKI. The medical expenses would be covered by the government and the Amele Birliği cooperatively.

<sup>926</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Mesleleri*, p.31

<sup>927</sup> For provisions of memorandum about the village clinics, see Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, pp. 195-197.

However, the organization could not achieve its objective because lack of doctors and other medical staff.<sup>928</sup>

For instance, in the fourteen villages of Kurucaşile, for instance, children were not vaccinated for two years although the head physician in Bartın was instructed to do so. Thereupon, the physician brought to court on charges of neglecting his duties and the medical staff was demoted to the village.<sup>929</sup> However, the complaints and requests continued in the following years. The health units in the villages were insufficient to solve the health problems of the villagers. Most of the villagers demanded doctors and nurses. Yet neither the demands of the workers nor of the villagers were met. In Bartın, for instance, although the people asked for a doctor to visit their town every two weeks, no doctor came to town because all of the doctors were called in for military service. Just like in Bartın, both the Ulus and Eflani people did not get a positive reply to their demand for health personnel and a nurse, but they did only get a traveling doctor.<sup>930</sup>

During winter, because traveling health personnel were unable to go in to the rural areas, the villagers asked for local clinics to be established. The Ministry of Economy approved the establishment of a town clinic in Devrek where half of the population was working in the coal mines, but preferred to renovate the one in Uzulmez region where many mine workers lived, instead of establishing a new one.<sup>931</sup> In eleven other villages of Zonguldak, the people wanted a local clinic since most of the patients died on the way to the hospital because of the distance to the town center.<sup>932</sup>

The mine workers and villagers tried to improve their health conditions through transmitting their complaints to the official and political bodies. The lack of medicine and the ill

---

<sup>928</sup> BUMH, 1944 Yılı Raporu, p. 140.

<sup>929</sup> 28.8.1943 Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0/513.2061..2]; Responses to the Zonguldak inspection reports as submitted to the fourth Bureau.

<sup>930</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response. responses

<sup>931</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>932</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

treatment by the health staff constituted the main sources of discontent, in addition to the fact that most of the workers could not find the prescribed medicine due to the inadequate medicine supply of the *Amele Birliği*'s health units. Although the official bodies acknowledged the problems and stated that the health units were warned to be more responsive,<sup>933</sup> complaints about the same problems continued in the following years. When the workers petitioned about the ill-treatment of the orderlies and the porters, the official bodies began accusing the workers, claiming that the health personnel ill treated patients who did not obey the rules in the clinics.<sup>934</sup>

Striving to fight the epidemics under malnutrition and heavy conditions the health organization was incapable of serving hundreds of workers. The Ministry of Health tried to meet the medicine and vaccination demands of the villagers, who suffered from epidemics. The health issues continued in the coal basin throughout the war years due to insufficient health personnel, and the lack of medicine and tight financial sources needed to establish a dispensary and similar health units.

#### The At-Any-Cost Production Policy of EKI, Accidents, and Human Suffering

Along with epidemics, another cause of death and injury among the workers was industrial accidents. EKI's production policy, which can be summarized as decisiveness to continue the production whatever it cost, pictured a working environment where the necessary health and safety measures were not taken properly. After the introduction of compulsory labor, the participation of inexperienced laborers in underground work in high numbers escalated the number of accidents. Either caused by the neglect of the company, or by inexperienced workers, thousands of accidents and hundreds of losses occurred during the

---

<sup>933</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in the 1940 provincial congresses and their responses.

<sup>934</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in the 1941 provincial congresses and their responses



war years. The large scale accidents such as fire damp and cave-ins led the mines shut, and production naturally came to a halt temporarily.

The high frequency of accidents and great human loss in the basin were not unique to the war years. Along with the high-risk geological conditions and uneven circumstances in the mine works, the production pressure and the piece rate wage system constituted the main reasons for the accidents. Hence the number of accidents in the basin had already been high during the prewar years.<sup>935</sup> In both war years and prewar period, lack of preventive measures and necessary technical equipment accelerated the number of the accidents. For instance, a firedamp explosion which killed twenty-three workers in the Kozlu mines on 27 February, 1939, stemmed from human error in overlooking the methane level. Since the engineers and technicians became more safety-minded after every accident, accidents would decrease in number in the following months, but this did not last long.<sup>936</sup> As long as the production pressure was maintained, the high ratio of accidents and fatalities continued. Yersel, the director of compulsory labor follow-up department during the war years, wrote in his memoirs that the firedamp explosion of 1943 and caused sixty-three fatalities at the Çamlık mine in Kandilli had been a consequence of pressure put on production and unsecured electric wires.<sup>937</sup>

It is not surprise, thus, that among all other provinces, Zonguldak was the leading province in worker fatalities.<sup>938</sup> Thirty-nine per cent of all industrial accidents in 1937, fifty-one percent throughout 1938, fifty percent in 1939 and fifty-three percent in 1940 happened in the mines of Zonguldak.<sup>939</sup> Likewise, 122 out of 163 fatal accidents in Turkey throughout 1940

---

<sup>935</sup> For the accidents in the 1930s, see Başbakanlık İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı*, Cilt 11 1939-1940 (İstanbul: Hüsnütabiat Basımevi, nd.), p. 239, also compare it with Sadrettin Enver, "Maden Kazaları," *Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 4, no. (July, 1939), pp. 25-26.

<sup>936</sup> Nişbay Report, 23.6.1938 Catalog no. [PMRA 030 10/ 174 2061], p.28.

<sup>937</sup> Yersel, p. 25-26.

<sup>938</sup> Orhan Tuna, "İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, vol. 6 (October 1944-January 1944), p.336

<sup>939</sup> *Ibid.*, p.345

happened in the mineshafts.<sup>940</sup> Between 1934 and 1940, when employment in the mines increased forty-one percent accident rates rose by eight-two percent and fatal accidents by 150 percent. While the number of physically disabled workers was 105 in 1934, this number increased to 326 in 1940.<sup>941</sup> In spite of the high rates of death and disability, there was no insurance system for the workers or for the families of the deceased workers to cover their losses.

Furthermore, in the 1930, the technical commission at the Basin Directorship, which was in charge of inspecting the technical negligence of accidents, making reports accordingly, fining penalty to the faulty mining companies and sending the engineers in charge to jail in line with those reports, seems to have cooperated with the companies against the rights of the mine workers who were injured or died due to the accidents. In his report of 1938, coal basin director Mr. Nişbay mentioned that in the coal basin unlawful actions were common. Nişbay also stated that, according to rumors, the engineers in the technical commission who sought their own interests wrote biased reports in favor of the companies.<sup>942</sup>

In the war years, accidents continued at high rates at great losses to the workers and those who entered the mines for the first time in their lives. In 1940, almost half of the accidents throughout Turkey were recorded in Zonguldak. Statistics indicated that fifty-three percent of total accidents in 1940 happened in the coal mines. This ratio was fifty-two percent in 1941, forty-nine percent in 1942 and 47.6 percent in 1943.<sup>943</sup> Only in 1941 was the number of accidents that occurred per day was twenty-three.<sup>944</sup>

---

<sup>940</sup> Gerhard Kessler, "Türk İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, vol. 4 (October 1942), p.252

<sup>941</sup> Ibid, 253

<sup>942</sup> 23.6.1938 Catalog no. [PMRA, 030 10/ 174 2061], p.25-26. After an inspection visit at the coal basin in 1939, Zonguldak deputies of RPP asserted that observed that mines were scattered in a large area and the number of inspectors was limited, therefore they concluded that it was not easy for the inspectors to control the mines frequently. In 8.1.1940 Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0.0/ 721 465 1], Zonguldak Province Inspection and Study Reports p.14.

<sup>943</sup> For the statistics see Orhan Tuna, "İş İstatistikleri," p. 345.

Table 18. The Number of Accidents Resulting in Fatalities and Injury between 1938 and 1947.

Years	Number of Fatal Accidents	Accidents harming work ability, temporarily, partially and wholly	Total number of accidents
1938	82	2,714	2,796
1939	130	3,819	2,949
1940	125	3,444	3,569
1941	75	3,292	3,367
1942	112	2,409	2,521
1943	75	2,611	2,686
1944	82	3,208	3,367
1945	83	3,536	3,619
1946	62	3,209	3,271
1947	121	2,304	2,425

Source: Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı*, Cilt 17, 1949, p. 198.

There is no doubt that the forced labor practice accelerated accidents. Under the compulsory labor regime 601 workers were dead from the accidents which happened in and out of the mines and 2,901 of them were injured. Those figures can be translated as 100 dead and 701 injured per annum.

Table 19. Accident Statistic between 1941 and 1948

Year	Underground		Surface	
	Dead	Injured	Dead	Injured
1941	67	2,725	8	549
1942	100	2,505	8	649
1943	64	3,103	8	936
1944	74	2,863	9	964
1945	67	3,069	14	990
1946	51	2,914	10	884
1947	110	2,079	11	585
Total	533	16,344	68	5,557

Source: T.C.Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, *Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949* (Zonguldak, 1950).

When Kessler visited Zonguldak and its vicinity during wartime, he observed that most of the accidents were caused by unskilled and untrained workers being employed at heavy labor and in risky working environments. Compared with similar working environments in Europe, the frequency of accidents in a small area like Zonguldak where 20 to 25,000 workers were employed was awfully high.<sup>945</sup>

Generally the high accident rate in the mines was related either to the workers' indifference to precautions or simply to the risky nature of underground work. Towards the end of the 1930s, when the officials became more sensitive to industrial accidents within the

<sup>944</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Mesleleri*, p. 29.

<sup>945</sup> Kessler, "Zonguldak ve Karabük'te Çalışma Şartları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* Vol. 9, no. 3 (1948), p. 179

context of the utmost usage of labor force, certain inspections were carried out by experts. In a report sent to the prime ministry in 1939 it was argued that such accidents occurred almost weekly, and that the authorities did not pursue the persons in charge and they regarded the accidents result of the nature of the work.<sup>946</sup> The report pointed out human errors as the main cause of accidents rather than production pressure. According to the same report, the cause of the accidents was mostly the ignorance of the inexperienced workers who were hired despite their lack of basic knowledge.

The high accident rate in the Zonguldak mines prompted the Ministry of Economy to take action in 1939. The MTA (Mining Study and Research Institute) appointed three experts to investigate the accidents. Worker error continued to be main cause of accidents in this report as well. Beginning its studies on 4 January, 1940 the team reported that despite all technical measures accidents happened because of negligence of workers.<sup>947</sup> It is true that the negligence of workers played a part. Despite the safety checks, as a habitual tradition, some workers entered the pits with matches and cigarettes they hid in bread, or in grooves they carved in their pickax handles.<sup>948</sup> The records of EKI contained a series of correspondences regarding workers' smuggling cigarettes and matches into the mines in their pockets.<sup>949</sup> However, the indifference of workers towards safety warnings was mostly related to the production pressure which made the workers spend less time on preventive works such as the proper installation of timbers. Since the implementation of safety measures dropped the speed of coal cutting, most of the workers ignored them. Although most reports hinted at the negligence of workers for accidents, in the 1940s the increased pressure for production, engineering errors and insufficient technical controls in the mines continued to be major

---

<sup>946</sup> 30.3.1939 Catalog no. [PMRA 30.10.0.0 /55.361.5]

<sup>947</sup> 11.3.1940, Catalog no.[PMRA 30..10.0.0/174.206..4.]

<sup>948</sup> Orhan Zihni Sanus, "Maden İşçisinde Kömür Tozu ve İnfilakların Önemi," *Çalışma Dergisi*, year 2 (June 1947), p.41.

<sup>949</sup> Entry dated 30.9.1941 re. "Prohibition of smoking and bringing cigarettes and matches to the mines"; entry dated 1.10.1941 re. "no smoking"; entry dated 9.10.1941 re. "Prohibiting carrying cigarettes and matches while in mines"; entry dated 9.10.1941 re. "Prohibition of all kinds of tobacco products for while workers on duty underground" in KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, between 9.8.1941-13.8.1941.

causes of accidents. The executives recommended safety measures and rules to be rephrased in a language which could easily be comprehended by all workers and headmen, and posters to be hung around the mines inspiring safety.<sup>950</sup>

### The Wage Policy of EKI and Wage Disputes in the War Years

By 1940, the mine workers were forced to work in the mines at wages even lower than those of the prewar years. In the prewar years the mine workers at least had created a chance to bargain with the companies on their wage rates. Particularly the labor shortage and organization of the workers around the crew head workers had provided the mine workers considerable amount of bargaining power. But, with the nationalization of the basin and the imposition of forced labor they had lost their control on the wage set. As the forced labor regime cut the existing ties of local headmen from the fellow crew members in the production process, the workers lost an organized form of resistance as well. Under the forced labor regime, the wages of workers in the basin were determined in line with the No. 2 Resolution of the Coordination Committee. The resolution implied that forced laborers would be paid equally as their peers, an amount of which was to be settled by the Ministry of Economy. The rotational workers would get paid only for the days they put to work in the mines. Hence, they would receive no wages during the time they stayed in their villages.<sup>951</sup> According to the memorandum sent to all mining companies on 26 February, 1940, except for the state employees, monthly paid artisans and workers and sea porters, wages for all remaining workers in the basin would be settled by the Zonguldak Provincial Office of Economy (*Zonguldak İktisat Müdürlüğü*). The office would set the daily wages by taking the average of

---

<sup>950</sup> BUMH, *İşçi Mesleleri*, p. 30.

<sup>951</sup> Anıl and Merey, Vol. 2, p. 177-178

the daily wage rates with benefits paid in 1939. The new wages would not be lower than the minimum wage scale of 1938.

Table 20. Average Daily Wages for Underground and Surface Workers, 1941-47.

Year	Hewers and their mates (piasters)	The other underground workers working in actual production process (piasters)	Drift developers and other workers in underground preparatory works (piasters)	Workers in other underground jobs (piasters)	Average daily wages of all underground and surface workers (piasters)	Average daily wages of the surface workers (piasters)	Average daily wages of whole workers. (piasters)
1941	104	117	136	129	120	119	120
1942	131	144	183	160	152	166	156
1943	140	150	204	169	163	156	161
1944	161	180	254	195	188	184	187
1945	182	204	281	222	212	204	210
1946	203	217	326	231	228	232	229
1947	279	267	354	271	279	273	278

Source: T.C.Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949 (Zonguldak, 1950), p. 21.

As confirmed by the table above, the hewers and their mates were underpaid throughout the war years until 1947 compared to others. Similarly, except for the drift developers and other preparatory workers, the underground workers received the lowest wages of all the workers. When the daily wages of all workers are considered, eighty percent of them received less than 150 piasters by 1941. Considering that underground workers constituted the majority of the work force, those who performed the most dangerous and hard works were situated at the lowest rank of the wage scale. Such low wages neither met their expenses nor provided for the livelihoods of their families. Despite the fact that most of the underground workers continued agricultural activities during the war years, under the provisions of the National Defense act, they had to be satisfied with the amount of crops left after they had deducted the state's share.

Throughout the war years the sales price of coal was kept lower than production cost. So the company also kept the wages low in order to compensate the loss. The mine workers not only paid for the cost of war by being compelled to work, but also by living in poor conditions and working underpaid. During the compulsory labor period the cost of daily wages

was 29.6 percent in proportion to coal production per ton in 1941 and 31.4 percent the following year (since production slowed down because of mine pole problem in 1942, Per person cost increased inevitably); 23.3 percent in 1943; 23.4 in 1944; 23.1 percent in 1945; 23.7 in 1946 and 23.2 in 1947.<sup>952</sup> Although coal production increased in those years, because coal was sold at less than the cost price the production increase could not be passed in wages. Hence, the mine workers also paid for the cost of coal consumption of the country with their labor.

Furthermore, the workers in the basin did not share this cost equally. The occupational groups at the lower ranks of the labor market in the basin shouldered a high share with the highest death risks and lowest living standards. Even their low wage rates took the attention of the inspection committee of the prime ministry, which always evaluated the labor conditions on the grounds of a pure economic rationale. In the 1941 report the inspection committee pointed out that the underground workers with an average 112 piasters daily wage constituted the lowest earning group in 1940. It was also mentioned that pursuing the low wage policy was incorrect for the workers performing the most dangerous and difficult job among all workers.<sup>953</sup> Hence, the committee suggested that it would be fair for workers to take their families into consideration and to set up wages according to the local cost of living index.<sup>954</sup>

The RPP Zonguldak deputies were highly critical of the wages as well. In their inspection report of 1940 they pointed out that, while talking to the mine workers during the inspection tour, the mine workers had informed them of their complaints about wages. The deputies underlined that the wages of the mine workers were even less than the minimum wage set in 1921. The mine workers who had criticized minimum wage scale of 1938 were forced to work with daily wages even lower than the 1938 rates. Hence, their wages had fallen behind the rates of nineteen years earlier. Further, the workers with long years of experience

---

<sup>952</sup> T.C.Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, *Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949* (Zonguldak, 1950), p. 22.

<sup>953</sup> BUMH, *1941 Yılı Raporu*, p.14.

protested to get the same wages as the newcomers and asked for levels of wages according to the years they spent in the mines.<sup>955</sup> In the same report the deputies claimed that in the first year of compulsory labor practice daily wages of underground workers differed from sixty-five to ninety-five piasters a day. After taxes and food expenses were deducted a worker who was paid fourteen to twenty-two liras for thirty days on average, would not be able to take care of his family.<sup>956</sup>

The mine workers also brought up the wage issue with the Zonguldak provincial congresses of RPP held in 1940. The congress report reflected mostly the complaints of underground workers from the villages of the basin. For instance, while the men from Devrek asked for a raise in their daily wages, men from Zonguldak demanded additional allowances to be paid to the workers with multi-children families. They also requested the abandonment of the tax burden on their wages. The response to their demands came in 1943. The Ministry of Economy promised to raise the wages of the mine workers, but reserved the right of a child care allowance only to EKI officials. Furthermore, it gave vague answers about the tax exempt issue.<sup>957</sup>

The complaints of mine workers continued in 1941 while they received a small amount of raise in their wages. Reflecting the workers' criticisms, the Zonguldak deputies wrote in their inspection report of the 1941 summer tour that even after coal prices had increased the wages of workers remained the same. They criticized the number of the unproductive work force such as the office staff of EKI, who received the highest salaries compared to the workers in the actual production process. Furthermore, although there seemed to be a ten to fifteen percent raise in the wages of the mine workers compared to the figures five-six years ago, the raise was only for qualified workers such as hewers and headmen. The deputies warned the

---

<sup>954</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>955</sup> 20/1/1942, Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, September 1940.

<sup>956</sup> Ibid.

<sup>957</sup> 20/04/1943, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.



officials that the forced workers would not long prefer to work underground at such low wages after the forced labor was over.<sup>958</sup> As the deputies stated, the mine workers of Kilimli district complained that especially during the shift changes their labor on the first days was not recorded and they were not allowed to sleep in the workers wards, but slept outdoors. Their complaints were responded to the Ministry of Economy in their favor. The ministry promised that the unpaid first three days of labor of the workers would be paid and they would be registered in the wards as soon as they arrived.<sup>959</sup>

Another target of criticism among the mine workers was that due to the compulsory labor regime they had lost both their chance to negotiate their wages and to work freely in high paid jobs. When the mine workers compared their wages to those of men working in other sectors, they were definitely not happy with the result. The Zonguldak deputies also mentioned in the inspection report of 1943 that since the mineworkers were paid less than other workers a raise in their wages would have a positive effect among them.<sup>960</sup>

The mine workers, who did not receive a positive answer from the ministry on the issue of a wage increase, turned their attention to social aid. As a component of their wages, they demanded an increase in the quantity and variety of social aid provided by EKI to them. It annoyed the workers not to receive equal social benefits compared to the officials and high salaried workers of EKI. Many of them who earned low wages protested the biased policy applied by EKI for qualified workers. At the Zonguldak congress held in 1941 the mine workers complained that the high salaried workers were given coal for house heating, which was even shipped to their address every month by the company, while those who were paid minimum wage only receive coal every three months and they had to transport it to their houses by their own means. However, their demand for equal access to social services was rejected on the

---

<sup>958</sup> 20/1/1942, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /721.467..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, summer 1941.

<sup>959</sup> Ibid.

<sup>960</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943.

grounds that it was not possible to provide equal social services to so many workers.<sup>961</sup> Similarly, in his inspection report of 1943, the provincial inspector of RPP, Şevket Torgut suggested that since it was almost impossible for compulsory laborers to afford textiles with their low wages, the EKI should provide fabric for their families. For this end, the textile quota of EKI should be increased so that the workers could satisfy their textile requirements for clothing. Accordingly, such a service would increase productivity as well. However, this suggestion was declined by the Ministry of Economy on the pretext of the difficulties in textile production.<sup>962</sup>

The complaints of the mine workers about wages continued until the end of the war period. According to the 1945 report of another provincial inspector, Rebii Barkın, the men of Beycuma, who had long been working in the mines, protested the compulsory labor system and low wages. In addition to the low wages, the people from Devrek, on the other hand, complained that the amount of food served in the company cafeteria was not sufficient.<sup>963</sup> Workers who complained to Barkın, asked for wages equal to those of workers in other industries. However, the Ministry of Economy refused to meet their demands, claiming that when food supplies, accommodation and clothing expenses were added to their wages, the mine workers did not receive less than workers in other industrial plants. When these components were regarded as payment in kind, the wages paid to the mine workers were assumed to earn sufficient incomes.<sup>964</sup>

Throughout out the compulsory labor period, neither EKI nor the Ministry of Economy replied positively to complaints regarding wage issues. According to both establishments, the social benefits provided to the mine workers were a part of their income. Hence, although workers in other sectors were paid more, they had to pay for their provisions, health,

---

<sup>961</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>962</sup> 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.472..1.], , 3/10/1943 Inspection report of RPP Zonguldak provincial inspector Şevket Torgut's September 1943 tour and the response from the ministries.

<sup>963</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945.

transportation and accommodation expenses themselves. On the other hand, if and when the cost of benefits the mine workers added to their wages, it would be clear that the mine workers earned wages equal to the workers employed in other sectors.<sup>965</sup>

Throughout the war years the Ministry of Economy and other offices responded the complaints of the workers in a similar fashion. The social services were suggested to be a component of the wage system. So, the ministry and EKI, in fact, continued the long lasting tradition of the previous mining companies, made part of the wage payment in kind on which the workers had no chance of controlling their quality or quantity. For instance, in a reply to the workers' demand of a wage raise in 1940, the ministry rejected the request by asserting that the average wages was 115 piasters and that the price of food charged the workers was much less than the food cost. So, the workers who paid four liras for food per month then were receiving a twelve percent raise in their wages while eating cheaper meals. However, what the ministry missed was that only there were a few workers eating in the company cafeteria until 1942. Those who did not utilize the company cafeterias did not receive this paid in kind part of their wages.<sup>966</sup> Moreover, all of the workers did not benefit from social aid equally. While a few of the qualified workers and white collar workers were able to stay in the staff houses with their families, receive better social facilities, the majority of the workers either stayed at the workers wards, in the barracks or in huts by their own means away from their families.

The inspection committee of the prime ministry also supported the policy of paid-in-kind in its various reports. The committee accounted the wages in similar way. For instance, the 1943 inspection report evaluated social services as a part of wages. It was reported that while the average daily wage of a worker was 120 piasters in 1940, this amount was increased twice in 1942 considering the higher living expenses. Along with the forty percent raise made in 1943, the average daily wage of a worker became 163 piasters. The committee added to

---

<sup>964</sup> 2.11.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA,490..1.0.0 /723.473..1], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkin's inspection report date 20/10/1945

<sup>965</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies.

the wages in cash the costs of social services such as food cost, which covered eight-three piasters per day and accommodation and cleaning cost, which covered twenty-seven piasters per day per workers, as well as other assistance-in-kind, such as clothing fabrics, corn and fuel gas. Hence, the mine worker under the forced labor regime was turned in the account of the officials into a luckier worker whose requirements were satisfied properly on behalf of himself, for himself but indeed against himself.<sup>967</sup>

The wage table in the 1949 Inspection Report includes the cost of social services delivered to mine workers as “social contribution” in wages.

Table 21. Daily Wages of Underground and Surface Workers Together with Social Contribution, Payment in Kind and Cash, 1941-1949

Years	Underground	Surface	Other work sites	Average of basin	Social Contribution	Total	Cost of living index 1941=100
1941	120.40	121.78	148.70	129.78	26.97	156.75	100
1942	151.82	152.93	168.02	158.46	56.83	215.29	137.34
1943	163.21	158.35	174.86	167.75	121.55	289.30	184.56
1944	188.50	184.28	247.81	198.48	128.51	326.99	208.60
1945	212.38	208.82	219.59	215.02	135.55	350.57	223.64
1946	228.49	232.54	245.26	235.28	136.18	371.46	236.97
1947	278.78	273.03	310.41	283.43	164.92	448.35	286.02
1948	287.31	280.60	328.19	302.03	175.33	477.36	304.53
1949	292.24	287.89	317.59	301.86	179.77	481.63	307.26

Source: BUMH, 1949 Yılı Raporu, p.42.

As the 1949 inspection report underlined, payment in kind made through social services did not raise the real wages. The rate of increase in social lot was much higher than the rate of increase in wages. Therefore, the real wages were kept lower through increasing the share of social contributions in total wages. Regarding the poor conditions of living, the malnutrition, the insufficient means of transportation and bad health conditions, the social contributions contributed to neither the worker's real income nor his standard of living. What the government did was to impose the burden of reproduction cost of labor on the workers, who worked in a place by force and political coercion. The mining company therefore used payment in kind to disguise low wages by adding the cost of employment to the payroll instead of calculating it as production expense.

<sup>966</sup> 20/04/1943, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

Social allotment in the wage calculation of the ruler served various ends. First, the ruler as state, as company and as political power with its right of use coercion assigned itself a paternalist vision which masked the very power relations between it and the workers. Social allotment became part of a moral regimen, providing a self-portrait for the ruler and legitimized the subordination of the workers to the will of the ruler who knew what was worse and what was best for its subjects. While imposing reproduction costs to the exchange value of the labor, social allotment kept wages below those of the free wage worker.

The idea of making increases in real wages and supporting wages with social contributions entered minds by the end of the war. Now that the war had ended and the compulsory labor practice had come to an end, EKI and Ministry of Economy officers began pondering how to improve the living and working conditions of the workers in order to prevent the loss of manpower. In 1947 the wages of hewers and their mates, who were actual producers, were increased. For the first time, the actual production workers received higher than average wages. In addition to wages they were also entitled to bonuses as an incentive to attend to work and to increase production.<sup>968</sup> Social policy measures were now defined as instruments to increase the productivity of manpower and their commitment to the mine work.

---

<sup>967</sup> BUMH, *1944 Yılı Raporu*, p.3

<sup>968</sup> BUMH, *1947 Yılı Raporu*, p. 26.

## CHAPTER 9

### PATTERNS OF RESISTANCE AGAINST THE FORCED LABOR REGIME

#### The Failure of the Forced Labor Regime

The compulsory labor act provided the necessary number of mine workers to the basin and ensured a certain amount of coal production for the state's own needs. However, the increase in the amount of man power did not bring the expected increase in the total amount of coal production, respectively. Similarly, the increase in numbers of the workers in the prewar years had not brought a proportional increase in the total amount of coal produced per year. While the number of workers increased by 94.5 percent between 1933 and 1944, unwashed coal production increased only 55.5 percent.<sup>969</sup> Since the productivity of the average mine worker did not increase, contrarily tended to decrease, the increase in the numbers of workers brought only a limited rise in total coal production. It is obvious that as long as the labor intensive and low machine mix was applied in the production process, there could be no substantial change in either the organization of the labor process or the rate of labor productivity.

The same reason was valid for the low productivity of the mine workers during the Second World War. Further, EKI had to maintain coal production with a ruined infrastructure and inadequate mining equipment. However, EKI obtained new laborers in higher numbers,

---

<sup>969</sup> BUMH, *1944 Yılı Raporu*, p.127.

which was nearly two-fold of the pre-war numbers. The forced labor regime removed the problem of labor shortage during the war period. However, the increase in amount of manual labor did not bring a considerable improvement in the production amounts. Considering increase in the amount of washed coal, the real increase in total amount of coal available for use was limited. Similarly, compared to the pre-war years, labor productivity declined with the involvement of inexperienced laborers in high numbers in the underground work process. For instance, while the average production of per worker per day in the basin was 558kg in 1939,<sup>970</sup> it dropped to 491kg. In 1942. As of April 1941, both general productivity and monthly coal production dropped remarkably.<sup>971</sup> Although the daily working hours were extended to eleven hours under the forced labor, the quantity of production did not reach optimum levels.<sup>972</sup>

Along side the lack of mechanization, as the prime ministry inspection reports stated, another cause of the low productivity in the war years was the forced labor regime. The 1942 inspection report emphasized that although the compulsory labor act provided the necessary numbers of workers for an extraordinary circumstances, the forced labor system had some drawbacks, too. Accordingly, due to the inefficiency of the forced labor system, production costs continuously increased while productivity dropped.<sup>973</sup> The increase in the number of workers was not reflected in production amounts. It further compounded provisioning and housing problems in the basin which brought workers misery. Hence, EKI's policy of at any cost maintenance of coal production did not bring remarkable achievements in coal production, but it made great numbers of people suffer from the coercive measures of the forced labor regime for seven years.

---

<sup>970</sup> Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu (n.p: Alaeddin Kiral Basımevi, 1940), p.26.

<sup>971</sup> BUMH, *1941 Yılı Raporu*, p. 45.

<sup>972</sup> BUMH, *1944 Yılı Raporu* pp.127, 128.

<sup>973</sup> BUMH, *1942 Yılı Raporu*, p.32.

Even the official authorities admitted the failure of the forced labor regime, stating that it did not help to solve the production problems of wartime. While analyzing the reasons behind the failure of the forced labor regime, they took a critical stance against it, while it was in force. According to the 1942 annual report of the inspection committee, the decline in worker productivity was mainly the outcome of the low wages and use of coercive means over labor power. The committee pointed out that it was still a challenge to make the men work in the mines even after the compulsory labor act. Although severe punishments were implemented for desertion, they were not deterrent over the obliged laborers. Hence the report admitted the failure of the forced labor practice. As the report stated, since the obliged workers were paid less compared to workers in other sectors they preferred to work in the fields during harvest and cultivation seasons, no matter how strict the sanctions were. Hence, the coercive measures under the low wage economy could not bring success. Furthermore, the social aids, accommodations and food facilities did not create consent among the workers. According to the report, the workers cared only for the cash they were paid rather than the food and accommodations they were provided.<sup>974</sup> So neither coercive nor consent creating measures prevented the workers from fleeing the mines.

Another reason behind the failure of the forced labor regime was the inexperience of the obliged laborers. Even in the pre-war period, except for a small number of skilled mine workers, the majority of the workers saw mining as a complementary source of income, rather than as a full time job. Under the forced labor regime, along with the men who had underground work experience, many inexperienced men were introduced the underground works. Various inspection and inspection reports of the prime ministry on the basin related the ineffectiveness of the forced labor regime in the employment of the unskilled and inexperienced men in the mines. The 1941 inspection reports pointed out that even the

---

<sup>974</sup> İhsan Soyak Archive; Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi, 1942 Hesaplarımızı Tetkik Eden Komisyon Raporu, pp.18-19.



existing mine workers were not used efficiently, since there were no records indicating or listing their qualifications. Moreover, the rotational work system prevented the obliged workers from developing specialized skills while working in the mines. When workers did not regard mining as their profession, the rates of absenteeism were high, which brought a further decline in production and spoiled the work discipline.<sup>975</sup>

The problem of the lack of professional mine workers was complicated by the forced labor practice, which brought unwilling men to the mines who had no experience or qualifications. The inspection reports were highly critical about the employment of unskilled and inexperienced men in the mines under forced labor. Accordingly, since the laborers did not embrace mining as a profession, compulsory labor had no effect at all. Hence, it was not rational to expect reluctant, unresponsive and unskilled men to generate high performance and hard work. The rotational work system which caused loss in the work days during the shift changes was stated to be another reason for the low productivity.<sup>976</sup> The failure of the compulsory labor system was also highlighted in a 1946 inspection report. Concerning with the post-war period, the report stated that although compulsory labor made workers unwilling to work and productivity to decline, the labor issue would be more complicated when this practice ended after the war.<sup>977</sup>

Despite the criticisms of the inspection reports EKI under the production pressure had neither time nor the resources to train qualified mine workers during the war. The forced labor partially ensured a certain amount of coal which had utmost strategic importance for the possible involvement of Turkey in the war. Instead of mechanizing the production process or persuading workers to work in the mines with high wages and better social facilities, EKI and the government adopted extra economic means of coercion to supply adequate numbers of

---

<sup>975</sup> For the critics of the inspection reports of the prime ministry inspection committee , see BUMH, *1941 Yılı Raporu* , pp. 10 and 99; BUMH, *İşçi Meseleleri*, p.9.

<sup>976</sup> BUMH, *1941 Yılı Raporu* , pp. 18, 21; BUMH, *1942 Yılı Raporu*, p. 14.

<sup>977</sup> BUMH, *1946 Yılı Raporu*, p. 13.

men for the mine works. With the support of the state's legal political power, EKI resorted to the forced labor regime during the war. Even though the extraordinary conditions stemming from war threat legitimated the use of compulsory labor for a period of time, the government could have facilitated the lives of the workers with higher wages and social facilities. Moreover, the government's reluctance to abandon the forced labor in 1945 after the war proved that the extraordinary conditions argument was not valid at all.<sup>978</sup>

Considering production amounts, the force labor regime achieved a limited increase in production in respect to the human loss. Moreover, the forced labor operated to the detriment of EKI. The high production costs put EKI in continuous loss. The balance sheet of the company proved that during the forced labor period it gave deficits in an increasing trend. In 1940 its deficit was 1,304,945 TL. In 1941 this amount raised to 4,638,543 TL. Despite a certain amount of decline in 1942 and 1943, the deficit increased at 7,111,697 TL in 1944 and 13,598,909 TL in 1945. In the last year of the forced labor regime its deficit was 19,657,247 TL.<sup>979</sup> Considering the low wage rates and insufficient social services, the share of wages in this deficit must have been a small one. It is obvious that the burden of the policy of selling coal at a price below its cost was imposed to a large extent on the workers of the basin.

Under the coercive measures of the state, those who resided in the villages surrounding the basin served the vested interests of the state to detriment of their own vested interests. Under the forced labor regime, the mine workers lost their previous control over their wages, their work place, their work period, in short, over their labor. They lost the ability to maintain the traditional cyclical work pattern between the mines and the land. With the forced recruitment system they also lost their newly rising organizational power on the basis of the crew system. As the organic ties between the worker headmen and their fellow laborers were

---

<sup>978</sup> Yersel points out that, in a meeting with a commission of Grand National Assembly on annulment of the compulsory labor act, EKI's director Ihsan Soyak stated that in order to keep coal production at a certain level, it was absolutely necessary to maintain compulsory labor regime. Soyak's statement reflects the outlook of the managerial cadres for the forced labor regime and their perception of workers as unfree labor. Yersel, p. 28.

<sup>979</sup> For the figures, see Apak, et al., pp.302-303.

cut, the mine workers lost the foundations of a possible organized resistance. They were faced with the excessive power of the state during the forced labor regime.

When the nationalization of the basin put the mining under the full control of the state, it had already introduced the lives of the workers to its economic, political and legal apparatus. The paternalist protectionism of the state, which reflected in social services of the companies in the 1930s, turned into paternalist coercion with the outbreak of the war. It brought a legal servitude to the basin's people, in reference to the duties of the true citizens to their state in hard times. The people of the basin were expected to work in the mines as soldiers in the service of their nation. The state tried to handle the problem of coal production through imposing extra economic coercion that involved legal sanctions over the labor power of the basin, instead of resorting to measures aimed at creating consent among the basin's population for work in the mines. Hence, the labor regime operated in the war years through the managerial, economic and legal coercion of the state.

As the balance sheet of EKI and the production amounts indicate, the forced labor regime ended with no great achievement. Contrarily, it brought misery and great human loss to the basin. It increased tensions the relations between the state and the basin's population. Actually the people of the basin should not be seen as a passive mass who simply submitted to legal servitude. They had an important part in the failure of the forced labor regime, defying it with a wide variety of practices ranging from open violation of the law, such as fleeing from the mines to which they were assigned, to legal forms such as resorting to the petition mechanisms of the RPP. The legally legitimate and illegitimate forms of resistance of the obliged laborers coalesced in an anti-disciplinary web. They tried to handle the forced labor regime by truly escaping from it or using, manipulating, making do with its rules within itself and creating the illusion as if they obeyed it.

Likewise, they resorted to the legitimate channels of the ruler, playing their role as true citizens seeking in their rights behind the state and yet against the state. In so doing, they articulated to the discourse of the ruler within which state-society relations were defined. Through resorting to the law courts or to the RPP's local and central branches, delivering their complaints and requests via petitions, they contested with the state within its own territory of language. They imposed ambivalent meanings on the concepts the meanings of which had already been appropriated and set by the ruler. What they did was to subvert the dominant discourse from within, not by rejecting or transforming it; but by using, diverting it in their favor.

Through resorting to a variety of practices, the obliged workers made use of the strong to defy the forced labor rule. In their petitions they appropriated the key components of particularly the populism principle of the RPP and inflected it with opposing meanings. The basin's inhabitants articulated a moral language and redrawn the boundaries of what was acceptable, expected, justifiable, right and fair in reference to the populist discourse of the state. Indeed, they underlined the oppressive nature of the state's relation to its citizens and they reminded the state the reciprocal nature of the relation between the state and the citizens. They demanded their rights as true citizens undertaking their duties. In their petitions they asserted that combination of forced labor regime to repressive practices of the local representatives of the state caused their misery. Their battle on meanings of the main concepts of the dominant language brought a clear political dimension.

#### To Cope with the Forced Labor Regime by Law: Compulsory Labor Lawsuits

During the obligatory labor regime, the obliged workers either brought a suit against the unjust implementations of the compulsory labor act, or they were engaged in a law with as to be charged with violation of the labor act. In his book published in 1941 Hürrem Barım, one

of the members of High Criminal Court in Zonguldak, summarizes several lawsuits regarding the compulsory labor act.<sup>980</sup> Although the examples given by Barım only cover the first two years of the Act, they give an idea about the subjects of the lawsuits and how the obliged workers made the law work in their favor. The cases are striking enough to show the court orders and so the manner of conduct of the lawyers towards the issue of forced labor. The cases pointed out by Barım consist of examples of people who were taken to court for violating the compulsory labor act or found guilty on such charges. Although there are no available statistics on the number of the cases indicating the frequency of the breaching the compulsory labor act, the examples given by Barım indicate the contested fields of the compulsory labor act.

The age limit for men under the compulsory labor act constituted one of the points of contest between the executor of the act and the obliged workers. Barım informs that while implementing the compulsory labor act imposed on the basin, some local judges regarded the youth under eighteen as obliged as well and sentenced those under eighteen who did not to obey the act. Yet those who appealed to the Supreme Court saved their rights on the grounds of the decision of the court which emphasized that youth could not be employed in mining work according to Article 49 of the Labor Act, and therefore could not be considered obliged under the compulsory labor law.<sup>981</sup> The cases proved the implementation of forced labor against the Labor Code of 1936 and the existence of the injured parties who sought their rights in the Supreme Court at the same time.

However, in order to avoid the irrelevancies of the obligatory labor law, the Coordination Committee dropped the minimum age limit of mine workers from eighteen to sixty on 18 February, 1941 as per resolution no. 256.<sup>982</sup> And then the Ministry of Economy

---

<sup>980</sup> Hürrem Barım, *Ücretli İş Mükellefiyeti* (Zonguldak: Doğan Matbaası, 1941)

<sup>981</sup> Ibid., s. 9. The conclusion was arrived at by the Third Appeal Court of Supreme Court as per Case no. 5731, File no. 5186 and Case no. 530 and File no. 661 published on 31/1/1941.

<sup>982</sup> For the full text of the decree, see Anıl ve Merey, vol. 2, p. 256.

issued a memorandum determining the maximum age limit as fifty-three.<sup>983</sup> However, until the legal arrangements were put in place, men above thirty-three and youngsters under eighteen had been made to work in mines. Those who refused to go to the mines on the grounds of the age limits of the Labor Code were sued and sentenced to imprisonment. Even though they had the right to appeal to the Supreme Court, most of them must not have been able to afford for legal fees. There must have been a few such people who sought their rights in the courts.

Another point of contest was derived from the legal definition of the labor obliged. Immediately after the obligatory labor act was issued, the village headmen arranged the lists of the male villagers who were obliged to work in the mines. However, the lists had many mistakes. Contrary to the law, obligatory work was imposed on many people who had no experience at mining or who were not originated from families with traditions of mining jobs. The false lists were the outcome of the follow-up officials who misinformed the headmen, calling them to prepare lists of all the men in their respective villages for compulsory military service. Naturally the lists included artisans and traders who had never been in the mines or did not belong to families with mining tradition. The false lists hence, caused a series of law cases. Men ones who were well-off tried to have their names removed from the call list by taking legal action. Although the local courts in general came to verdicts against them, the Court of Appeals would change the verdict.

For instance, the objection of one man who was imposed to compulsory labor although his family had not history in the mines and he no experience at such work, was declined by the Zonguldak Court of First Instance (*Zonguldak Asliye Ceza Mahkemesi*). Fortunately, the Court of Appeals acknowledged his objection and changed the verdict of guilty in his favor.<sup>984</sup> However, those who could not afford to object to the verdict of the local

---

<sup>983</sup> Özeke, *Türkiye Sanayiinde*, p.18

<sup>984</sup> Barım, p.31.

courts had to continue working in the mines. For instance, a number of men from the villages of Ulus, who had no mining experience because of the distance of Ulus from the mining districts, were subjected to the compulsory labor act as well.

Yet, the appeals of the objections in the Court of Appeals were sometimes overruled. For instance, an office messenger in the Karabük Demir Çelik plants was forced to go to work in the Asma mines. Legally those who had already worked in a public service had to maintain their work in their respective work places, since they were under the obligatory labor act there. In reference to this provision, the office messenger argued that he already had under obligatory labor act in his respective work site and he could not leave his post. However, he was unable to get rid of the compulsory mining work. His objection was overruled by the Court of Appeals and the verdict of the local court remained effective. Furthermore, the office messenger was sentenced to prison as well as to pay a fine in regards to the final verdict of the Court of Appeals.<sup>985</sup>

The plaintiff who objected to the practice of compulsory labor did not always have the right to object. They sometimes attempted to find solutions, making use of the Resolution No. 2 as a get away. In one case, the Ereğli Court of First Instance found the plaintiff innocent, who had been charged with violating the compulsory labor law with the excuse that he had a sick mother to take care of. However, the Court of Appeals changed the verdict, claiming that an obliged laborer could only be signed sick on his own behalf by an official health report authorized by a government doctor.<sup>986</sup>

Another channel for objecting to the compulsory labor act was either to apply to the Compulsory Labor Follow-Up Office or to the Ministry of Economy. But their applications to be exempt from compulsory labor were most of the time declined. For instance, on 6 September

---

<sup>985</sup> Barım, p. 27.

<sup>986</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

1941, the exemption requests of seventeen men were refused by the Ministry of Economy.<sup>987</sup> The attempts of worker to be exempted from compulsory labor continued even though the majority of them could not achieve their goal. The 1944 incoming records of EKI are full of these requests. Cemal Uzunal from Bartın Geriş Zanaatköy was only one whose application was declined.<sup>988</sup> Among the applicants there were also women who requested that their husbands be exempt from compulsory labor. For instance, in 1946 two women named Gürcü and Fatma Öz petitioned that their husbands be excluded from compulsory labor.<sup>989</sup> Yet, there were some claims of exemption acknowledged as well. For instance, in 1941 Hasan Yılmaz's exemption request was accepted.<sup>990</sup> Similarly, in 1945 Hasan Hamamcı's application for exemption from compulsory labor on the grounds that he was a disabled person, was forwarded by the Ministry of Economy to the Compulsory Labor Bureau for evaluation.<sup>991</sup> Through the compulsory labor period, the obliged workers did not give up trying to escape from the regime either with the efforts of family members or their wives. However, a significant number of those applications were declined on the grounds that the labor force would be weakened and work discipline would be disturbed.

### The Requests and Complaints Mechanisms of the RPP as Channels of Resistance

The inhabitants of the basin communicated their annoyances that stemmed from the compulsory labor regime to various channels of the RPP either in writing or verbally. The RPP party inspection committee which was back in force in 1939<sup>992</sup> and the RPP's Zonguldak

---

<sup>987</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, date of the file 19/8/1941-13/11/1941; Correspondence from the Ministry of Economy to EKI, correspondence date, September 6, 1941.

<sup>988</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsaliye Defteri, 12/8/1944-14/12/1944.

<sup>989</sup> But since the summary of the Correspondence only gives an idea about the nature of the petitions we do not know their contents and response to them. TTK, Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri 7/2/1945-5/8/1946.

<sup>990</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 19/8/1941-13/11/1941.

<sup>991</sup> TTK, Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri 7/2/1945-5/8/1946.

<sup>992</sup> For RPP party regulations for inspectorships and its applications, see Cemil Koçak, *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi (1938-1945)*, Cilt II. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996), pp. 94-103.



deputies served as the most important channels in passing the petitions and complaints of the people to the government and the Party General Secretary. One other channel was the Party's provincial congresses held by the delegates at the province, district and village levels. Through the Party's local congresses the inhabitants of the basin were able to express their problems, expectations, and complaints to be passed onto the headquarters of the Party. Last, members of local bureaucracy such as the governor, prefecture, district administrator, and village headmen, also voiced the demands of the people to the government.

The direct petitioning to the RPP General Secretary was a widespread practice the people of the basin resorted to during the period of the forced labor regime. The basin population was also able to apply directly to the Party General Secretary through by-passing the local bureaucratic channels. Most of the petitions sent to the Party General Secretary during the war years were written by the villagers who had problems with the compulsory labor law and the oppression of the local representatives of the state. The follow up officials, the gendarme units, village headmen and some administrative units at the village and town levels were targets of complaints. The forced labor practice provided an excessive power in the hands of the local authorities, who used their duties regarding the different processes of the forced labor as a means of oppression over the villagers. Generally, the Party General Secretary sent those complaints and petitions to the ministries or to the local branches of the Party after evaluating them. While the evaluation of the petitions took one to three months in the Party General Secretary, after forwarding to the ministries, their evaluations took almost one year. Those petitions which initially were kept in some correspondence among local units in the provinces then went from one desk to another in the ministries, the RPP General Secretariat and the local bureaucracy. The Party General Secretary, hence, acted only as an agent to pass the complaints to the related units. Effective or not, the direct petition mechanisms performed many functions, one of which was that the villagers of the basin

turned this channel into an opportunity to express their requests, complaints and demands even though most of them were not taken into consideration.

Along side the direct petition mechanism, the party kept informed about what was going on in the basin through organizing provincial congresses during the war years. The minutes of the party's town congresses held in 1940 and 1941 and the Zonguldak congresses held in 1940 and 1942 were collected in a booklet.<sup>993</sup> The booklets summarize the problems the basin population experienced throughout the period and the approach of the government to those problems. The concerns the party members voiced during the local congresses were classified. The requests and complaints belonging to the concern of the governorship, the Party's local branch and the municipal office were separated from the rest and passed to the related provincial offices. The rest were passed on to the Party General Secretariat. After issuing the requests and complaints the committees of the local party congresses selected the issues which were regarded as significant and passed them to the party general secretariat. The party general secretariat classified the issues in accordance to the related ministries and the state offices then passed them on for evaluation. Last, the ministries and the related bodies evaluated the issues and informed the party general secretary about the measures they had taken or their ideas about the problems assigned to them. The Party General Secretariat tried to check whether the requests had been evaluated or not and the measures taken by the related offices.<sup>994</sup>

Another channel, the RPP inspection committees, consisted of deputies commissioned by the Party General Secretary to inspect certain regions. These inspectors had to be present in the regions to which they were assigned, at least every six months as well as during provincial elections and congresses. The aim of Party inspectorships was to

---

<sup>993</sup> For the requests determined in the provincial party congresses held between 1940 and 1942 and the responds given by the related offices and the ministries, see 20/04/1943; Catalog no.[PMRA,490..1.0.0 /722.471..1. ]

<sup>994</sup> For the functioning of the request mechanism in the party local congresses , see Esat Öz, *Tek Parti Yönetimi ve Siyasal Katılım* (Ankara: Gündoğan Yayınları, 1992), pp. 189-191.

evaluate the local branches of the party and their activities in the related province. It is no doubt they functioned as a control mechanism of the Party headquarter over the local branches of the party.<sup>995</sup> The inspectors reported their observations to the RPP General Secretary, covering many details, such as the law and order of the province in question, the activities of the local party branches, the moral quality and the behavior of the local representatives of the party, the party's relation with the local press and the people. Since the aim of the party inspectorships was to keep the province and party organization under the surveillance of the party center, they also gathered information about those who were involved in socialist, communist or nationalist movements as well as individuals and groups that opposed the Party, if any.<sup>996</sup>

When the regulation of the party inspectorships came into force in 1939, Kars deputy Şerafettin Karacan was appointed to the party inspectorships of the Bolu region. In 1940 Karacan was charged with both Bolu and Kastamonu. In 1943, Kırşehir deputy Şevket Torgut was commissioned as the head inspector to Zonguldak. Both party inspectors reported the petitions and complaints of the people delivered during the party's local congresses. During their inspection tour, they met with the people of the provinces and they informed the party general secretary about their impressions. During this tour the people informed the deputies about their complaints and expectations from the state and delivered individual or collective petitions to the party inspectors who then passed them to the party general secretary.<sup>997</sup> Apart from the Party inspectors, Zonguldak deputies also paid visits to the area generally during the summer period. They generally made some inquiries about the feelings and reactions of the people and informed the government and the Party about the regional issues. In the

---

<sup>995</sup> For the lists of the Party inspection committees and their functioning, see Koçak, vol. 2, pp. 94-104.

<sup>996</sup> 21/7/1942, Catalog No: [PMRA 490..1.0.0/ 722.469..1.], There were set of questions which asked law and order of the province under inspection. For the questions, see inspection report of Şerafettin Karacan.

<sup>997</sup> For the inspection report of Karacan, *ibid.*; for the responses from ministries to Karacan report, see 28/8/1943 Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 513.2061.2.]. For the inspection report of Şevket Torgut, see 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.472..1.]

inspection reports written by Zonguldak deputies in 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1945 there appeared many problematic issues regarding the obligatory labor regime.<sup>998</sup>

The reports of the party inspectors and Zonguldak deputies were evaluated by the RPP General Secretary and then having been classified the issues were sent to the related ministries and provincial administrative units. The responses to the petition and complaints were again sent back to the provincial branches of the party to be passed to the local offices and to the people who had requests or complaints. Both the inspection reports of the deputies and the responses from the Ministries give us an idea about the problems of the basin's people and the government's approach towards them throughout the war years.

Through the Party's channels the basin population communicated their complaints and requests to the political body. Most of them were directly related to the forced labor regime and the use of it as a coercive device by the local representatives of the state. The basin's inhabitants tried to improve their living and working conditions or to soften some measures of the forced labor regime in their favor by means of requests and the petition channels of the party. The requests concentrated on some issues. While some of the people tried to expand the exemption criterion from the forced labor regime, others tried to improve working conditions, rotation periods or working hours. The inhuman treatment of the mining engineers and other supervisory cadres, overwork, wage cuts and some hardships in underground works constituted the main subjects of complaint.

Some of the workers on whom compulsory labor was imposed wanted to change the system to their benefit by trying to expand the limits of exemption. During the town congresses held in 1940 workers from Devrek demanded the postponement of their compulsory labor for a while for those with ailing family members. The village guards obliged to work in the mines asked to be eligible for exemption on the grounds that they could not perform their duties in

---

<sup>998</sup> For the reports of Zonguldak deputies, see 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /721.467..1. ]; 21/07/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.469..1.], 3/12/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490.1.0.0 /722.470..1.], 28/08/1943; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /513.2061..2.];

the villages. The Ministry of Economy refused both requests, pointing out that cases like theirs had not been included in the list of exemptions granted by the decisions of the Coordination Committee.<sup>999</sup>

Residents of all of the villages in Ulus and Safranbolu also requested to be exempted from the forced labor on the grounds that they had neither mining experience nor the tradition of working in the mines. Actually most of the residents living in Safranbolu and Ulus were engaged in trading, farming or forestry as the primary economic activities. Working in the mines under the forced labor regime was detrimental to their livelihood since they had to stop their traditional economic activities. The people of Ulus expressed their complaints to the Zonguldak deputy of RPP, Rebii Barkın, who visited the area in 1945. They asked him to exempt them from the forced labor regime, stating that they were made to work in the mines even though they had no experience, and did not like mining jobs at all. Out of 1,131 men from Ulus included in the compulsory labor force, 404 of them were working in the mines, the other 727 men got away on working in the mines with the condition that they would work in casting timber for mines. Nevertheless, arrangement of the obliged workers in two groups and assignment of one only to cutting of timbers brought a considerable degree of discontent among the Ulus people. The practice led to some bribery and misconduct. Those who desired to be involved in the second group with the obligation of cutting timber were accused of getting out of mining obligation by giving bribe to the local officers of the forced labor. As a result Barkın asked the Ministry of Economy to exclude all of the Ulus people from forced labor.<sup>1000</sup>

Most of the exemption requests were turned down on the grounds that it would demolish the work discipline. Those who understood that they could not achieve exemption began to improve working conditions in the mines. One attempt of this sort was the demand of shorter working periods. Most of the workers complained about the one-month compulsory

---

2/11/1945; Catalog no.[PMRA ,490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.].

<sup>999</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

period, later the 45-day working period. For instance, at the congress held in 1940, the people of Bartın suggested that compulsory laborers should work one month in the mines, and two months in the agricultural fields. Similarly residents of Devrek asked for two months leave for the compulsory laborers during harvest season. Most of the villagers demanded permission to work on their farms under the supervision of the village headmen. But the Ministry of Economy pointed out that they achieved better results in the one-month compulsory working period, and only later some changes could be made according to the conditions of different regions in different seasons.<sup>1001</sup>

Although requests and complaints regarding the period of compulsory working continued throughout the war years, there were no improvements from the workers' point of view. On the contrary, the compulsory working period was increased to forty-five days in 1942. Claiming that both their agricultural work came to a halt and they became exhausted, the workers demanded this period be shortened.<sup>1002</sup> Yet the answer from the Minister of Economy was still negative. The Ministry stated that the one-month compulsory period had been increased to 45 days because of the drop in productivity during the shift changes, and therefore no changes would be considered.<sup>1003</sup>

During the inspection tour of Rebii Barkın in 1945, the complaints of the villagers still continued. In Barkın's words, the villagers of Çaycuma:

...are more dependent on land than other places. For this reason an uninterrupted forty-five days work in the mines causes their agricultural work to suffer loss at a considerable degree, particularly in the summer times. They told with pour out one's woes that they received low wages, the money they are paid at the end of the forty-five day working was only enough to afford a pair of shoes and a pair of shoes endured only one and a half or two months and in this manner the villagers almost worked in the mines only for their food. They said that since there were no men left in their villages, it was women who worked in the fields.<sup>1004</sup>

---

<sup>1000</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 0/10/1945.

<sup>1001</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>1002</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943.

<sup>1003</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies.

<sup>1004</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945.

As Barkın indicated, the low wages were the most important source of discontent. Compulsory labor forced them to work with low wages and they also lost their livelihood in farming. Hence, working in the mines did not compensate their losses. The villagers rightly criticized the oppressive labor regime which harmed their livelihood both in the mines and on the land. Rebii Barkın met with similar complaints in every village he visited. While responding to their complaints, he resorted to the "sacrificing and patriotic Turkish villagers" rhetoric of the political elite. However, "some literate headmen" as Barkın labeled them, framed their complaints out side of the rhetoric of sacrificing and patriotic Turkish villagers. Instead of the oppressive relationship between the state and the society within which the ruler exercised coercion over the subjects to make them do something, they offered a regime within which the ruler strove to achieve the consent of its subjects. In such a system which offered at least an asymmetrical yet reciprocal relationship, they could give their consent in return for some gains. In reference to citizenship rights and duties, the villagers, hence, reminded Barkın of this reciprocal relation between the state and society, and called on the state to abolish the forced labor practice. In Barkın's words,

I told them how coal production is as important as military service, and that just like it would be meaningless for a soldier to complain of his military duty of keeping fatherland under protection, it would be unacceptable for a self-sacrificing Turkish villager to find compulsory work as burdensome, which indeed was as important as military service. Some villagers, especially more or less literate village headmen, said that villagers had been tolerated this forced labor for such long years and as the war had already ended, well then it was necessary to abolish the forced labor as well, and soon when the soldiers of the army were discharged it would not be fair to maintain forced labor regime in the way it used to be.<sup>1005</sup>

In their conversation, the village headmen clearly redrew the limits of what was just and unjust, what was acceptable and unacceptable in reference to the language within which the political elite legitimized the forced labor regime. They turned the tension into a moral battle against the state, legitimizing their arguments within the dominant rhetoric of "soldiers in

---

<sup>1005</sup> Ibid.

the service of the protection of the fatherland." They skillfully used the weapons of the strong, the ruler, against itself within its dominant discourse through appropriating the key words of its rhetoric. While demanding the abolition of their "military service," they did not make a request but did seek their rights. In this dialogue, they reconstructed their place in the already established hierarchy between the state and society, on a reciprocal basis. In such reciprocity, they represented themselves not as poor and self-sacrifice villagers, but as true citizens who performed their duties and now demanded their rights. Hence, the criticism of the forced labor practice brought the villagers on a new level where they began to criticize the whole the political order.

The rhetorical battle of the village headmen and the complaints of the ordinary villagers made Barkın realize that the existing language of the elite had lost its power over the people in creating legitimacy and consent for the state's policies. He also began to question the political elite's vision of the poor and obedient Turkish villager. Shocked by confronting a mass different from the elitist vision, Barkın confessed that he faced a new truth, an image entirely different from the perception of the elite. In his words,

It is my job to mention a truth it is that in many regions within my election district and especially in Çaycuma, Ereğli and Devrek which are on the lines of railway or sea routes the learning and mental capacity of villagers have developed remarkably.

Sometimes I'm subjected to such questions and I receive such answer to some of my words in my conversation with the villagers which impulse me serious thought and make me come to such a final judgment that it would be right to deliver a speech to the villagers on the grounds of absolute truths. In respect to this judgment, it is my duty and my job and my obligation to state that the compulsory labor question in the coal basin has to be taken up as soon as possible, considered seriously and necessary precautions should be taken urgently.<sup>1006</sup>

The portrayal of the villagers by the political elite as introverted and stagnant peasants whose rights should be protected only by the government was shaken after the travels of the deputies to the basin. The reality within which the villagers portrayed themselves was different

---

<sup>1006</sup> Ibid.



from the elitist vision of the political elite. By means of their demands and their moral battle within the language of ruling elite, the villagers forced the ruling elite to see the villagers not as subjected to the state's will but as the subjects of their own lives. The new reality indicated that the words which defined state-society relations on the basis of the duties of the people to the state no longer worked. Loyalty, self-sacrifice, submission to state authority, the duty of protecting the fatherland, military service and such attributes situated the ruled in a coercive order where the state had the right to exercise legal, political and economic and also physical coercion over the ruled and expected them to obey without questioning. From the elitist perception they could not question because of their inability to think. However, when the people obtained a chance to dialogue with the rulers, they compelled them to think and question their very elitist perception of peasantry. Consequently as long as the people achieved to make the elite reconsider their language and revise its main components, the people's battle of words achieved a political end as well. Words like "urgently, as soon as possible, seriously" that Barkın used in his report also denote the urgency of revising the main components of the elitist perception.

The villagers of the basin tried to make use of dialogues with the political bodies to improve their working conditions in the mines. They turned the conversations into opportunities to express their demands and hence achieve certain improvements. When they could not achieve certain demands, such as shorter work periods they then turned to improve working conditions. Sometimes demands were made collectively, with the involvement of the local-official representatives of the village communities, such as headmen and/or the council of elders. For an example of such collective demand-making, the elder councils from eleven villages in Zonguldak and Bartın petitioned for the daily commute of villagers to the mines in a letter they wrote to the RPP General Secretary on 12 February, 1944. The petition was given after the cancellation of the rights granted to 841 workers who were allowed to commute from

their villages to Gelik and Karadon mines every day. The chief engineer in Gelik had handed discounted train tickets to the workers for four liras each. Nevertheless, the workers living in the distant villages had missed their trains because of transportation difficulties particularly in winter, which inevitably made them miss their work days in the mines. Hence EKI management had cancelled all of the discounted train tickets and had required the workers in Gelik and Karadon to stay in the worker dormitories like all others.<sup>1007</sup>

What the village councilmen tried was to reinstate the opportunity of the daily commute of the workers to their work. They tried to persuade the political and administrative units through certain arguments. They first pointed out the discrimination among the workers, some of whom continued their daily commute to mines. For instance, although the discounted train tickets of the workers who got on the train at Kokaksu station were cancelled, the ones who got on the train at Filyos station were still commuting. Second, to make their demand acceptable, they took into the consideration EKI's objection and demanded the commuting right for the workers living in the villages at the most three-four km away from Kokaksu station.<sup>1008</sup> What the councilmen tried to achieve was flexible working conditions for the workers which would be provided by being free to travel, so the workers would be able to spend nights with their families.

Before petitioning their demand to the RPP General Secretariat, the councilmen had applied to the governorship. However, their request had been objected by EKI management once again on the grounds that the daily commute of the workers lasted five to six hours and since the workers worked in their villages, when they arrived at the mines, they had already exhausted their energy and worked with low productivity. So, the discounted train tickets had been cancelled in order to keep production in line. Then the councilmen had applied to the Party General Secretariat. To back their request at this time, they based their request on the

---

<sup>1007</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490.1.0/ 0491.1978.1. ], Collective petition, dated 12/2/1944, sent to the RPP General Secretary by the village council of elders of eleven villages.

how poor the living conditions were in Gelik mines. They continued their argument, claiming that since the workers were not safe because of theft and robbery and the poor hygienic conditions in the worker dormitories, the workers were forced to sleep outdoors. In their petition, they emphasized that if the workers would be allowed to commute daily between their village and mines, they would be more willing to work, which would benefit EKI, the railroad company, and the workers.<sup>1009</sup>

Although the RPP General Secretariat forwarded the petition, the requests of the councilmen was declined by the Ministry of Economy on the grounds that the bed capacity in the worker dormitories were more than enough, but that workers who were not happy with the discipline and level of hygiene preferred to sleep outdoors.<sup>1010</sup> The Minister also objected to the daily commuting of the workers, claiming that the physical conditions in the dormitories were as regularly checked, but the ones commuting to and from their villages were a potential threat for contagious diseases. Moreover, since workers wanted to go their villages not to see their families but to work in their fields, they tended to escape from mine work, which affected production badly. The Minister further stated that most of the villagers asked for discounted train tickets for their personal interests, like being able to travel for less money when going to the city center to the market place. In the end, demands of the councilmen were refused both by the local authorities and by the Ministry of Economy.

The RPP General Secretary functioned only as means of passing the response to the councilmen through its local office. However, the line of argumentation of the councilmen proved how they critically used the living conditions in the mines as a strategic part of their demands. Furthermore, the collective demand making of the councilmen as both representative of the state at the local level and the representative of the villagers indicated

---

<sup>1008</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1009</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1010</sup> 24/10/1945, Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1.] The correspondence , dated 26/6/1944 send by minister of economy, Fuat Sirmen to RPP General Secretary Memduh Şevket Esendal

their in-between position which enabled them to make demands on behalf of the village communities with certain official power as well.

Even though the workers did not keep their rights to commute daily, they continued their struggle to improve their conditions under the forced labor regime. One another objective of the workers was to maintain their control over the work place they had been assigned to the previous work period. They demanded to maintain their work in the same pit and the same room when they returned to the mines after their forty-five day off period. It was important for them because they could work more comfortably in the same room or coal face than in a new one. Since they knew the geological conditions, difficulties and easiness, they adapted to work more easily. Further, they did not want to leave the respective work place to a new group, where they had run all the preparatory works and believed to be safer than a new work place. During the inspection visit of the Zonguldak deputies in 1943, the workers informed them about their demands. Although their requests were communicated to the Ministry of Economy, they were declined on the grounds that conditions would not allow for them to be assigned to the same mine shafts in every work period.<sup>1011</sup>

Other issues the workers complained about were the long working hours, which exceed eight hours a day, the unhealthy working conditions and deficient payments. For instance, during the provincial party congress of 1941 the mine workers from Kasımlar village stated that they got sick after working ten to twelve hours in the watery seams of the Asma mine. Nevertheless, their complaints were responded as such that each shift in the mines did not exceed eight hours and that after they left the mines their clothes were dried and then given to them again.<sup>1012</sup> In reality, however, the workers not only worked for more than eight hours a day but they were not paid for the overtime since their working hours were not recorded systematically. Many of the notes in the EKI records indicate that overtime work was

---

<sup>1011</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies.

<sup>1012</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

a usual practice and that the workers usually were not paid for it. In a correspondence dated 1940, for instance, while mine worker Nuri Topçu complains that his overtime wage was not paid and his daily payment was cut,<sup>1013</sup> another worker, Osman Emrullah complained about working overtime.<sup>1014</sup> Similarly in 1942 the workers of Asma mine also mentioned the overtime work.<sup>1015</sup> The complaints of Hüseyin Ünal and Recep Koymat about working overtime and being paid less in 1946 hinted that the problems were still on the agenda of the workers, even after the emergency period.<sup>1016</sup>

The only injured party among the workers was not the obliged workers. Free workers also had some problems. At the 1941 provincial congress permanent workers from the Asma mine protested that they had been laid off and replaced by other workers without any grounds. In the response to the complaint it was stated that arbitrary lay offs did not exist in the mines.<sup>1017</sup> However, in reality, despite the labor scarcity, lay offs were seen occasionally. In a letter dated July 13, 1945, Mehmet Arslan, chief watchman in the Zonguldak Üzülmüş mines wrote a complain petition to the RPP General Secretary. In his petition, he asserted that he had been laid off by a chief engineer subjectively and even though he had asked for a document stating the reason why he had been laid off, the chief of engineer had not given it to him.<sup>1018</sup> Furthermore, other watchmen who had protested the firing of their fellow had also been laid off with the justification that they had gone on strike. Later on, the watchmen either related to the demonstration or not had been all seized by the security forces and imprisoned one night at the gendarme station.

The chief watchmen Mehmet Arslan petitioned RPP for an investigation to be made as in the following:

---

<sup>1013</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 11.6.1940-27.8.1940; Correspondence , dated 4/7/1940.

<sup>1014</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 11.6.1940-27.8.1940; Correspondence , dated 4/7/1940 .

<sup>1015</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 13/4/1942-30/6/1942; Correspondence , dated 15/5/1942.

<sup>1016</sup> TTK , Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri, 7/2/1945-5/8/1946; Correspondence , dated 20/3/1946.

<sup>1017</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>1018</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA, 490.1.0.0 / 491.1978.1. ], Mehmet Arslan's petition submitted to RPP General Secretary in 13/7/1945.

I have been one of the old and faithful employees of the company for seven years and I have a family of eight. The unjust and arbitrary treatment I encountered has caused me extreme suffering loss. I have been obliged to take refuge with your kind consciences as a citizen. As a Turkish individual I would like the local representative of the RPP to investigate the matter while all evidence is still straightforwardly available and in case any proof is obtained against me I would like you take the necessary legal investigation against me.<sup>1019</sup>

Similar to the rhetoric of other petitions and the conversations held between the party deputies and the villages, the chief watchmen spoken within the dominant discourse of the ruler through legitimizing his arguments, in reference to Turkish citizenship, and faithful laborers who deserved fair and just treatment. After being evaluated by the RPP General Secretariat, the petition was then forwarded to the RPP provincial administrative committee of Zonguldak. Although we do not know the outcome of the investigation, the petition at least seems to have caused the authorities to take action.

The arbitrary and cruel attitude of the engineers as well as their management of the mines at their offices instead of going down to the mine shafts were the subject of complaints. In their 1943 inspection report, the Zonguldak deputies stated that the engineers were deeply involved in administrative work and used to manage the production from their desks. Hence, they put the headmen in charge. The deputies warned the party that the engineers should be involved in production immediately.<sup>1020</sup> In its response, the Ministry of Economy objected to the accusation of the deputies, claiming that all engineers in the mining companies tried to assume all their responsibilities including the administrative work and had not passed their duties to the headmen totally.<sup>1021</sup>

The betterment of working conditions, freedom of association, right of retirement and social security were some other demands the workers voiced behind the political bodies and EKI's units. For instance the worker headmen, mostly of whom were originated from

---

<sup>1019</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1020</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943.

<sup>1021</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0/ 723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies.

experienced mine workers, demanded in the 1940 provincial congress to establish a professional association. They were the most influential figures in the underground work process, directly dealing with the underground workers and mediating between them and the company engineers. Their demand to form a professional association was declined by the Ministry of Economy on the grounds that the purpose of the association was not clear.<sup>1022</sup> In the same congress the workers claimed the right of retirement and pension plan just like the railway workers and enforcement of the social security act as soon as possible. The Ministry of Economy also declined this demands, stating that only ailing, elderly or handicapped workers were entitled to pensions and that the social security act was being appraised in the councils of the Grand National Assembly.<sup>1023</sup> Although the claims of workers regarding the institutionalization of their rights in the form of either a worker association or social security establishment were not taken into consideration, their demands indicated that they defined their interests with a new language, a class one.

### The Everyday Forms of Resistance against the Forced Labor Regime

Along side the legal channels, the obliged workers resisted against the forced labor regime by resorting various means. They first took direct action against the law through escaping from the mines they were assigned. This was the most risky, yet one of the most wide practices among the obliged laborers. In the case of fleeing, their family members, relatives and sometimes whole fellow villagers of the fugitive were coerced by the state's local representatives and the gendarme. When the fugitive was arrested, he was subjected to torture, imprisonment, and exile to working in the fortification in distant provinces. However,

---

<sup>1022</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

<sup>1023</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response.

due to the labor scarcity, the fugitives were mostly reassigned to a mine after being intimidated into not escaping again.

Along with fleeing from the mines, another practice, rather set of practices, was simply based on subverting the forced labor regime within itself, without taking direct or collective action. The obliged laborers mostly manipulated the deficient points of the compulsory labor act, such as the exemption conditions, age limits and working elsewhere, making use of them in their favor. Second, they made use of permission pretext which enabled them to leave the mines in their compulsory work period for a while. Third, they resorted to bribery, giving money to EKI personnel at different posts, such as those who arranged the lists of the obliged workers, or attendance sheets or medical reports for excusing workers from work. Fourth, they incorporated local agents of the compulsory labor act, such as compulsory labor follow-up officers, village headmen, gendarme, or other local officials at low ranks either by bribing or using the collective resistance of the local networks. However, bribery, misuse and corruption at the same time were turned in the hands of the executors of the forced labor into means of coercion, extortion and squeezing certain gains such as money from the obliged laborers and their families.

Most of the practices they developed were comprised of ruses, tricks and make-shift creativity. Their practices were dispersed, atomized, heterogeneous, variable, unsystematic, spontaneous and mostly tactical in nature. They were defensive against the state's economic and legal coercion. They were legitimate actions in the eyes of the obliged laborers, since they were forced to work in the mines, without their own will. The forced and coercive nature of the work constituted the most single justification of their illegal resistance practices in their eyes. Furthermore, the dangerous nature of the mine work, low wages, inhuman treatment, miserable living conditions, the necessity of allocating time for the maintenance of subsistence farming and the responsibility of looking after family members justified their



covert violations of the law. Although these fragmented and individualistic practices did not bring about political opposition, they involved such a potential, when they incorporated a collective demand making process, which will be elaborated in the next chapter.

As fragmented and heterogeneous practices, the everyday resistance practices can not be defined as a movement. They were rather a non-movement. The practitioners of the everyday resistance tried to escape from or soften the hardship of the forced labor without directly and collectively opposing the law. On the other hand, they achieved a certain degree of success in subverting the forced labor regime particularly in the first three years of its implementation. While subverting its order, they did not reject or alter the forced labor regime; rather they used, manipulated and diverted it within itself. At this point, they watched for opportunities, and transformed them into favorable situations spontaneously. Since the executors of the forced labor constantly enforced it as a response to its manipulation, the obliged workers had to find new occasions or resorted different practices at different times in parallel to the newly discovered internal weaknesses of the forced labor practice. Hence, they had to utilize the casual or circumstantial opportunities through the implementation of the forced labor.

The most direct and most risky action the obliged workers took against the forced labor regime was undoubtedly desertion. Although nonattendance with a valid excuse, signed sick reports, false time card punching and such practices were less risky, running away from the mines was the most common practice. The searches conducted by the local military units during the trailing of runaways were tough both for the fugitive and for his family since the first place the gendarme units searched was his home. And when the investigations began his family faced harsh treatment such as violence, threats or being arrested to intimidate the fugitive. Fugitives were beaten when they were caught and, apart from pecuniary punishment, they were put to jail and worked in heavier conditions after being released.

Despite the heavy punishments, the prevalence of gateways was the result of the inadequacy in the organization of the forced labor system and problems in its operation. Since EKI and the Labor Follow-up Office were inadequate in their jobs, the runaway rate of workers in 1940 and 1941 reached their utmost levels. Although the compulsory labor act was enforced in March 1940, the centralization of the management of the basin in the hands of EKI came at the end of the year due to the delay in enforcement of the nationalization act. Until that time the mining companies which maintained their existence, had not been able to manage the forced labor regime. Nevertheless, after EKI took in charge of the management, there was not much improvement as well. Since the organizational structure of EKI was too inefficient to manage such a labor regime in a disciplined manner, dispatching the obligated laborers and keeping them in the workplace remained a devastating problem for EKI for some years.

In 1940 when EKI was busy establishing its organization, the total number of absentees and runaways reached half of the total workers under the forced labor regime. According to daily attendance lists sent by the centers of the mine districts between the July and December 1940, the total number of the non attendants and fugitives was 11,898.

Table 22. Absentees between June 1 and December 31, 1940

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Those not attended at the beginning of the month</i>	<i>Fugitives</i>	<i>Total</i>
Zonguldak	1,333	808	2,141
Bartın	1,373	1,398	2,770
Devrek	2,375	2,858	5,233
Ereğli	234	236	470
Safranbolu	985	299	1,234
Yekûn	6,299	5,599	11,898

Source: Zonguldak İş Mükellefiyeti Takip Müdürlüğü, in Barım, p. 63.

Despite the increasing disciplinary measures and strict punishment breaches, the compulsory labor act absenteeism and fleeing continued during the period between 1940 and 1942. Even though EKI stabilized the numbers of the workers through increasing its control on cases involving nonattendance and excused absence, it was not easy to stop desertion. While absentees were nine percent in 1942, this rate dropped to three percent in the following year.

Parallel to this, the number of rotational workers increased to 11,781 by thirteen percent the 1943 from 10,442 in 1942.<sup>1024</sup> In the course of time the number of absentees which were particularly high during sowing and harvest season also dropped. The rate of absence during off-season and harvest months was twelve percent in 1940, then dropped to eleven percent in the following year and finally down to nine percent in 1942.<sup>1025</sup>

Unlike nonattendance, the fleeing could not be taken under control. None of the sanctions could stop workers from running away from the mines. While the ratio of desertion was 9.7 percent in 1942, it was up to 10.7 percent in 1943.<sup>1026</sup> The EKI Incoming Document Files contain many correspondences about absentees, fugitives, and no shows without excuse. The frequency of correspondences is evident for the high number of violations. In fact, trailing the fugitives was an additional burden on the shoulders of the EKI management and Follow-Up Office. There were many notices sent to the hometowns of workers by the Follow-Up Office. For instance, for the trailing of the mine workers who had abandoned their duties and returned to their villages, the Follow-Up Office sent the fugitive lists to the villages in March 1940.<sup>1027</sup> It informed Devrek governor about fugitives by phone in July 1941.<sup>1028</sup> On the same date, Ereğli governor reported by phone that thirty out of 2.400 registered obliged workers had not shown up for work.<sup>1029</sup>

According to the related provisions of the Act of National Defense, all the workers were obliged to perform their duties at the work site and they could not change their jobs or work places without permission. On these grounds, EKI trailed all workers in the basin regardless of their status of obliged worker or free worker, when they failed to go to work without permission, or did not show up at work or deserted the basin area and ran off far away. All

---

<sup>1024</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, p.93.

<sup>1025</sup> BUMH, 1944 Yılı Raporu, p.131.

<sup>1026</sup> *ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>1027</sup> KUA, Gelen Evrak Defteri, no. 139 , correspondence , dated 4.3.1940.

<sup>1028</sup> KUA , Gelen Evrak Defteri, no. 107, correspondence , dated 3.7.1941.

<sup>1029</sup> *ibid.*

local authorities and governmental officers got involved in trailing workers no matter where they went. Hence the trailing of fugitives sometimes exceeded the basin's boundaries and many other provinces became involved in the trailing process. Incoming document files have summaries of many written notices sent to the highest offices of cities like Izmir, Istanbul, Konya, Erzincan, Çorum, Gümüşhane, Rize, Ordu, Bolu and Kastamonu. There are two samples, for example, one written to the Istanbul Governorship about a fugitive, Fevzi Yermi, who worked in a restaurant at Tophane in Istanbul in spite of his obligation to work in the mines. The other correspondence was sent to the Izmir Governor about the seizing a fugitive named, Hakkı Özdemir.<sup>1030</sup> As many examples prove in the document files of EKI, despite a strict trailing of the fugitives and their harsh punishments, the workers continued to run away until the end of the forced labor regime.

In their inspection report of 1941, Zonguldak deputies recommended several measures in order to reduce the numbers of deserters. They criticized the trial period, stating that a four to five month trial period of the fugitives or nonattendance workers was too long. The punishments pronounced in the end after four or five months so no longer had a deterrent effect. Moreover, since those guilty workers who could not afford to pay the pecuniary punishment were sent to jail, it brought about a decline in the number of workers able to work in the mines. Hence, the deputies suggested the fines be reduced and the guilty workers continue working in the mines under the supervision of gendarme units rather than imprisonment.<sup>1031</sup>

The number of fugitives increased especially during sowing and harvest seasons due to the fact that the workers needed to maintain their farming activities for their livelihoods. While in the supply of labor force there existed no great trouble until May 1941, after this month

---

<sup>1030</sup> For written notice about Fevzi Yermi , see TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 19.8.1941-13.11.1941, correspondence date 20.9.1941; for Hakkı Özdemir , see ibid. correspondence date 10.9.1941. For written notices to various cities, see TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 13.4.1942-30.6.1942.

<sup>1031</sup> 20.01.1942 Catalog no.[PMRA, 490..1.0.0/ 721.467..1.]. 1941 Inspection Report of Zonguldak Deputies.

problems began and lasted until the year end.<sup>1032</sup> Desertion and nonattendance continued to affect coal production throughout 1942 as well. There were many workers who were taken to court because of noncompliance with the obligatory labor act.<sup>1033</sup> In the same year in Courts of National Security were established in Zonguldak to try workers who violated the act. Two local newspapers, *Ocak* and *Zonguldak* began publishing the list of verdicts in October 1942.

*Zonguldak* gazette gave a full list of verdicts between April 13 and July 21 in its October 16, 1942 issue. The list involved 150 workers who were required to pay fines differing from 200 to 1,800 liras.<sup>1034</sup> 5 December, 1942 issue of *Ocak* published a list of verdicts of desertion on trial between July 21 and December 3 1942. This list included fifty deserters who were punished with fines from 300 to 1,200 liras.<sup>1035</sup> Consequently, as reported in the two newspapers, 200 workers had been given to pecuniary punishments during the period between April and December 1942. The National Defense Act required workers to pay fines between fifty to 500 liras for violating the compulsory paid labor provisions for the first time, but their punishment would be doubled for the second violation 100 to 1,000 liras. Should the offense be repeated the offender would be committed to prison for a minimum of fifteen days to two months in addition to the pecuniary punishment for every rotation of the working period.<sup>1036</sup> Since all the fines imposed on the workers exceed fifty liras, we can conclude that almost all the workers had offended the law in more than one period.

In the lists of 1942 no workers were punished with imprisonment. They must have been put to work in the mines instead of kept in jail. Although there was a penalty of imprisonment in the lists announced two years later, in 1944, it is not possible to tell the nature of the offense since the National Defense Act also required imprisonment for offenses such as speculating or

---

<sup>1032</sup> BUMH, 1941 Yılı Raporu, p. 8.

<sup>1033</sup> BUMH, İşçi Meseleleri, ,p. 13.

<sup>1034</sup> *Zonguldak* Gazette, 16 January 1942.

<sup>1035</sup> *Ocak* Gazette, 5 December 1942.

<sup>1036</sup> Barım, p. 39.

overpricing.<sup>1037</sup> But deserters must not have been committed to prison in that year due to the labor shortage in the mines. At a time when labor scarcity was a significant issue EKI had to use all manpower available to continue coal production, so whether criminal or deserter, all workers were worked in mines.

During the first months of 1942 coal production was almost stopped because of desertion and nonattendance problems combined with trouble in supplying timbers, and deficiency in the infrastructure. While the number of deserters was quite high within the first years of the compulsory labor practice, it was prevented partly with the help of severe measures. As a result of the production crisis, İhsan Soyak, an experienced mine engineer and previous manager of the İş Bankası companies in the 1930s, was appointed general manager to EKI on 26 January 1942. He was expected to discipline the labor supply and to remove problems in the production process. Likewise he established a tight management and handled the problems with a considerable degree of success. To solve the problems of nonattendance and runaways, four months later, on 25 May 1942 the compulsory labor act was revised with more punitive sanctions. Revised provisions would enable cooperation with the highest authorities in trailing and arresting the fugitives be bring them back and put them to work in the mines by force with close cooperation with the gendarme. And the fugitives would also be made to work extra to compensate for the days they had missed.

Alongside the oppressive measures, another way of deterring workers was sending deserters into exile where they were made to work on road construction and fortification projects districts far from the basin. It was simply the worst of the worst. During 1942 and 1943, total of 1,391 workers were banished to work on fortification projects. Out of them, 1,305 of them were deserters and absentees and the remaining eighty-six had acted against work discipline. Although the ratio of offenders did not exceed one percent,<sup>1038</sup> being sent into

---

<sup>1037</sup> *Zonguldak Gazette*, 20 August 1944.

<sup>1038</sup> BUMH, 1943 Yılı Raporu, p.93.

sending exile to work on road construction was still a severe punishment. Workers who were banished worked under heavier conditions with military discipline. Particularly those who attempted desertion more than once were sent to Çatalca and Demirkapı for heavier work. Banishment was the nightmare of both the workers and their families. There are many letter entries in EKI incoming document files written by or on behalf of workers' families objecting to banishment. For example, a petition from Ayşe Aktaş from Üveyikli village who requested the postponement of her husband's banishment was rejected.<sup>1039</sup> There were also letters informing the security forces or higher offices about offenders to be banished and sent to certain locations, like Asım Uz. Residing at Balat, İstanbul Uz was sentenced to work fortification on the grounds that he failed to abide by the compulsory labor act.<sup>1040</sup>

Another penalty imposed on fugitives was to make them serve in the *Ocak Hizmet Taburu* (Mine Service Battalion). The military service obligation of the mine workers was deferred so that they could continue to work in the mines. If they deserted or neglected their duties or violated work discipline then they were subjected to severe punishment. Offenders such as fugitives, absentees and those who violated work discipline were sent to the mine service battalion and continued working in the mines, but this time under the military discipline of the battalion. It was set up on 28 November, 1943. Petitions entered in the EKI correspondence records also indicate that this was also a common penalty.<sup>1041</sup>

The Mine Service Battalion consisted of reserves whose military service had been deferred, of workers who had offended the regulations by deserting, by not showing up, or by violating the work discipline. However, the commander of the battalion was far from establishing a disciplined order in the battalion. Although it was the duty of the punished soldiers to stop the workers from running away or to trail the deserters, they themselves were leading such offense. In his report to the lieutenant general, the general manager of EKI,

---

<sup>1039</sup> TTK Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 5.7.1944-1.9.1944, correspondence date, 28.7.1944.

<sup>1040</sup> Ibid., correspondence date, 21.8.1944.

İhsan Soyak, complained about the undisciplined actions and negligence of the commander in charge of the Mine Service Battalion.<sup>1042</sup> He pointed out that since 15 February 1944, when the second commander had taken charge, desertion had increased twelve percent in the Battalion compared to the rate of two percent six months earlier. While only fifteen soldiers out of 825 had deserted in February 1944, this number was 118 out of 974 in August. Soyak also accused the second commander in charge of bribery and misconduct. Although the National Security Act forbade any leave for the soldiers who had committed offenses, the second commander recorded the ones who had gone their hometown on duty. Soyak mentioned that those were the soldiers with whom the commander wine and dined and he demanded that the commander be punished immediately.

Despite the severe punishment, banishment and being sent to the Mine Service Battalion, as long as the deficiencies in the practice of the forced labor remained, the workers did not abandon nonattendance or runaway. One other opportunity the workers discovered was the inefficiency of attendance records and misconduct of the record officers. Confusions in the system allowed civil officers to manipulate the regulations by abusing their duties and accepting bribes. Thus, being aware of these facts, the workers took advantage of the circumstances in order to evade the compulsory labor. No matter how hard EKI management tried and threatened the office staff who neglected and misused their duty with salary deductions, their collaborating with the mine workers continued. In the incoming document files and memoranda records we see many examples regarding the misconduct, misuse and corruption of forced compulsory labor follow up personnel. The village headmen and transportation unit staff who gathered the mine workers from their villages and dispatched them to the basin area, the attendance keepers who recorded attendance in the mines and

---

<sup>1041</sup> Ibid and Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 12.8.1944-14.12.1944. for petitions reg. workers incorporated in Mine Service Military Units.

<sup>1042</sup> Correspondence, dated September 2 ,1944 from EKI General Manager İhsan Soyak to the Lieu. General, Private Archives of Ekrem Zaman, Zonguldak.



the compulsory labor follow-up officers who tracked the rotation period of work, were all key elements in controlling the workers.

Bribing the local agents of EKI in charge with the listing and dispatching of obliged workers or arresting the fugitives was the most widespread practice to which the obliged workers resorted. Village council, headmen and follow-up office staff were all in charge of making lists of compelled workers, announcing the lists, gathering the compelled workers and dispatching them to the mining company on the first day of every month. During this process the compelled workers collaborated with the local agents to avoid the work. The agents facilitated the desertion of the workers or the exclusion of their names from the lists of the compelled workers either by neglecting their duty or misusing their authority. Occasionally the local agents of the compulsory labor act took advantage of their authority in order to put pressure on the villagers, threatened to list them as compelled workers unless the villagers agreed to meet their personal demands or give money. Whichever the case, the local agents of the follow-up office used their authority either to punish or safeguard the village people.

The petitions sent to the party's general secretary proves that bribery was a common practice among local authorities in return for relief from compulsory labor. The village headmen were in a position to accept bribes and misuse their authority due to the critical role they played in the process of determining compelled laborers and their dispatch to the mines. In a complaint letter sent to the General Secretary of the RPP, Nuri Aytaç, the headman of Akpınar village in Bartın, was accused of collecting ten liras each from forty-seven men in exchange for relieving them from compulsory labor. But since he did not keep his promise, he defrauded them, in the end all of them had to go to mines.<sup>1043</sup> There are more examples set by other village headmen in the files of EKI. In the record entered in 1941, it was reported that the headman of Arapoğlu village, son of Mustafa, Ramazan failed to serve his compulsory

---

<sup>1043</sup> 24.10.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490.1.0.0/ 491.1978.1.], Complaint letter of İsmail Ergener, RPP Town Administrative Committee to the General Secretary on 19.5.1945.

labor duty,<sup>1044</sup> and in the records kept three years later, another headmen was accused of concealing some of the compelled workers.<sup>1045</sup> From time to time, the village authorities took advantage of their positions in punishing the persons they disliked. A mine worker named Ahmet Yükseldemir reported to EKI management in 1946 about the village council members who had caused him to serve in the Mine Service Military Unit without any just cause.<sup>1046</sup>

The election of the local representative of the state provided another chance to escape from forced labor obligation. The process of election also became a subject of bribery. As the village headmen, watchmen, members of council of elders and forest guard were exempted from the forced labor, men tied to be elected or appointed to these positions through bribing the related offices in charge with elections or appointments. In 1940 a total of 1,140 men were relieved from compulsory paid labor with the help of their office duties although they were experienced in working in mines. However, on July 28, 1940 the coordination committee adopted a resolution to stop the misuse, requiring the swapping of the elected local government representatives with those who were over 50 years of age or with ones who had no experience in mining at all.<sup>1047</sup> However, some still managed to get away from compulsory labor by bribing higher authorities in order to be appointed to these posts. For instance, in a petition written by Kamil Durmuş on 15 April 1944 to the General Secretary of the RPP, he claimed that the follow-up officer and the party's local representative, Eyyüp Pehlivan in the Çaylıoğlu village of Ereğli accepted bribes during the process of electing and appointing village headmen and guards. He accused Pehlivan of pocketing seventy liras from a man named Mustafa, in return for relieving him from being compelled to work in the mines. Mustafa achieved to appoint to guardship. However, as his deferment of military was automatically canceled when he was relieved from mine work, at this time he had to go the

---

<sup>1044</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no. 50, correspondence, dated 16.8.1941.

<sup>1045</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri. 12.8.1944-14.12.1944, correspondence, dated 1.9.1944/3480.

<sup>1046</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri. 7.2.1945-5.8.1946, correspondence, dated 17.06.1946.

<sup>1047</sup> 28.8.1940, Catalog no.[ PMRA, 30..10.0.0/174.206..8]

army due to his military service obligation. Likewise, Kara Mehmet from the Peynircioğlu family in the village of Alioğlu had paid 100 liras to Pehlivan to be appointed as the village guard. Even the price of field guards was determined in accordance to tariff, between 100 to 150 liras.<sup>1048</sup>

Similarly, the gendarmes in charge of tracking down deserters and handing them to EKI released them in return for money. While compelled workers were relieved from mining work with the help of corruption, misconduct and nepotism, they had to pay significant amounts. In summer 1943 villagers informed Zonguldak deputies that the gendarme units in charge of the compulsory labor act had set the compelled workers free for fifteen to twenty liras as if they had tariff rates. The gendarme units were also accused of demanding money from the workers by threatening to treat them as deserters although they were either on sick leave or had been provided an allowance of time for recreation. Should the worker fail to obey them, the gendarme units would take him back to the mines no matter how ill they were.<sup>1049</sup>

The negligence, misconduct of the staff in charge, or their misuse of their duties were widespread practice among EKI personnel in the mine districts and in the central office as well. They made the workers able to run away from the mines in return for some money. In such cases, the workers seemed to work at the mines they assigned, but in reality they were absent. Sometimes, the misuse or negligence of the key officers resulted in the unfair punishment of other workers who were present at their works. In March 1940 EKI management gave a warning to the directorship of the mines and companies regarding some workers being allowed to leave their jobs by putting forward irrelevant excuses.<sup>1050</sup> Especially during the first years of the forced labor regime, the uncertainty in the authorization of certain officers gave a clash of authority. Such uncertainties made it easier for mine workers to skip

---

<sup>1048</sup> 24.10.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490.1.0.0/491.1978.1.]. Complaint letter, dated 23.8./944, handed by Ali Rıza İncealemdaroğlu to the RPP General Secretary.

<sup>1049</sup> 24.10.1945, Catalog no. [PMRA, 490.1.0.0/ 491.1978.1.], 1943 Inspection Report of Zonguldak deputies.

<sup>1050</sup> KUA , Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no. 139, Correspondence , dated 13.3.1940.

their work. A memorandum issued in 1941 which informed that foremen were not authorized allowing workers to leave the mine site is evidence to the clashing authorities.<sup>1051</sup> Furthermore some attendance-record keepers and other officers connived at workers escape when bribed. When Zonguldak deputies interviewed workers in 1941 both on the spot and in their villages, they found that some of those record keepers accepted bribes to indicate workers on the run as present at work.<sup>1052</sup> In respond to such claims the Ministry of Economy stated that the necessary precautions had been taken against officers committing offenses and investigations had been started.<sup>1053</sup>

On the other hand, errors made deliberately or due to carelessness by the follow-up office staff in the attendance records of workers caused serious problems for workers who performed their work honestly. For instance, in 1944 because of irresponsible recording of the Kozlu Follow-Up Office, one injured worker on sick leave was shown as a fugitive and punished unfairly without the necessary investigations. He was sent to the Mine Service Battalion, having been accused of desertion.<sup>1054</sup> In several memoranda addressed to the Personnel Department signed by EKI General Manager in 1946, we see that many members of the office staff were punished for abuse of authority and misconduct. For instance, the two officers in charge of checking the arrival of new rotational workers failed to report the thirteen no shows among them. They also did not register the arrivals of five workers. Hence, they were penalized for misconduct.<sup>1055</sup> Likewise, the follow-up officers in charge of Üzülmüş and Kozlu were reprimanded when they failed to report the new arrival of a group of rotational workers.<sup>1056</sup> In Gelik another officer in charge of following up compulsory laborer was penalized when he let fugitive to desert the mine site who had been already brought back by

---

<sup>1051</sup> KUA, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, no. 107, Correspondence , dated 29.8.1941.

<sup>1052</sup> 2.11.1945 Catalog no.[PMRA, 490..1.0.0/ 723.473..1].

<sup>1053</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1054</sup> Correspondence, dated 6.8.1944 to the Personnel Department of EKI, Ali Kaya Private Archive, Zonguldak.

<sup>1055</sup> Correspondence, dated 18.1.1946 to the Personnel Department of EKI, Ali Kaya Private Archive, Zonguldak.

<sup>1056</sup> Ibid.

the gendarme units. And there were other follow-up officers in Gelik who gave permission to workers to take a few days leave but did not report them when they did not return.<sup>1057</sup>

The frequency of correspondences between EKI and the local authorities of several towns indicate that in many cases workers failed to get back to work after going “on leave” to their hometowns. In one of the correspondences, for instance, EKI management requested the Görele governor to trail a worker who had taken two-month leave but not shown up when this time was over.<sup>1058</sup> Indeed tracking down workers who did not return back to the mine site after their leave was over created a considerable amount of work burden to office staff. It was also a common practice among workers to find several excuses to evade mine work. Between 1942 and 1943, the total number of workers who did not show up in the mines with various excuses was almost one out of four of the total rotational workers.

Table 23. Rotational Workers Leave- On with Excuse between 22.12.1942-12.12.1943

Period	Work Periods	Workers on leave with excuse under the authorization of Headmen	Workers on leave with excuse in the Compulsory Labor Records	Total number of workers on leave with excuse	Total number of rotational obliged workers
1	22/12/1942-15/12/1942	564	3,043	3,647	15,880
2	16/02/1943-31/03/1943	696	3,275	3,971	15,737
3	01/04/1943-15/05/1943	927	3,033	3,960	16,144
4	16/05/1943-05/06/1943	1,173	3,169	4,342	16,882
5	01/07/1943-15/08/1943	1,254	3,286	4,540	16,910
6	16/08/1943-04/10/1943	889	3,351	4,240	17,058
7	05/10/1943-11/12/1943	1,095	2,989	4,084	17,230
8	12/12/1943	911	3,206	4,117	17,524

Source: EKI 1943 Yılı Faaliyet Raporu, TTK, İhsan Soyak Archive, no. 81, p. 13-14.

The number of workers on leave in the records of village headmen or of follow-up officers climbed during the spring and summer seasons. As per the Compulsory Labor Act and the Regulations set by the Follow-Up Office, in order not to delay the agricultural pursuits of workers, the Ministry of Agriculture and Compulsory Labor Follow-Up Office would cooperate. In this line, while the ministry coordinated cultivation for villagers, the Office would adjust the rotation periods accordingly.<sup>1059</sup> The reason why the number of workers on leave rose during cultivating and harvest seasons was probably because of permissions granted to villager

<sup>1057</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1058</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 11.6.1940-27.8.1940, Correspondence, dated 14.6.1940.

<sup>1059</sup> For article 19 of Compulsory Labor Act arranging the agricultural work of villager workers and articles 11 and 12 of Follow-Up Office Memorandum, see Anil and Meray, Vol. II, p. 19; and ibid pp.1 87-188.

workers by the Follow-up Office. However, since the reason for the leaves is not indicated, the above table cannot tell us the intensity of agricultural work. But, no matter for what reason, the ones on leave failed to come back to the mine site when their permission time was finished. For instance, one of every four rotational workers did not come back from leave but remained in his villages as the records of 1943 reveal. Thus we may conclude that follow-up officers in charge of determining the obliged workers, their dispatch and control until their period, continued to collaborate with some of the workers and signed them as on “excused” leave in the records.

According to the compulsory labor act a worker could only take leave when he was sick, if a first degree relative had died and the case of natural disasters such as flood, fire and earthquake. In the case of the sickness or death of first degree relatives, the worker had to prove his excuse with a sick report from the health services of EKI or certificate of death of his relatives. Despite the strict rules the number of workers on leave with several excuses increased and that the village headmen and some authorities enabled workers to continue this act.

As a matter of fact, workers frequently used sickness excuses with made-up sick reports. The lack of organization in the local health unit helped compelled workers to stay away from mines with made-up sick reports. Workers were held exempt from the mines temporarily or permanently with the help of reports they took from the EKI's health units through made-up certification as if they were sick or handicapped. The frequency of “worker on rest” in EKI records is evident that this was another common way of skipping mine work even though there were real cases as well. Some of the health officers made up sick reports for workers. In a clinic in Gelik, for instance, health officer was terminated on 31 December 1943 because of the faked medical reports he provided for the workers and the clinic doctor

was given a warning. EKI tried to prevent the loss of the labor force by declaring void all the medical reports written to that time.<sup>1060</sup>

One other favorite way out for workers to evade compulsory labor in mines was to pretend to be employed by other companies. As the Compulsory Labor Act required that those to be selected as compelled workers should not be already employed for other public services, the workers manipulated this article as well.<sup>1061</sup> In the EKI incoming document files there are several correspondences regarding some suspects who might have taken advantage of this regulation. In 1941, for instance, EKI wrote to the Zonguldak Mayor to expel a worker named İsmail Abacı from the municipal staff, informing that this person was among the compelled mine workers and he must be fired as soon as possible.<sup>1062</sup> On the same day EKI had a phone conversation with the medical superintendent of Zonguldak Hospital, regarding Yusuf Kazıma, one of the hospital staff who was under obligation to work in the mines.<sup>1063</sup> While some of the compelled workers were expelled from other establishments, there were some cases when this procedure was reversed. In a document dated 1945 sent by the governor of Devrek and the Ministry of Economy to EKI it was stated that should it be proved that the compelled worker Yakup Karakavuz worked in the construction of government buildings, he could be relieved from compulsory labor.<sup>1064</sup>

---

<sup>1060</sup> Correspondence, dated 29.3.1943 from EKI General Manager İhsan Soyak to the head of Engineering Department at Kandilli mine site, Ali Kaya Private Archives, Zonguldak.

<sup>1061</sup> Hürrem Barım, p. 27.

<sup>1062</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 19.8.1941-13.11.1941, Correspondence, dated 06.10.1941.

<sup>1063</sup> *ibid*, Correspondence, dated 16.10.1941.

<sup>1064</sup> TTK, Evrak İrsalat Defteri, 7.2.1945-5.8.1946, Correspondence, dated 04.08.1945.

CHAPTER 10  
THE VILLAGERS, THE LOCAL BUREAUCRACY AND THE STATE IN  
THE LIGHT OF THE PETITIONS

The Republican People's Party, the Local Power Struggles and the  
Battle of the Villagers in Words

During the Second World War the relations between the state and the villagers of the basin was tensed up to a considerable degree under the policies of the war economy. The actual existence of the state in the basin was extended and deepened simultaneously by means of both the nationalization of the coal mining and the implementation of the compulsory labor act in the basin. The government intervened intensively in the ordinary lives of the basin's people at two levels in the context of the National Emergency Act. The government's involvement in the agricultural activities of the villagers constituted the first level. The sanctions put forward by the National Emergency Act with the effort of overcoming the food provisioning problems made it impossible for the villager workers to keep their previous control over their agricultural activities and their yields. As small land proprietors, the basin's villagers engaged in subsistence agriculture which primarily served their survival. Allocating a part of their produce to the state undoubtedly deteriorated their self provisioning in their respective



villages. The economic crash brought by the wartime hardships associated with legal obligations affected the villagers both as producers and consumers.<sup>1065</sup>

The compulsory labor regime constituted the second part of the government's intrusion in the lives of the people. Throughout the 1920s and the 1930s, while some of the villages were incorporated into the mining enterprise, the forced labor regime involved many of the villages and villagers in mining even though they had no mining tradition or experience in mining. The forced labor deteriorated on the one hand the flexible work pattern of the villagers between the mining and cultivating who had mining tradition as the part of their livelihoods. On the other hand, regardless of having mining traditions, a large number of villagers were compelled to work in the mines with low wages, terrible living and working conditions and under the economic and extra economic coercion of the state via its representatives, EKI and the local official practitioners of the forced labor regime. After seventy years, the basin people experienced once again legal servitude in the mines, under the coercion of the state, which perceived the basin's people as soldiers of the nation, as self-sacrificing Turkish villagers and indeed an easily driven rural mass and source of cheap labor.

What doubled the misery of the basin's people was the coercion of the local representatives of the state's authority, such as the headmen, compulsory labor follow-up officers, gendarmes and administrative heads of sub-districts. All the small ranking local officials were charged with crucial functions in both the running of the organization of the obliged villagers to work in the mines and the extraction of the state's share in their agricultural products. Both functions provided the local officials an excessive power over the villagers, through merging the already existing power relations between the villagers and the local representatives of the state. During this process the villagers and the local officers confronted

---

<sup>1065</sup> There is no doubt that the government's policy of guaranteeing provisioning of urban centers and the army through purchasing a certain amount of cereal from peasants at a pre-determined price mostly below the market price affected particularly the small peasants engaging in subsistence farming. The basin's villagers were no exception. The state's coercive measures deteriorated living conditions of a large number of small peasants during the war years. For the government's provisioning policies and their influence on the different sections of the

each other on very tense ground. The villagers found themselves in a struggle with the state while confronting its local representatives. The local bureaucracy did not hesitate to misuse new power sources in their favor<sup>1066</sup>. Legal coercion extended to corruption among the local rulers. They used new means to enhance their power and to increase individual gains.

The practices of the National Emergency Act turned the basin into the site of a local power struggle between the villagers and the practitioners of the act. There was no clear cut line between the parties such as oppressed villagers and oppressor local rulers. The power struggle did not only take place between the villagers and the local bureaucracy. It was rather a dynamic struggle within which the parties frequently formed new alliances among themselves and the persons from the opposite parties. The actors of the struggle changed sides in a more intrigued relationship chain. From time to time the villagers cooperated with the local government in an attempt to eliminate the other side of the struggle. During this process the village headmen and councilmen played important roles. Being organic components of the village community they occasionally cooperated with the villagers to resist the National Emergency Act. In such cases, similar to the villagers, they had to confront the governor, the prefects and the gendarme. However, sometimes they used their power to make the villagers subservient to their own interests. In such circumstances, the villagers sought collaboration with other local authorities in order to save them from the pressures imposed on them by the headmen.

The state positioned itself in the local power struggles as the protector of the poor and oppressed villagers, in reference to its paternal image. Indeed, the policy makers were concerned primarily with the ends, not the process of the implementations of the legal measures and their articulation to the local power struggles. The safe maintenance of the coal

---

peasants, see Şevket Pamuk, "War, State Economic Policies and Resistance by Agricultural Producers in Turkey," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, vol. 2, no. 1, (Spring 1988), pp. 19-36

<sup>1066</sup> This was not peculiar to the basin. In everywhere where the government imposed coercive rules over the agricultural producers through its local representatives, they did not hesitate to misuse the new legal means in the service of their benefits. Moreover, in order to save a certain amount of their product from the government's seizure, the villagers also resorted bribing the officers. Ibid, p.28.

production at all cost, including the human one, was the subject of the utmost interest of the government. However, for its maintenance a political regime needs consent as coercion. Associated with the fifteen year old authoritarian regime of the RPP, the policies of the war economy and their implementation by the local bureaucracy undermined the RPP's legitimacy among the people to a considerable extent. Likewise, the erosion of the legitimacy of the party would later give rise to the Democrat Party's opposition and its ten year rule in the post-war period. There is no doubt that the state was confronted a legitimacy crisis as the outcome of both the forced labor practice and the coercion of EKI and local official representatives in the basin. The practices of the National Emergency Act brought about both a deep discontent among the villagers of the basin and a legitimacy crisis of the party-state as well. During this period, the party tried to absorb and control the discontent of the villagers on the one hand and enforced the legitimacy of the party through utilizing various mechanisms of surveillance, on the other. By means of such mechanisms, the party tried to learn, control and reshape public opinion in the basin, which was not receptive towards the government's coercive policies. The RPP's party inspection committees, the Zonguldak deputies, the RPP provincial congresses and last, the mechanism of direct petition to the RPP General Secretariat by the ordinary people functioned as safety valves against the mass discontent and against the decline in the legitimacy of the political body.<sup>1067</sup>

The various communication channels of the RPP performed various functions, one of which was the gathering of information about public opinion and the general state of law and order in the basin. The inspection reports of the deputies and the booklet of the local congresses containing requests and the complaints of the basin's people, and last, the petitions directly sent to party's central body or local branches were reflective of the public

---

<sup>1067</sup> The same mechanisms, including petition to RPP General Secretary were run by the political elite throughout the 1920s and the 1930s as well. For a discussion on petition mechanism of RPP in relation to the state and legitimacy, see Yiğit Akın "Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Sosyal Tarihçiliğinde Dilekçeler," *Toplum ve Bilim*, 99 (Kış, 2003/2004): 98-128. There is no doubt that inspection tours of the party inspection committees and of the deputies, and the provincial congresses performed the similar functions during the war years as the petition mechanism of RPP undertook in the prewar years.

opinion. Through gathering information the party penetrated the daily lives, worries, discontent and expectations of the people. At this point as part of the ruling strategy, the information supply function of the party channels made the government and the party known and so put different dimensions of the life in the basin under political control.

The second function of the party's communication channels was to construct legitimacy at the local level. The people of the basin made the political body know about their requests, demands, complaints, worries, discontent and even oppositions in an open manner through the channels which were presented by the party to them. Through providing direct communication with the representatives of the state, the party attempted to renovate its image among the people, who began to perceive the state, its local representatives and its policies as illegal, unjust, unfair and coercive. By means of these mechanisms, the people were able to inform the political power about their misery as the outcome of the forced labor regime and the coercion of the local officials, and demanded the removal of unjust practices. The people, hence, came to feel that they were able to complain about the unjust treatments of the local officials, and put an end their loss and misery under the protection of the highest political authority, the state, and of its representative, the RPP.

The communication channels of the party served to renovate its decreasing legitimacy and its image of just and fair ruler. Indeed particularly the RPP's Zonguldak deputies and the party inspectors created this paternal image and personalized it with their self image through directly communicating with the basin people. The personalization of the political power through deputies in communication with the ordinary people served in differentiating the corrupted local officials from the state. Projecting a paternal image the party or its representatives promised patronage and justice to the people who were suppressed under the local officials and their "abuse" of the laws and of the state authority. Thus, the coercive nature

of the forced labor and of other measures of the war economy articulated the coercive treatment of the corrupted officials. Such maneuvers functioned through localizing discontent towards the personalities of the local officials, hence diverting the tension from the state to its local representatives. Neither the party nor the government was accused while corruption, oppression and violence were regarded as individual and isolated events.

The relationship of the RPP with the local struggles was both determined by the requirements of the war economy and by the paternal image of the state. The party used its paternal image to renovate its legitimacy, which had almost been lost due to the practices of the war economy. The party tried to keep the state away from the tension stemming from the practices of the National Emergency Act by identifying the state with the party and its paternalism, and on the other hand, identifying the coercive outcomes of the act with the local bureaucracy. Through its paternalist communication channels with the people, the party assumed an arbitrator role in solving the local disputes between the people and the local bureaucracy. Hence, the party created a turbidity in the sight of the people to veil both the organic relationship between the state and its local representatives, and between the coercive nature of the state and the coercive nature of its polices in the basin. The paternalist image with the arbitrator role of the party served such an end that when the prefect, the gendarme, the village headman, follow-up officers, forests guards, chief of police and all other administrative, bureaucratic and security units all utilized the National Emergency Act as the new source of power on the basin's people, their misconduct was considered as individual actions, a deviation from the original rationale of the act rather than the mere reflection of the state coercion at the local level. In this picture the party situated itself as arbitrary, listening, evaluating and defending its citizens against the corrupted local representatives.

The power struggles between the local bureaucracy and the villagers in the context of the forced labor regime and the position of the party in such struggles can be traced. The

villagers, who suffered from the coercive practices of the local officers, sent complaint petitions to the party general secretary to inform about their losses and to have the guilty officers punished by the state. Most of the petitioners first resorted to the local offices of the state to remove their troubles. However, after receiving no solution, they ceased to hope that the local representatives of the state would help. At this moment, sending petitions to the party central body appeared to be the most effective and the last resort. In their petitions, most of the complainants summarized the process of how they had applied to the local authorities and how the officials had held up their petitions instead of starting the judicial process against those who had misused their duties and put the villagers under coercion. Furthermore, the petitions revealed the cooperation between different ranks of the state local officials which veiled the corruption, misconduct and coercive practices among them.

The petitions proved the widespread nature of the bribery and corruption among the local officials in charge of the implementation of the compulsory labor act in the villages. Through by-passing the local bureaucracy, whom the petitioners accused of collaborating with the guilty, the petitioners tried to gain the support of the RPP to enforce their hands against those whom they believed acted unjustly. In their petitions the villagers followed certain rhetorical strategies to enforce their arguments. In the petitions, the villagers portrayed themselves as citizens of the state who performed their legal duties properly. They presented themselves as citizens believing in the state authority, its laws, the Republican regime and the RPP's principles, particularly its populism. The state appeared in this picture pursuing justice and the well-beings of its citizens. On the other hand, the local officials were portrayed as those who misused their duties against the will of the state and the rights of its citizens. They underlined the legitimacy of the state and the Republican regime in their eyes. They carefully limited their criticisms to the misconduct of the local authorities in applying the laws, rather than the laws themselves.

The vocabulary they used was composed of words carefully chosen from the language of the ruler. Indeed they developed a dialogic relation to the political power within its language. The dialogic interaction with the ruler also created the opportunity to undermine the already established power laden meanings of the words, and to refashion them with new meanings in favor of the villagers. By means of such rhetorical strategy, the villagers appropriated the words of the ruler and imposed new meanings to them in line with their rights. Hence, through using their own voice, the villagers turned the monologue of the ruler with its subjects into a dialogue between the state and the citizens. In such a dialogic interaction the villagers reestablished the state-society relationship into a reciprocal ground on which both parties had mutual duties and rights to each other. The villagers appropriated key components of the language of the state, such as duties, rights, legal, illegal, just, unjust, and imposed on them their shared experiences under the forced labor regime. Hence, they turned the dialogue into a means of making claims such as the combination of the forced labor regime into the unlawful practices of the local representative so the state was directly responsible for their misery and loss. The state should and must protect its citizens if it were the just, fair and lawful ruler it claimed to be.

The rhetoric of the petitions was a reminder of the moral ground of the state-society relations and demanded their rights in exchange for their duties. The villagers constructed a moral language with the words of the ruler. Justice, lawful governing, fairness, citizenship rights, and individual freedom appeared as the main components of this moral battle against the unjust, illegal, unlawful, unjust and despotic rule of the state at the local level. They turned upside down the asymmetrical power relation between the state and the villagers by replacing the state's rights-citizen's duties set by the state's duties-citizen's rights one. Hence, in such a rhetorical battle, there appeared an implicit call for a reciprocal, democratic and egalitarian relationship between the state and the citizens. In the petitions of the villagers there was a

strong rebellious voice against the coercion of the state's local representatives; nevertheless, this voice did not skip the paternalist vision of the state, and not turn into a total criticism of the state oppression.

The role the RPP assumed as the protector of the villagers was internalized by the villagers. The villagers confronted the local officers within the local power struggles, while the villagers tried to utilize the patronage of the RPP, the others exercised the power the RPP assigned to them. Hence, the state, in the embodiment of RPP, became in the eyes of the villagers the main source of protection, yet the source of oppression in the embodiment of the state's local representatives. The villagers became mostly the losing party in this struggle. But in order to diminish the pressure of the local bureaucracy and to improve their working and living conditions they tried to articulate the paternal means of the RPP in their resistance repertoire.

#### Village Headmen in Seeking Justice as the Representatives of the Village Community

The village headman (*muhtar*) was located in an elusive place between the village community and the state. He was, on the one hand, in charge of the preparation of the list of the obliged villagers, their dispatching to the mines and their trailing if they escaped from the forced labor. On the other hand, as the organic part of the village community, he lived in a local network which made him responsible for the villagers with whom he had social interaction. Moreover, his official position further strengthened his situation within the local networks. However, his in-between position provided him a wide variety of opportunities which he was able to use either against his fellow villagers or in support of them. In this line, during the war period, the *muhtars* sometimes used their duties and responsibilities to oppress the villagers and increase their power over them for personal gains. Sometimes, they collaborated



with their aggrieved villagers against oppression from above and in the end they became aggrieved.

The village headman occupied an over-fluid place in the local power struggle merging with the forced labor practices. The asymmetrical power relation between the state, its local representatives and the villagers was not a stable and absolute one within which the positions of actors in respect to each other were unchanged. Contrarily the asymmetry of the power relations was in constant dynamism and this dynamism stemmed from the very power struggles among the actors of the power relations. The power struggles reallocated the actors in different ranks of the hierarchy, strengthened or weakened their previous positions respectively, or eliminated one actor from the struggle totally. As the organic part of the village community the *muhtars* occupied more a vague position in the power struggles. Such a vague, ambivalent position allowed the *muhtars* move in between different power alliances.<sup>1068</sup> During the forced labor period, the *muhtars* appeared in collaboration either with the village community or the other functionaries of the forced labor regime. However, when the *muhtars* preferred to cooperate with the villagers instead of the local bureaucracy, they were seriously punished, removed from their posts and sent to the mines with the status of obliged laborer. While utilizing the opportunities of their official positions in favor of the villagers, such as delaying their dispatching to the mines, protecting them from compulsory labor or such acts, the headmen ran risks. The complex relations between the headmen, the villagers, other local officials of the forced labor regime and the local bureaucracy during the war years can be traced through the numbers of petitions the headmen sent to the RPP General Secretary and the observations of the RPP deputies who visited the basin regularly.

---

<sup>1068</sup> The *muhtar* appeared one of the most interesting local figures in the early Republican era. As Üstel points out, among the teacher-gendarme-headmen trios who represented the state authority at the villages, the *muhtar* was one who represented the village community at the same time. And his organic relation with the village community made him at the same time a suspicious figure on the eyes of the ruling elite. See, Fusun Üstel, *Makbul Vatandaşın Peşinde II. Meşruiyetten Bu Yana Vatandaşlık Eğitimi* İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), pp.201-202

The *muhtar* appeared to be one of the most critical figures due to their duties in the implementation of the certain measures of the obligatory labor law and regular dispatching of the obliged villagers to the basin. However, the in-between position of the headmen made them suspicious in the eyes of both their fellow villagers and the RPP deputies. Particularly the headmen had enough opportunities to guard their villagers or relatives from compelled work or to punish them with forced labor. The village council and headmen were in charge of making lists of men who were obliged to work, announcing the lists, gathering the men and dispatching them to the mine districts on the first day of every month.

In their reports the Zonguldak deputies mentioned the interruption of the listing process of the obliged men due to the misconduct of the officials in charge with preparing lists of the obliged workers. Especially in the beginning of the compulsory labor practice, there was a widespread chaos since the names of the men were drawn from the worker records of the mining companies. Immediately after, the registration office provided a list of names from the identity cards of those who had been born within the provincial boundaries of Zonguldak. However, the details of neither the worker records of the mines nor the identity cards were checked by the village council or the registration offices.<sup>1069</sup> Hence, there were many mistakes which made many villagers suffer. In the lists there were workers who were dead, or changed their residences. Some names and surnames were written incorrectly. Although some of the obliged men were not there, some others with the same name and surname were taken in their places even though the mothers' and fathers' names or birth dates did not match.<sup>1070</sup> To overcome this chaos, the *muhtars* were asked to make a full list of all men over eighteen who resided in their villages. However, at this time they included men who were actually exempted from the forced labor, but excluded some of them who had been underground workers

---

<sup>1069</sup> 20.01.1942; Catalog no.[ PMRA Fund 490..1.0.0/ 721.467..1. ], September 1940 Inspection Report of Zonguldak deputies,

<sup>1070</sup> Yersel, p. 20.

previously and so under obligation legally.<sup>1071</sup> The lists of headmen, due to their in-between position became targets of criticisms and suspicion more than other lists.

The ambivalence position of the *muhtars* created this suspicion. However, the numbers of petitions sent by the muhtars to the RPP General Secretariat prove the efforts of the *muhtars* to save their fellow villagers from forced labor. Their attempts were not well prepared or planned. The headmen rather manipulated certain circumstances in favor of the villagers. However, in the end they were punished severely by the different ranks of the local bureaucracy. The story of Hasan Dogru, headman of Cambo Meydan village in Bartın, is a good sample of the local power struggle and the attempts of the headmen to protect their villagers from the unjust implementations of the law. The petition sent by Hasan Doğru to the RPP General Secretariat led to a heavy correspondence traffic between the RPP headquarters, the town office and several other official units between June 1943 and July 1944.<sup>1072</sup> In Hasan Dogru's words his story began as such,

Four years ago the head officer of the district, the commander of the local gendarme unit and compulsory labor follow-up officer came to our sub-district and investigated the issues related to mine workers and meanwhile they arranged a meeting with the *muhtars*. After this meeting and investigation, it was decided that since the men from six villages in Kurucaşile had been mine workers for many years, they would be subjected to compulsory labor, and that the people from the remaining twenty-seven villages would be exempted from compulsory labor since some of them had been busy with brick mastership for a long time in pursuit of their livelihood in the regions distant from Kurucaşile, in Istanbul or elsewhere and some others were busy with farming and when it was not enough, with timber maintenance for the mines and their transportation and lumber business.<sup>1073</sup>

According to Hasan Doğru, his village was one of the exempted villages. The exemption lasted until mid-1943. However, when Doğru clashed with the *kaymakam* of Bartın, this confrontation changed both his and his fellow villagers' fate. Quoting Dogru,

---

<sup>1071</sup> 20.01.1942; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0/ 721.467..1. ]. September 1940 Inspection Report of Zonguldak deputies.

<sup>1072</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], the petition dated 21/8/1943 sent by Hasan Doğru to RPP General Secretary and the attached documents.

<sup>1073</sup> The report dated 12 October 1943 prepared by Talat Hidayetoğlu, the head of RPP Bartın branch on the grounds of Hasan Doğru's written testimony in *ibid*.

As the headmen of villages, we were called for a meeting on 7 June, 1943 with the agenda of grain production, at the center of sub-district in the office of the *kaymakam*. My village is three hours from Kurucaşile towards Bartın. And Bartın is at ten hours walking distance. So I left home the day before the meeting, on 6 June 1943, and arrived at Bartın. On 7 June 1943 one of the merchants from Kurucaşile, Murat Sarı and the headman of Hacı village, Hakkı, who arrived at Bartın via sea found me in Bartın. They told me that the head of the district had sent a letter to you, we had lost it but they said that the letter invites the headman of Karaman, Hasan, to a compulsory labor follow-up office. After the grain production meeting was over, I went to the compulsory labor follow-up office. The chief clerk Seyfi Güven told me *muhtar*, give us the identity registration booklet of the village, we will arrange a list of all men born up to 307-1926 as obliged laborers and you will stamp it with your seal.<sup>1074</sup>

Doğru might have used the excuse that the letter had been “lost” as a tactic to detain the officials and to delay the imposition of forced labor on his villagers. While talking, he also reminded the follow-up officer that men from his village had been exempted from compulsory labor due to their jobs in masonry and mine pole manufacture. However, he could no longer control the flow of events. The follow-up Officer said:

You hide the registration booklet from me, well, let us see and hear when you appear in front of the *kaymakam*, too. He says, come on, we are going to *kaymakam* now. We found the *kaymakam* at the municipality. The *Kaymakam* said why don't you give the list of laborers. I explained to him that since I had not been informed about this requirement, I had not brought the booklet with me. Allow me three days to go to my village and to bring the booklet. Beside, half of the men are not in the village now but in İstanbul or elsewhere. The moment I finished my words, he said that it was absolutely not allowed, (ordered his officers) take this man and the chief of gendarme to get his testimony, and take his seals and hand him to the police station to his dispatching to the fortification job. We went to the sergeant major. After meeting with the follow-up officer Seyfi who had entered the office before me, they called me and sergeant major Sahap Yurdağüven, who was in charge with the captain said: leave your official seal on his desk. I don't want to leave it and I said, it is a legal instrument belonging to my post and it is granted to me. I would only hand it in a legal manner. He attempted to beat me, I was scared, and I left the seals on the desk.<sup>1075</sup>

The *kaymakam* did not achieve his goal through harassment and putting pressure on Hasan Doğru. Moreover, Doğru objected to him with audacity, through accusing him of asking for his official seal illegally. When the *kaymakam* realized that Doğru would not provide the

---

<sup>1074</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1075</sup> Ibid.

lists, he did not insist on his unlawful act, and told the chief of the gendarme, "Give the seals of this bastard. I call the head of the district and get the seal from him and dispatch the headman to work on the fortification camp"<sup>1076</sup> Then, Dođru returned to his village with the seal in his pocket. One month later, the official seals were taken from Dođru properly. However, he then was dispatched to fortification jobs, which meant that he was sent into exile as a penalized laborer. When Dođru arrived at the local draft office to be dispatched to the fortification jobs, he gave his first petition to the draft office. He petitioned that his fellow villagers had been first made exempt from compulsory labor and that the sentence he had asked to serve had only been applied to the fugitive laborers, and therefore, was absolutely unlawful and unfair. In his petition Dođru protected his rights in reference to laws and state order, and accused the local officers of violating laws. In that case he stated it was not he who had disobeyed the law, but the local administrators. Dođru succeeded in making the officials take the necessary actions for his release. In the end, after being kept in custody for eight days, Dođru was released.

However, Dođru was not able to avoid the *kaymakam*'s rage. On 12 August, 1943 the Kurucaşile gendarme commander paid a visit to Dođru to inform him that he should serve as a compulsory laborer. So starting from 15 August, Dođru began working in the Kilimli mines, but at the same time he sent a telegram to the General Secretary of the RPP about the unfairness of his position. In the cable he sent on 21 August, 1943 he requested that he be saved from this incorrect application:

Believing in your continuous declarations that the peasant is master of the nation and that populism is one of the six principles of our party on which our government is built, I would like to submit you to that my village headman position was cancelled by *kaymakam* of Bartın, without any legal grounds. My freedom was restricted by the previous administrator of the Follow-Up Office. As a citizen and a village headman, on behalf of the people and of the government, I would kindly ask you to assign an inspector to investigate how many other fellow citizens like myself have suffered and are oppressed.<sup>1077</sup>

---

<sup>1076</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1077</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1.], Hasan Dođru's petition sent to RPP Genel Secretary, dated 21 August ,1943.

Doğru started his petition with the words referring to the populist and pro-peasant principles of the Party. As a rhetorical strategy, he underlined his belief in government and indeed reminded the authorities to stick to the principles of the RPP. The rhetoric Doğru uses is quite common among the other petitions the residents of the basin sent to the RPP General Secretariat. Doğru generalized the injustice as a common experience the people shared in the basin, hence, underlining the urgency of the situation. He claimed his right not by pleading affection and justice either from the Party or the government. He justified his claim for justice as a legal personality whose rights before the state were defined on the grounds of citizenship and officer of the state. Thus, Doğru did not define the relationship between the Party and himself by paternal references, but by legal rights. After receiving the petition, the Party General Secretary immediately took the petition into consideration, and asked the RPP Zonguldak branch to undertake run an investigation.<sup>1078</sup> The investigation was conducted in October 1943 and Doğru delivered his testimony. After the investigation the party inspector stated that compulsory labor had been imposed on Doğru unfairly and illegally. The inspector verified Doğru's testimony that Doğru was the only person in his village on whom compulsory labor had been imposed as a punitive measure.<sup>1079</sup>

Although the imposition of forced labor on Doğru was proved to be unjust and unfair, he was not released after the investigation. Yet Doğru did not give up pursuing his rights. On 12 June, 1944 he sent another petition to the Party General Secretariat, reminding them that his testimony and the investigation of the party's representative had not been taken into account.<sup>1080</sup> Furthermore, as he pointed out, instead of being immediately exempted from

---

<sup>1078</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], The communiqué sent by RPP General Secretary R. Nafiz Edgüner to RPP Zonguldak provincial branch. Dated 31 August 1943.

<sup>1079</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], The communiqué sent by Seyfi Öztamur, follow up officer of Bartın branch to RPP sub-district office, dated 12 October 1943.

<sup>1080</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Hasan Doğru's petition, dated 12 June 1944

compulsory labor, he had been sent to the Kilimli branch of the Mine Service Battalion to which punished laborers were dispatched.

In his last petition, Doğru requested that the documents which had long been in transit from one office to the other to be traced and action to be taken accordingly. All his efforts proved fruitless. The RPP General Secretariat accepted the last petition, but this time the Ministry of Economy evaluated the situation and declared Doğru's claims to be false. The Ministry asserted that it was not only Doğru who had been dispatched to the mines, after him forty more men had been called for compulsory labor from the same village. The Ministry also mentioned that since Doğru had been justly sentenced to serve in the Battalion due to his attempt to flee and his use of a gun against the gendarme soldiers who had trailed him.<sup>1081</sup> In the Ministry's response, Doğru appeared as a guilty man who had violated law and deserved punishment.

Hasan Doğru's efforts to save himself by the support of the Party did not help him. His search for a remedy was forwarded from one local office to another ended with the involvement of the Ministry of Economy. While in the beginning of the story Doğru was a citizen who suffered from the unjust and illegal measures of the local officers, he appeared at the end of the story as a criminal from the point of view of the government. The story of Doğru indicates that within the power struggles although the injured party tried to solve his problems through applying to the RPP General Secretary, it was proved that the Party General Secretary utilized the petition mechanism only as a means of legitimacy construction. It is clear that the Party did not really try to solve the problems of the villagers who were harmed by the power granted to the local bureaucracy by the state. Perceiving the treatment of the local bureaucracy as unjust yet necessary led the Party to follow up on the claims of the victims only to a certain extent. Despite the limited help of the Party in removing the troubles,

---

<sup>1081</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Communiqué sent by the minister of economy to RPP General secretary Memduh Şevket Esendal, dated 31 July 1944.

or unjust practices of the state officers, the injured parties did not give up writing complaints to the Party with the hope of obtaining some support.

Sometimes, the *muhtars* objected to the unjust practices of the local bureaucracy collectively through sending multi-signed petitions to the party. As the representatives of the village community, while seeking their own rights or the rights of the fellow villagers, most of them were damaged by the unjust treatments of the local bureaucracy as well. Most of the cases followed the same paths as that of Hasan Doğru. The petitions they sent to the Party General Secretariat were sometimes passed on from one desk to another, kept pending or lasted a very long time. Because of the inadequacy or unwillingness of the Party General Secretariat to remove the injustice, most of the injured were unable to find solutions to their problems. When the *muhtars* confronted and clashed with the local bureaucracy, the compulsory labor was immediately imposed on them. Like their villagers, they were harassed and punished by the local bureaucrats.

A petition dated 14 September, 1943, sent to the RPP General Secretary by Nuri Gön on behalf of sixty-seven *muhtars* from Safranbolu, Ulus, represented a collective resistance to the unjust treatment of the local bureaucracy.<sup>1082</sup> The preparation of the list of obliged men constituted once again the starting point of the story. Accordingly, the compulsory labor follow-up officers came to Ulus in 1940 and asked for the draft list for the men born between the years 307-337(1892-1921). Later on this list turned out to be the list of obliged laborers. Since the lists covered many villagers who should have been exempted from the forced labor in respect to the law, many of them were dispatched to the mines unjustly. In Gön's words,

Based on this list, the compulsory labor was imposed on merchants, retailers, artisans and even disabled persons. The merchants and artisans among them reached their legal rights and achieved exemption after spending much money and experienced many difficulties. The other artisans and disabled went to seek their legal rights, in order to afford their travelling expenses to the court houses they had to sell their houses, cows and oxen. As a result they were deprived of

---

<sup>1082</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Petition dated 14 September 1943, signed by Nuri Gön, on behalf of sixty-seven headmen from villages of Ulus.



animals to utilize in land driving and milk and they also lost their dwellings. There were long lines at the courts. The municipal police were occupied all day long. The problems the government had to deal with escalated. All this was caused by a district administrator who wanted a higher salary or rather a bonus.<sup>1083</sup>

Moreover, some of the *muhtars* were insulted and tortured by the commanders of the gendarme, *kaymakams* and the heads of the sub-districts while they were performing their duties. Their official seals were taken from them and they were punished by being dispatched to fortification jobs. In the end of the petition, the village headman pleaded for this unjust treatment to be corrected in the name of republican laws.<sup>1084</sup> When the RPP General Secretary ordered the RPP provincial branch to investigate the matter, it was found that the compulsory labor act had been misinterpreted during its implementation and that some citizens had been harassed and victimized.<sup>1085</sup> The head of the provincial branch stated that such mistakes and mistreatment should be brought to a total end, and precautions should be taken to stop villagers from being victimized by the local gendarme commanders, district administrators and *kaymakams*.<sup>1086</sup> Both the *muhtars* and the RPP's provincial branch emphasized that all such practices violated the laws, citizen rights and the legal order. The correspondences revealed that the local authorities used the physical violence frequently and used compulsory labor law as a means of punishment, intimidation and source of income.

Even though the complaints of the headmen were admitted by the party's local branches after an inspection, the authorities did not take action against the officers who violated the law and caused misery to the villagers and headmen. The party General Secretary then kindly reminded the Ministry of Economy issue with correspondence.<sup>1087</sup>

---

<sup>1083</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1084</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1085</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Correspondence date 4/11/4943, send by head of RPP provincial branch, Ali Rıza İncealemdaroğlu to general Secretary.

<sup>1086</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1087</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], correspondence sent by General Secretary of RPP on March 13, 1944 to Minister of Economy Fuat Simen.

Although the Party organs acted quickly to investigate matters the Ministry staff and the local authorities acted slowly. To achieve results either took a long time or was not possible at all.

Another complaint letter, co-signed by a group of *muhtars*, was from seven of the villages of Ulus. In their petition the headmen mentioned problems, unjust treatment and oppression similar to those the sixty-seven other headmen had expressed. When the seven headmen got the news that RPP representatives were coming to their town, they passed their complaints to them to be forwarded to the Zonguldak deputies.<sup>1088</sup> Müçteba Altaş, among the ones speaking individually from the village of Eldeş said, “We are not literate people. But we believe in and obey the law of our Republic with all our hearts. So, I dare to speak considering the support and concern that our RPP feels for us.”<sup>1089</sup> Altaş started talking in the same manner with the others. Before articulating his complaint he found it necessary to emphasize that his action was not a rebellion against the government, the regime or the law. He also stated that being allowed to express his complaint was an opportunity given by the RPP. He continued his words that although the citizens from Ulus had no mining experience, it had been unlawful to force them to work in the mines since 1942. Accordingly, through violating the regulations of the coordination committee, the follow-up officers had brought the villagers in misery, dispatching them to the mines by force and threat, sending the fugitives to fortification camps, and injuring their families. In his testimony Altaş defined the victims as citizens while accusing the representatives of the state in charge of the enforcement of the law with acting illegally. The crime was committed by the very representatives of the state.

In his testimony, Müçteba Altaş referred many times to the incompatibility of the practices of the officers with the law and order of the state. He stated that the district administrator ordered thirty-three *muhtars* to sign the lists containing the identity records of the men born between the years 307-309(1892-1894). When the *muhtars* found out that

---

<sup>1088</sup>24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], petition date 9 October, 1943, co-signed by headmen of seven villages of Ulus.

<sup>1089</sup> Ibid.

compulsory labor had been imposed on those men, they refused to sign the list. In Altaş's words, they recommended that;

We said, give us the list, we shall go back to our villages and check the ones who need to work in the mines in accordance to the decision of the coordination committee. The district administrator does not accept this. We said that if any men included in that list were signed by us illegally, in opposed to the law, then we should be held responsible. Because to arrange and approve a list and official statement against the law is to commit a crime and take a responsibility, we hesitated to approve the lists. Yet, they did not want to realize our rightful and appropriate response.<sup>1090</sup>

Altaş underlined the treatment of the headmen as just and legal. Contrarily it was the district administrator who had infringed on the law. Parallel to Aktaş's testimony, the other headmen had approved his claims and accused the local bureaucracy of violating rights of the citizens, outlawing the government decrees and misusing the state authority. On such just grounds, the headmen demanded that the party and the government take necessary measures for the implementation of laws in a legal manner and the punishment of the criminal officers.

The *muhtars* who did not sign the lists on the grounds that the lists were illegal, were then punished. According to testimonies of two other *muhtars*, Mehmet Ali Ulus and Hüseyin Arslan, those who objected to obeying the order of the district administrator Celal Öztamur were arrested and taken into custody. Later in the night the second commander of the gendarme released them temporarily saying, "You may go now, go home and have your bread and come back here early in the morning before the district administrator gets up." And they went to their villages, rejoicing and came back to the gendarme station the next morning. Then they were dispatching to Safranbolu under a guard of gendarmes, with an eighteen hour journey on foot, with their hands cuffed.<sup>1091</sup> In Safranbolu they were dispatched to the court house and the district attorney took their testimony. They defended their act of not signing the lists as legal and just since the lists had been prepared against the law.

---

<sup>1090</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1091</sup> Ibid.

After their testimony they were taken into the presence of the *kaymakam*, Subhi Aktan. They defended their action with the same words; however, they were shocked by the reaction of the *kaymakam*. The *muhtars* depicted this moment as,

The *kaymakam* furiously called us," You ass, slob *muhtars*," and while bawling us out, he said, "Why the hell did you not obey my orders, why the hell did you not fulfill your duty? I shall make you pay for this!" After he finished his terrible words, he ordered us to perform our duties and he let us return home."<sup>1092</sup>

The head of the RPP Ulus branch, Mustafa Akıncı, also witnessed the harassment of the *muhtars* by the *kaymakam*. During his meeting with the RPP inspector, Akıncı confirmed the testimony given by the seven *muhtars*.<sup>1093</sup> The story of the *muhtars* developed in the same line with that of Hasan Doğru. The *kaymakam* of Safranbolu discharged those *muhtars* that did not sign the lists of obliged villagers and seized their official seals. Akıncı claimed that the *kaymakam* dismissed the headmen from their posts in an illegal fashion. According to him only the Party authorities and the courts were authorized to take such an action. Their story ended that of Doğru. The former headmen were sentenced by the *kaymakam* to compulsory labor, some others were sent to the fortification camps. Those who escaped could not return to their villages for fear of punishment.

There is no doubt that the local bureaucracy in Ulus implemented the compulsory labor act in an illegal fashion, against the law and order in the normative sense.<sup>1094</sup> As Akıncı confirmed, since the villagers from Ulus used to earn their living in agriculture and forestry, they were among those who frequently runaway from the forced labor. Instead of forcing them to work in the mines, Akıncı suggested that it would be better to make Ulus villagers work in the maintenance of mine timbers due to their long tradition of forestry. His recommendation seems to have been taken into consideration. In his 1945 inspection report, Rebii Barkın

---

<sup>1092</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1093</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0/ 0491.1978.1. ], testimony dated 12 October 1943, signed by Mustafa , head of the RPP Ulus district

<sup>1094</sup> Ibid.

indicated 727 men from Ulus fulfilling their forced labor obligation through working in the timber maintenance.<sup>1095</sup>

There was another story relating again to a headman, Niyazi Öcal, who did not sign the list of obliged workers and hence was punished by being dispatched to the fortification camp. This time his mother Fatma Öcal sought to have the unjust treatment of her son brought to an end. When she heard that the party representatives of the RPP Zonguldak branch were going to visit Bartın, she did not miss the opportunity and passed her complaints onto the party representative. In her testimony she claimed that her son had been dispatched unlawfully to the military fortification camp in Bolayır, Galipoli. In her words,

My son's response that he would only sign the list after he had examined it was a valid one. His hesitation was result of his fear to take legal responsibility, a faulty action if he signed the lists before understanding what was going on. Nobody witnessed the misuse of my son Niyazi either before or after his assignment to the headman post and he achieved his duties with honesty. My son was dispatched to the fortification camp immediately, without any prior notice and neither an authority nor an investigation committee interrogated him. If his action of not signing the list without examining was a fault or offense he should have been dispatched to our noble courts. It is unlawful and improper to send my son to a fortification camp. I kindly ask our noble party with pleading with all my heart to withdraw the fortification punishment through proceeding and investigation as soon as possible.<sup>1096</sup>

Actually Öcal was busy freeing her son from the fortification camps by applying to various local offices for nearly a year. Nevertheless, she did not achieve any result in favor of her son. It was her last resort to call on the help of the RPP.

Sometimes on the grounds of personal disputes or bickering, the local actors punished each other via forced labor. In so doing, they collaborated with the officers in charge with the implementation of the forced labor act. The Headman of Barkaç village in Bartın, Mehmet Üstünsoy was a victim of such a personal rivalry. According to his petition submitted to the RPP Zonguldak branch in 1943, the former headman of the village had convinced the compulsory labor follow-up officer to remove him from office due to his personal jealousy.

---

<sup>1095</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0 /723.473..1.], Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkın's inspection report date 20/10/1945.

Furthermore, Üstünsoy heard that he would be sent to the fortification camp on the grounds that he had neglected his duties regarding obliged villagers. In his petition, Üstünsoy objected to the threats and defended his post on the grounds that he had been elected by village people and that he performed his duties lawfully. He concluded his petition with those words,

I would plead with the authorization of a relevant and competent investigation committee to inquire whether the claims of those who put me in misery and ruin my life are true or not, and to summon me to our noble courts if those claims are proved to be true, and I would assure you that I would accept any sentence pronounced. So, I would like to inform the relevant offices about the claims in order to keep my honor as a son of the nation.<sup>1097</sup>

As the examples above prove the *muhtars* who impeded the implementation of the compulsory labor act whether they had valid or legal justification or not, were usually punished severely or were threatened to be punished if they attempted to block the run of the practice. Hence, even those who brought a small impediment were subjected to severe punishment. Mustafa Öztürk, headmen of Horna village in Bartın was subjected to such punishment. According to his petition, although he usually had sent the compulsory laborers to the mines on time, because he had been two days late to deliver one laborer, he had then been obliged to work in the mines as an obliged laborers.<sup>1098</sup>

As seen in the above examples the *kaymakam*, the sub-district administrators, the compulsory labor officers and gendarmes exercised a considerable degree of violence and pressure over the *muhtars* who did not obey their commands. Despite the coercive nature of the compulsory labor act and the related decrees, the injured parties tried to keep their rights in reference to the law itself, which imposed certain limitations on the practitioners of the law. However, the necessity of supplying adequate numbers of workers prevailed over the lawful implementation of even such a coercive law. The law itself became an arena of struggle

---

<sup>1096</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Fatma Öçal's petition, dated 12 October 1943.

<sup>1097</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Petition dated 11 October, 1943, written by Mehmet Üstünsoy.

<sup>1098</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], testimony of *muhtar* Mehmet Öztürk from Bartın Horna village , dated 11 October 1943 .

between the victims of the same law and its practitioners. The victims tried to keep the rights the law granted to them against the state's local representatives, who were pressured from above to implement the forced labor rigidly, if necessary, unlawfully. When the law itself threatened the utility expected from it, then it was turned into a mere formality. It then reached its real worth in the hand of its practitioners.

There is no doubt that the indifference of the government, the ministries, the RPP and other central political bodies to the oppression of the local bureaucracy who implemented the law unlawfully with a considerable degree of human suffering proves the criminalization of the whole state in the basin during the forced labor period. The tacit agreement between the state and its local representatives on the safe maintenance of the coal production at any cost, doubled the coercive nature of the forced labor practice. The reason why the complaints and petitions were kept in the shelves, or forwarded from one office to the other, or ignored, or not found worthy to be answered, and the reason why the petitioners were punished severely instead of the offending officers whose offenses were admitted by the party's investigators was derived from the authoritarian political tradition shared both by the government and its local bureaucracy.

It was also the people of the basin who experienced the authoritarian political tradition, not as ruler but as ruled. Their position forced them to make do with this tradition by taking advantage of its paternalist dimension and subverting it within itself by imposing their voices on the main components of this tradition. In this line, they tried to utilize the opportunities the law provided them to protect themselves against the state. Imposing their interpretations on the compulsory labor law, they tried to gain legal grounds for their rights. In most petitions the people who were victimized defined themselves as citizens obeying the law who deserved just and fair treatment. However, their criticisms were limited to the boundaries of the local bureaucracy. While they hated the state's actual presence in their daily lives as

oppressor, they kept their reliance on its paternalist appearance. Hence their criticisms did not turn into a total criticism of the political system.

#### Villagers Seeking Justice against the Village Headmen and the Follow-Up Officers.

The elusive position of the *muhtars* in the power relations gave them the opportunity to utilize their power, this time to the detriment of the fellow villagers. Some of the *muhtars* allied with the other local officers and used forced labor as a means of power and repression. During the war years, the misuse of the official authority, oppression and violence increased tremendously among the low level administrative staff and local gendarme units. Even though the basin population had from time to time taken advantage of these relations in order to rescue themselves from compulsory labor, they eventually became the victims of the practice.

There are a number of petitions which exemplified the experiences of the villagers who were victimized under the oppression of the low level administrative units in collaboration. One is the story of Kamil Durmuş, a prisoner from Aşarlı village of Ereğli. He was a fugitive obliged worker. His petition portrays clearly the oppression of the local authorities who misused their official power in cooperating with each other.<sup>1099</sup> In his petition Kamil Durmus denounced Eyyüp Pehlivan, the local representative of the RPP and follow-up officer together with Corporal Faik, the commander of the local gendarme unit, on accepting a bribe. Durmus had previously denounced the follow-up officer and the corporal to the *kaymakam* on the same offense. As a result, the *kaymakam* had assigned another corporal to investigate the matter. According to Durmus,

The new corporal has been treated well by Corporal Faik at the Caylioglu police station. He offered him plenty of raki and chicken, then the people I called to witness gave their testimony under heavy insult and even among them, haylofts belonging to Arif Tabakoglu from Orta village and to the İsmail döğen, headman

---

<sup>1099</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], petition dated 15 may 1944 submitted by İbrahimoglu Kamil from Ereğli Aşarlı village



of Saltuklu village, were put on fire immediately at that night and all of us were insulted one by one and were threatened with such words (You will continue to live here, won't you). The motto of "the peasant is master," which is one of the principles of our populist Republican Government has been treaded down disrespectfully and within our district vassalage is on rule.<sup>1100</sup>

Hence Durmuş was not able to get results from this investigation. Cooperation between the small local officers was an ordinary practice in the basin, particularly in the war years. Many of petitions written in this period claimed that the local units in cooperation with the local security forces, came together and terrorized the villagers so that they would not dare to lodge any complaints or would cancel the ones they had already made. Most of the villagers were victimized under their oppression, yet could not complain about them due to fear. On the grounds of villagers' testimonies, it was mostly the local authorities that committed crimes like setting fire to the haylofts, poisoning or stealing the animals of the villagers either to frighten or to punish them. Such offensive acts against the means of subsistence of the villages brought destructive outcomes for them.

In his petition Durmuş tried to strengthen his claims through accusing them of bribery and profiteering. In his words,

I would ask your high conscience to prevent and investigate the corruption being staged by a corporal and a man named Eyyup Pehlivan, who acts as the RPP representative, whereas both are engaged actually in trade, as well as raising horses and marketing the corn they get from the village people by force and sell it after mixing it with sand, and I would please request you look into the arbitrary actions of the so-called party representative Eyyup Pehlivan, who removes any village headman from his office and brings anyone he wishes to, and the money – which is approximately 200-300 liras per person– he collects from the village people by promising them that he would save them from compulsory labor.<sup>1101</sup>

In response to Durmuş's petition, the RPP General Secretary assigned the Zonguldak branch to inspect the matter. The Zonguldak branch sent RPP laborer and tradesman representative, Tahsin Avdan to the region. The investigation report of Avdan was then

---

<sup>1100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1101</sup> Ibid.

forwarded to the General Secretary.<sup>1102</sup> The report clearly portrays the intricate relations between the local officers and their use of forced labor as an instrument of oppression. In his report Avdan evaluated the individual characteristics of the actors first in reference to their attitudes in the National Struggle period. By means of such reference, Avdan traced the loyalty of these persons to the state and the regime as well as their honesty. In Avdan's portrayal, the follow-up officer Eyyup Pehlivan appeared as a deserter, having fled from the army during the National Struggle and joining bandits. After the war, he began dispatching laborers to the mines as a labor recruiter. His career continued with his appointment as a local representative of the RPP and follow-up officer, despite the fact that he was an illiterate man. As a follow-up officer since he took his duty seriously, no deserters among the villages under his control were reported during his term.

Tahsin Avdan described the oppressive order established by Eyyup Pehlivan and Corporal Vahip as such,

As an innate tyrant, Eyyup Pehlivan persuaded Corporal Vahip who, stationed in Çaylıoğlu as a gendarme commander in order to double his influence over the surrounding villages, and owing to this corporation, made people do whatever he wished. Most of the impartial villagers with whom we spoke in order to get information, hardly told the truth because they were afraid of this man, in the end they pleaded that, their names be kept anonymous. When we asked why they feared him so much, they replied that if he heard we said anything against him, he would not hesitate to set our houses or haylofts on fire, steal our animals, and they gave such similar answers.<sup>1103</sup>

Eyyup Pehlivan seems to have established his authority over the village people through terrorizing them by various means. Pehlivan's actions were not only limited with corruption, speculation or assaults against the subsistence of the villagers. Avdan claimed that he also arranged marriages, kidnapping girls to neighbor villages without their or their families' consent, in return he was paid certain amount of money from the bridegrooms. He did this in

---

<sup>1102</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Investigation report of Tahsin Avdan, dated 23 August 1944

<sup>1103</sup> Ibid.

collaboration with Corporal Vahip. Another income source was huge sums of money he asked from the men whom he promised to rescue from compulsory labor.

Avdan began portraying Corporal Vahip in reference to his family roots. Accordingly, Corporal Vahip was the son of a Circassian man from Duzce who had been executed for treason against the National Struggle. This suspicious man also misused his power and forced the villagers to bribe him and/or he accepted bribes in return for providing benefits to villagers. He also generated commercial income in illegal ways, by means of his official power. He owned a shop which was run by his relatives and he sold there corn mixed with sand. Of course he bought the corn from the villagers by force.

Yet Kamil Durmuş, the complainant was also a suspicious man from Avdan's point of view. In the past he had been exiled to Kastamonu and then after committing murder there he had been put in prison. Since he had attempted to escape from prison a couple of times he had been sent to the fortification camps and finally he had been dispatched to the Kilimli mines for fortification jobs. But he had not stayed there for long, he had run away and was still on the run. This striking man seems to have taken revenge on Eyyüp Pehlivan and his collaborator. He had been busy with them for a long time. Although he had delivered several complaints to several authorities about them he had not been able to reach a result. In the end, Avdan confirmed Durmuş's claims with a conclusion that in collaboration with Corporal Vahip, Eyyup Pehlivan had misused his party membership and follow-up officer authority as a means of illegal income. Pehlivan had achieved menaced the people by combining the notorious name he made during his employment as dispatcher in the mines and his influence as a government officer.<sup>1104</sup>

It is not clear whether these two men were found guilty and punished in the end. But it is clear that the case is only one among many similar cases which became an ordinary part of

---

<sup>1104</sup> Ibid.

the daily lives of the people in the basin. Bribery, oppression and terrorizing the villagers were a set of practices most of the low ranking officers exercised during the war years. In almost every incident the local bureaucrats played significant roles, appearing as either hiding or ignoring the accused officers. The victims could not resort to the compliant and petition mechanism in an environment where the local officers dreaded the people. Even though they uttered their complaints under a heavy threat of assault, they had to be patient since their petitions passed among many desks and mysteriously disappeared from sight. When the local authorities frustrated their hopes, they then attempted to make themselves heard by the Party General Secretariat. However, the secretary only got involved in the local power struggles by initiating investigations and forwarding the results to the related ministries. As the part of the same repressive political order, the General Secretary functioned as an agency that allocated news from and enhanced the state's surveillance over the periphery. As long as the periphery served the state and did not threaten its foundation, it seems that the state assigned autonomy to the periphery and did not interfere with the local power relations. Autonomy and loyalty to the regime constituted two main components of the tacit agreement between the state and its local representatives.

Another case illustrates the collective resistance of the villagers against a corrupted *muhtar*. Once again the hesitancy of the state to get involve in the local power relation is clear. A group of villagers from Akpınar village in Bartın filed a complaint about their *muhtar*, Nuri Aytaç. In their petition, dated on 18 May, 1945, they claimed that the *muhtar* had violated the National Emergency Act.<sup>1105</sup> Despite the fact that the villagers had sent various petitions to local authorities against the village headman, no action had been taken. For instance, among the complainant villagers, Huseyin Cetin had delivered a petition to the *kaymakam* on 10 January 1944 and accused the *muhtar* of accepting bribes. In this petition he had claimed that

---

<sup>1105</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], The petition dated 18 May 1945 and attached correspondences.

the *muhtar* had collected money from the villagers in Akpınar on whom compulsory labor had been imposed, but then he had not kept his promise to them with and delivered them with his own hand to the follow-up office in Bartın. On the grounds of these claims, the *kaymakam* had forwarded Çetin's petition to the Bartın gendarme unit for investigation. However, although witnesses were called in, admitted that they had paid some money to the *muhtar* in order to be saved from compulsory labor, after their testimonies, the *muhtar* was neither taken to court nor punished.<sup>1106</sup>

The *muhtar* who got angry because of Çetin's complaints to the *kaymakam*, decided to take revenge on Cetin. According to Çetin's testimony, the *muhtar* included his name on the list of the compulsory laborers. In his petition submitted to the RPP General Secretariat, he claimed that although he was not a mine worker but an ironmaster, he was kept exempt from the compulsory labor until 1944. But the *muhtar* illegally imposed on him forced labor to punish him. In Çetin's words,

I have found out that to take his revenge and to ruin my life both financially and emotionally, the *muhtar* put my name in the list as compulsory laborer to start serving in the mines as of November 1945, through violating the laws, legal procedures and coordination decisions. The *muhtar*, who makes out of every one a puppet just because of his personal rage, seeks to put the social environment of the village and its residents under his service, just like a dictator.<sup>1107</sup>

Under the threat of compulsory labor, when Cetin did not achieve anything from the investigation carried out by the *kaymakam*, he went to Zonguldak and this time put his complaint to the compulsory labor follow-up office. Yet no charges would be put against the *muhtar*.<sup>1108</sup>

Following Çetin's testimony in his petition to the Secretariat, the *muhtar* carried out many practices against the National Emergency Act. Accordingly, the *muhtar* committed forgery by giving false information about the size of his fields so that he would turn in less yield

---

<sup>1106</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Hüseyin Çetin's petition, dated 18 May 1945

<sup>1107</sup> Ibid

<sup>1108</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Muhittin Taşçı's petition, dated 18 May, 1945.

crop to the government. Other villagers had already informed the *kaymakam* of Bartın about *muhtar's* crime. The inspector who was assigned to investigate the case, confirmed the fault and reported the *muhtar* to the district office of tax and finance (*Mal Müdürlüğü*). Nevertheless, the *muhtar* was once again not punished. The villagers then went to the offices in charge with allocating the state's share from the villagers' products. However, this time the officers stated that since the villagers had not filled out the petition properly, they would have to file their complaints once again and start the whole procedure all over. The villagers did not give up the case, and submitted a new complaint against the *muhtar*. On the grounds of the villagers' insistence, the related office had to make another investigation against the *muhtar*. However, when the investigator came to the village, he went back to Bartın with the *muhtar* without making any examination and taking testimony of the complaining villagers. Not surprisingly, the *muhtar* continued his illegal action after the second investigation.

Another petition about a *muhtar* from Hacılar village of Safranbolu indicated that the misuse of official power by *muhtars* to the detriment of villagers was a widespread practice in the war years. Collaboration between local officers was widespread as well. Similar to the above complaints, this petition proves that particularly the process of the extraction of crop yield as government share from the villagers had been turned into an opportunity for the local officers to make money and to oppress the villagers. The *muhtars* appeared to be the most influential figures in this process. They determined the amount of crop to be handed to the government, and they were in charge with its collection and stocking in the name of the government. This power helped them to dictate anything they wanted to the villagers who were obliged to allocate a part of their crop to the government.

In a petition written by Hakkı Öztürk from Hacılar villager in Safranbolu on 15 January, 1944, it was complained that the *muhtar* had not allocated the money to the villagers, paid by the government as the price of the crop it collected. Furthermore, he had tried to get bribes of

the villagers by threatening to force them to give a greater share to the government, and that he had stolen crops from the official stock and sold it to the people.<sup>1109</sup> After evaluating the petition, the RPP General Secretary ordered the Zonguldak branch to examine the claims. The investigators reported his observations about Hakkı Öztürk and the people of Hacılar village to the Secretary. According to the report, Hakkı Öztürk was one of notable persons in the village, having worked as a baker in Istanbul and Ankara for many years and had such a high social status as to be able to file a complaint against a *muhtar*. Like Öztürk, the inhabitants of Hacılar village were smart persons, who frequently visited big cities like Istanbul and Ankara.<sup>1110</sup>

After witnessing countless improprieties of the *muhtar*, one night the smart people of Hacılar village had caught their headman red-handed. On 19 December, 1943, after the village headman had learned that financial officers would come to the village to inspect the temporary grain cellars, late in the night he had tried to steal grain to sell to the villagers. Indeed the villagers had duped the *muhtar*, hoodwinked him as if they were purchasers of the stolen grain and caught him in act. The *muhtar* had been turned in to the gendarme when caught. The witnesses had testified in the case. But after a few days, the headman had got off scot-free. When he came back he had started threatening the complainers. Then the scared petitioners had applied to another gendarme station, made their complaints and then informed the district attorney about the case. Yet no matter how they tried, the *muhtar* would not be prosecuted. According to Öztürk,

We informed Corporal Zekeriye, the commander of gendarme station in Toprak Cuma about the situation once again and asked him to call the public prosecutor. We told him that we are citizens who wish to live honestly and honorably, but ever since you released this con man, he has begun threatening us with a gun in his hand, and in case any incident occurs we shall hold you responsible. And we asked him what to do. We repeated the same words to the commander of the gendarme.

---

<sup>1109</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Hakkı Öztürk's petition sent to RPP General Secretary, dated 15 January, 1944.

<sup>1110</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Communiqué sent by head of RPP sub-district branch to the head of the RPP provincial branch, dated 21 March 1944.

Both of them said there is not any trouble. We can do nothing. Later on we headed to the proxy of the *kaymakam* and told him the case. But we were told that they had enough of him, he better leave the neighborhood, however we left the office without any solution.<sup>1111</sup>

When the villagers of Hacılar realized that they could not prompt the local authorities and judiciary offices to take any action, they then applied to the RPP General Secretary asking for an investigation. After the investigation the *muhtar* was taken to the court on the grounds that he had stolen the government's share. However, he was not judged for oppressing the villagers.

Another story narrated by a villager, Hüseyin Cetin, illustrates vividly the collaboration among the local administrative staff and their autonomy from the measures of law and order which were exercised only over the ordinary people. Hüseyin Çetin was one among many villagers who suffered from this cooperation. For instance, Muhittin Taşçı, from the same village, was punished by the *muhtar* as a response to his complaint against the *muhtar*. Although Taşçı was a miller, he was put under forced labor by the *muhtar* and dispatched to the mines. Taşçı expressed the unlawful action taken against him as follows,

The Republic of Turkey provided every kind of assistance, to protect its children who worked in different crafts and to improve its citizens in every field. I at the same time taught and showed my craft to my citizens that I employed...I was informed that I would be among the obliged laborers who would be dispatched to the mines by 1945 and since I'm sure that our laws and also our Republican People's Party would administer justice against those who wanted to make citizens puppets in their hands due to their grudge against citizens. So I would like someone to write my testimony exactly how I said it.<sup>1112</sup>

Taşçı portrayed the state as if it was an ideal one he desired, and indeed implicitly wanted the state to act as an ideal ruler which would be just, lawful, protective and helpful to its citizens. Through admiring the state and the RPP, he enforced his request of removing the decision of forced labor, which had been imposed on him unlawfully.

---

<sup>1111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1112</sup> Ibid.



The *muhtar* in question not only punished the ones who filed complaints against him by writing their names on the compulsory laborer lists, but also by causing them to suffer losses, such as forcing them to allot more grain for the government than required legally. Another villager, Hakkı Camcı, was punished by the *muhtar* after he had given testimony against the *muhtar* to the investigators in charge of inquiring whether the *muhtar* had hidden crops belonging to the government. Then the *muhtar* forced him to hand in more crop to the government than he should have by reporting the total amount of grain that he had produced as more than the real amount. In his petition, Camcı complained about the *muhtar's* unjust practices in the following words,

We are people respectful and loyal to the laws of our state. It is our honor to obey what our laws order. Our government does not say ruin the citizens. It says that every body should give a crop share to the government sincerely, on the grounds of the capacity of their lands and according to the laws and regulations. We did and do never avoid this duty. We are handing in our share totally. I am the only person in Akpınar village who has handed in the biggest amount. There is no one else handing in more than I. So, I wish that *muhtar* Nuri Aytaç would not be allowed to get away with what he does unjustly, who has wanted to oppress me since I have petitioned against him for justice.<sup>1113</sup>

Camcı was careful to emphasize that he did not criticize the legal obligations of the citizens the laws required. His objection was, hence, not against the laws, but those who misused the laws arbitrarily against the true citizens of the state. Like the others, Camcı also sought justice and the felons to be prosecuted. Through interpreting the state-citizen relationship on reciprocal grounds, he subverted the existing hierarchical relations which had ruined him. Putting his voice in the dominant language of ruler, he demanded justice as a true citizen who obeyed the law, respected the order and performed his legal obligations fully.

In general the petitioners established a representational relation between the state and the RPP. It was a natural outcome of the merging of the state and the party in the 1930s. The party came into the sights of complainants as the embodiment of the state. Hence it was

---

<sup>1113</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Petition dated 18 October 1945, signed by Hakkı Çamcı.

the party that would prompt the institutions of justice in the name of the state. In this framework the petitioners avoided the establishment of a representational relation between the state and its corrupted local representatives. While crime belonged to the local officials who swerved from law and order, justice belonged to the state. Therefore the relationship between the political power and its local representatives, or between state and its actual appearances in daily life, became vague.

The petition of another villager, Mehmet Onur who was punished by *muhtar* Nuri Aytaç by forced labor, clearly indicated the differentiation of the unjust local representatives from the state itself.

The *muhtar* make all village people who work honestly and loyally subjected to his bad treatment. Whereas he doesn't know that in the Republican period a *muhtar* is in charged with protecting and caring citizens and supporting their skills and encouraging them to improve themselves. Therefore, I would like the Republican People Party to carry out necessary inquiry and to prosecute the *muhtar* Nuri Aytaç accordingly, since he inflicts pain to villagers and put them under unjust treatment<sup>1114</sup>

After series and serious complaints about the *muhtar*, the investigators confirmed that the *muhtar* not only indicated his crop yield less than it was but also acres of his fields to avoid handing more crop to the government. As the crime was committed at the loss of government, which made government deprived of certain amount of crop, the *muhtar* was sentenced as quickly as possible to pay a fine with fifty per cent interest. Then he was turned to the district attorney on the grounds that he took bribe from obligor laborers with the promise of saving them from compulsory work.<sup>1115</sup> Both commitments brought about loss for government, loss of crop and of labor power. But it is not clear whether the *muhtar* was punished due to his commitments against the villagers on whom he imposed forced labor unlawfully. More, the *muhtar* was punished by the state after one year when the first complains began.

---

<sup>1114</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], communiqué send by Naci Rollas, *kaymakam* of Bartın to Zonguldak governor , dated 7 April, 1945.

<sup>1115</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Hakkı Çamcı's petition, dated 18 May 1945

As the cases imply, the villagers filed complaints against the local authorities only when the illegal and arbitrary practices became unbearable for them. Otherwise they preferred to stay in silence under the threat of assault from the local officers. A petition and its withdrawn exemplified this fear clearly. In the complaint letter the merchant Mustafa Ali Eyi wrote to the RPP General Secretary, he accused Yenice district administrator and *muhtar* of Çeltik by collecting money from the residents without presenting official documents and spending the money to build a resident for the district administrator. Furthermore the administrator imposed forced labor on the villagers for his personal works by coercing them. In his words,

A few days ago the district administrator did not let the laborers to go to the mines but asked them to sign sick so that they could work in the construction of his house. He also asked the *muhtar* of İbricak village to send him some women to work in his garden and fields, and when he did not obey him, he beat him so hard that all women and their children had to rush to cultivate his fields. As a result all had to stop doing their own farm works for a week. The district administrator also bit the butcher Selim from Çeltik Village, in the public because he refused to carry stone to his building. After beating, Selim stopped doing his farm work and carried stone for days. Hence, villagers do not dare to come to the town center for the fear of being beaten and this stopped the trade in the town. What can we do<sup>1116</sup>

The petition of Eyi set the RPP provincial branch into action. The RPP laborer and tradesman representative Tahsin Avdan came to the region in charge with inquiring the matter. However, Eyi called off his petition, claiming that he did not file any complaint, that someone else must have put his signature under it.<sup>1117</sup> After inquiring the case Avdan stated that he found no evidence indicating any corruption and coercion. The merchants told him that they had raised some money as a charity to contribute in the construction of the district which fell apart after the last earthquake. Also, the shopkeepers whose shops were destroyed during the earthquake were asked to tear them down to build new ones at another location. Petitioner Eyi was one whose shop and house were broken down.

---

<sup>1116</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Mustafa Ali Eyi's petition dated 24 September 1944

<sup>1117</sup> Ibid.

According to Avdan, Eyi might have filed a complaint out of rage and then might have changed his mind. Although Avdan underestimated such a reason that Eyi might scare administrator's assault against him due to his complaint, Eyi's fear was understandable. In his petition he specially requested his name be anonymous out of fear that the lives of his family would be ruined and he would have to leave the town. As seen in the above example, it was a common practice of the local authorities to use physical violence and coercion. Eyi must have been scared that both the *muhtar* and the district administrator might take revenge on him if they were prosecuted.

As the examples above indicate, the local bureaucracy collaborated in itself in their power struggle against the village people. This collaboration was more obvious among the lower ranks of the local bureaucratic hierarchy, who had direct contact with the villagers, such as *muhtars*, the commanders of gendarme station and the compulsory labor follow-up officers. The high ranks of the hierarchy who did not in direct contact with the villagers such as *kaymakams*, prosecutors and sub-district administrators supported the alliance of the lower ranks either pretending not to see their misuse of their power or deflecting the complaints of the villagers. Perceiving this alliance between the high and low ranks, some of the complainants by-passed the local offices and directly applied to the RPP General Secretariat. Nevertheless, some others first tried to put local authorities in an action before applying the RPP. Even though action was taken in regards to some of the complaints after long and tiring procedures, most of them disappeared somewhere between the offices of the local authorities without being processed. When they achieved setting the RPP in action, while their troubles were investigated by the local branches of the Party, nobody took effective measures to remove the troubles in question. Hence, the state and its central offices also supported the local alliances unless they threatened the vested interests of the state or its foundation.

The examples above did not indicate individual and separate events, but rather a set of practices exercised by the local representatives of the political power. In the war years the local bureaucracy increased its power over the villagers by means of the measures of the war economy, such as forced labor and the extraction of crop from the villagers for the state. There is no doubt that the excessive power of the local bureaucracy created numerous victims in the basin. With the fear that they would be maltreated or hurt the villagers tried to avoid petitioning and complaining as long as they could bear the pressure. Only when the extent of the oppression and violence reached as far as enlisting the men as compulsory laborers, or doing harm to their property or to themselves, did they apply to the official authorities. But since their petitions were not taken into consideration most of the time and the ones on which action were started did not result in the short term, the petitioners continued to live in fear and under pressure.

#### Public Order, the Gendarme and the Villagers in Rebellion

During the war years the relations between the villagers and the security forces became tense. The gendarme units were not only in charge of maintaining law and order, but also of dispatching the obliged laborers to the mines and trailing of the fugitives. They, hence, became indispensable component of the forced labor regime. The Zonguldak deputies pointed out in their 1940 report that the forced labor practice brought about a heavy burden on the shoulders of the gendarme along with their duties of maintaining law and order in the basin. However, since the numbers of the gendarme units was not enough to perform both of their functions, they became insufficient in the follow up problems of public order. They gave priority to supervising some 20,000 laborers on their way to the mines by the end of every month and to tracking the deserters.<sup>1118</sup> As a result, there was an increase in the numbers of ordinary

---

<sup>1118</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, September 1940.

crimes in the basin. With insufficient numbers the gendarme staff was unable to cope with the offenses in the villages. Moreover, the mine shafts became ideal hiding places for fugitives and criminals with abandoned underground passages and galleries. Deputies urged the gendarme to be more cautious in security matters and that purpose the number of staff should be increased.<sup>1119</sup>

However, there was another reality the deputies did not point out. The crime rate climbed not only due to the limited number of gendarme, but particularly due to the collaboration of the gendarme units with the felons in criminal acts. In the war years, villagers mostly complained that the gendarme acted with felons in the crimes like animal theft and setting haylofts or harvests on fire. Hence, the gendarme lost the confidence of the people to a great extent due to their function in the implementation of the forced labor and their involvement in crimes. Crimes like setting haylofts on fire or stealing livestock had long been common throughout the basin. Nevertheless, the local authorities were unable to prevent such assaults on the villagers' source of sustenance. During the 1940 inspection tour of the Zonguldak deputies, the villagers complained about the increasing cases of assault against their properties and demanded that the deputies take the necessary precautions against the arson and animal poisoning cases which had multiplied significantly. The villagers also added that since they were afraid of denouncing the offenders to the government and were not able to find the offenders by themselves, they wanted the sentences applied for such crimes to be more severe.<sup>1120</sup>

The stolen livestock was being slaughtered and its meat sold in the markets, which made it harder to arrest the offenders.<sup>1121</sup> In his response to similar complaints in 1940, the Minister of Public Works highlighted that offenders had been arrested and prosecuted.<sup>1122</sup> Yet,

---

<sup>1119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1121</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response

<sup>1122</sup> Ibid.

offenses against property continued to multiply in the villages. In 1940 in Devrek thirty-one animals were stolen in ten thefts. Sixteen of the animals were found, but only the price of four out of the lost fifteen animals was charged to the offenders. Although nineteen thieves were arrested that year, the stealing did not come to an end. The next year the number of animal thefts was thirteen in the same neighborhood and seventeen thieves were arrested. But only fourteen out of twenty-one stolen animals were found.<sup>1123</sup> In 1942 thievery continued in Devrek and Çaycuma.<sup>1124</sup>

In his report of 1945 Rebii Barkin noted that similar crimes continued. He pointed out that since the government was unable to cope with the crimes the villagers had lost their faith in the government. Apart from livestock thievery, setting fire on haylofts was also common in districts such as Çaycuma, Kokaksu and Bartın.<sup>1125</sup> The crimes were not committed only by those who sought to gain money. The villagers also committed crimes against each other's properties with motivation of revenge. For instance, firing haylofts were the most popular way of punishment among rival villagers against each other.

The basin people had a tendency to accuse the gypsy tribes of stealing their animals and setting their haylofts on fire. They believed that gypsies living in the basin were the main cause of law and order problems. As mentioned in previous chapters, the gypsies were actually immigrants from Golos, Greece, who had settled around Zonguldak in the 1923 population exchange. The local people had not accepted them despite the passage of many years. The petitions dated 1941 indicates that the Zonguldak townspeople complained that the Golos immigrants spoke Greek and they wanted the government take the necessary measures to make them speak Turkish. They also expressed their annoyance by giving

---

<sup>1123</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 513.2061..2.] communiqué sent by Ministry of Internal Affairs to RPP General Secretary, dated 17 April, 1942.

<sup>1124</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 513.2061..2.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 8/10/1942.

<sup>1125</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [Zonguldak deputy Rebii Barkin's inspection report date 20/10/1945.

examples of how dirty the Golos people were, that they burned coal in tin cans littering the public areas, and that the clothing of their women was shameful, and so on.<sup>1126</sup>

But the most significant complaints related to the gypsies were related to their offenses against property. Since they roamed around it was almost impossible to keep them under control. The demand of the people that they be settled in certain locations could not be met. In the party congress held in 1940 in Zonguldak, the townspeople asked the gypsy men be enlisted as compulsory laborers in the mines, and that the women work in the fields. The Ministry of Internal Affairs rejected this suggestion, fearing that the gypsies would commit robbery and disturb the work discipline in the mines.<sup>1127</sup> During the same congress the people of Eregli also asked that the gypsies to be settled in certain neighborhoods, but the Ministry of Internal Affairs also turned this query down on the grounds that the legislation did not allow it.<sup>1128</sup>

When Zonguldak deputies inspected Devrek in 1941, the people once again repeated their complaints about the increase in crime against their livestock and demanded that the gypsies to be taken under control. Indeed, after the necessary amendments were made to the Settlement Law No. 2510, the governorships were notified to settle the gypsies in their respective places. However, while some of them were settled, they did not give up roaming around in the neighboring villages.<sup>1129</sup> The settlement problem remained unsolved because there was not sufficient allowance for plows and seedbeds to be allocated to the settled gypsies.<sup>1130</sup>

The Ministry of Internal Affairs was unable to develop radical solutions in controlling the gypsies and the minister admitted their inability, saying that only in case of any robbery or

---

<sup>1126</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1941 congress and the incoming response

<sup>1127</sup> 20/04/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 722.471..1.], The requests stating in 1940 congress and the incoming response

<sup>1128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1129</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 721.467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1941 Summer term

<sup>1130</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog no. [PMRA, 490..1.0.0; 513.2061..2.], Communiqué sent by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to RPP General Secretary, dated 1 May 1941.



theft were they able to bring them under control through imprisonment.<sup>1131</sup> The minister, on the other hand, accused the villagers of acting imprudently. In 1942 he pointed out the helplessness of judicial precautions to tame the gypsies in following words,

The increase in the theft of animals is mainly because the villagers leave their livestock grazing unattended for days, begin looking for the animals when they realize that they are lost and do not call the authorities immediately. As the days went by, even if the police trails along after the offenders, he is confronted with many difficulties. One other reason is that the gypsies in this region commit theft as their craft. They have been arrested, prosecuted and exiled several times, but after release they repeat their bad habits. We have called officials on duty once again to take the necessary precautions to prevent livestock thievery.<sup>1132</sup>

But the gypsies were not alone in offending the villagers' properties. One of the main reasons of not preventing the burglary in the region was the inefficiency of the gendarme and their collaboration with the offenders. When RPP inspector, Sevket Torgut arrived in Zonguldak in 1943, the villagers declared that the thieves were supported by the commander of the gendarme. Villagers from Çaycuma and Persenbe claimed that when they denounced the thieves stealing their livestock, the district administrator and the commander did not take any action against them and even collaborated with them. In their co-signed petition, the villagers claimed that both the Bartın gendarme commander Corporal Hilmi and another commander in Tefen collaborated with the thieves. They claimed that even if the stolen animals were found later on, they were not handed over to the owners unless they paid some money. In a sense they were forced to buy their animals from the thieves and their official collaborators. Meanwhile, even if the thieves were arrested, they were not punished and released on bail.<sup>1133</sup>

The villagers who suffered losses to a great extent, petitioned their expectations from the government as in the following lines:

---

<sup>1131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1132</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 513.2061..2.], Communiqué sent by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to RPP General Secretary, dated 17 April 1942.

<sup>1133</sup> 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.472..1.], Complaints of villagers from Çaycuma and Perşembe Pazarı, dated 30 Eylül 1943

Since the thievery cases have not been pursued and prevented properly, on the contrary regarded as a source of income, the people have lost their confidence in the state and lost their enthusiasm to resort to the nearest government office for their troubles. They have lost their confidence so much that even they do not inform the government, instead they try to get their animals back by paying the thieves. This lack of law and order has increased pessimism among the people and some rebellious voices have begun increasing such as (The government is nonexistent, we have no a protector). At such a sensitive time period the world passing, the loss of faith of people in the government even in such a small part of our country, can shake the national unity. This man must be punished on the grounds that he misuses his authority and his duty in favor of his private benefits of a miserly sort. The peace and harmony of the country have to be set back. Here we are expressing our complaints for the sake of our country. (The people's voice is the voice of the truth).<sup>1134</sup>

Contrary to the rhetoric of the other petitions the villagers submitted , in this petition the villagers did not emphasize their faith and loyalty to the government. On the contrary, with a rebellious voice they accused the government of not governing the country properly. The state from this point of view did not undertake its main functions, setting law and order for peace and harmony of the people it ruled. The villagers were harmed a considerable extent due to the misconduct of state authority by state officers and the state's indifference to unlawful treatments of its representatives. They clearly threaten to rebel against the state. The petition turned into a precaution, a warning and a call for a properly running public order.

This time the petitioners did not legitimize their demands in reference to the respectful attributes they assigned to state such as its protectorship, its just ruling and its populist policy and as such. Contrarily, they legitimized their demand in reference to themselves. Accordingly, they were right to demand justice and order as the people. Their demands were valid since their voice was the voice of justice, the voice of truth, and indeed the voice of God. As imposing multiple meanings on the word *hak*, they turned the hierarchy between the ruler and the ruled upside down, where they situated themselves at the highest rank and the state below them. Now the state was the servant to its people, and the people were their master and the master of the state. Why the villagers did not speak in such a rebellious voice when

---

<sup>1134</sup> 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.472..1.], The addendum attached to communiqué sent by Şevket Torgut to RPP General

they were forced to work in the mines, tortured, oppressed and humiliated but spoke only when their property were stolen or assaulted is an important question. What made the villagers so angry was the direct assault on their means of subsistence, their properties which were more crucial than their labor and their citizenship rights.

Confronting such a harsh reaction from the villagers, the regional inspector Torgut suggested that the RPP general secretary appoint an “honest and experienced” lieutenant commander to the gendarme station. He pointed out that stealing and poisoning livestock, setting fire to haylofts and the crops were customary events within the region. Torgut also noted that although it had been decided to discharge the sub-district administrator from his post, he was still on duty. So, the villagers were afraid that if they denounced the thieves who were in corporation with the sub-district administrator, they would take their revenge from them through damaging their property.<sup>1135</sup> When Torgut submitted the petitions of the villagers to the RPP General Secretary, the secretary became anxious about the anger of the villagers. The secretary then informed the Minister of Internal Affairs. The secretary underlined that since thefts became a source of income both for the district administrator and the gendarme units the thieves were not trailing by them deliberately. Actually the crimes and collaboration of the security forces with the thieves became important matters for the government only when they endangered the loyalty of people to the government and when the people began speaking in a rebellious tone.<sup>1136</sup>

Although the villagers submitted their petition in September 1943, by the end of 1944, the accused sub-district administrator still was not arrested, and most probably was still at his post.<sup>1137</sup> Meanwhile, the judicial inquiry of the accused gendarme corporal and the sergeant

---

Secretary; dated 27 September 1943

<sup>1135</sup> 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.472..1.], Communiqué sent by Zonguldak region Inspectorships to RPP General Secretary, dated 3 October 1943 .

<sup>1136</sup> 3/08/1944; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.472..1.], Communiqué sent by RPP General Secretary to Ministry of Internal Affairs, dated 7 October 1943

<sup>1137</sup> In the communiqué from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to RPP General Secretary on December 12, 1944, it was stated that judicial investigation about the sub district administrator continued. In 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.]

resulted in appointment of them to another province.<sup>1138</sup> As a result of the precautions and removal of the accused, the hayloft fires were prevented. The offenders were arrested in Bartın and Devrek, and the authorities who were found negligent had been transferred to other towns.<sup>1139</sup>

Despite the interference of the Internal Affairs Ministry and the RPP General Secretariat, the complaints of the villagers about security issues continued. The people especially accused the gendarme units of making money in collaboration with the offenders through misusing their authority, taking bribes and forcing people to pay them money. All such actions deteriorated the legitimacy of the state authority among the people. The Zonguldak deputies stated in their 1943 inspection report that they received a number of petitions within which the gendarme units were accused of being involved in the livestock thievery in Devrek and Bartın. The deputies warned the government that the prosecutions of the accused should be run more seriously and quickly. In addition, the people of Devrek grumbled to the deputies about the military division based in their town. Accordingly, the division destroyed their gardens and fields as well as plundered their fruits and vegetables.<sup>1140</sup> The complaints were taken into consideration by the Ministry of National Defense. The Ministry replied to the complaints in July 1944 to the effect that the damage done to the village had been compensated for and the necessary measurements had been taken to prevent such acts.<sup>1141</sup>

One other complaint made by the villagers was related to the forest guards and forest officers. The villagers residing in forested areas especially protested the illegal actions and ill-treatment of the forest guards. In the 1941 inspection tour of the deputies, the villagers whined that the forest administration staff did not even allow them to log the trees they grew in their own orchards. Accordingly they could not supply their own firewood for the winter due to the

---

<sup>1138</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], Communiqué sent Ministry of Internal Affairs to RPP General Secretary, dated 28/12/1943

<sup>1139</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies.

<sup>1140</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943

difficulties into obtaining a license and the oppression of the forest guards.<sup>1142</sup> In their 1943 inspection tour the deputies were confronted with similar complaints. The villagers told them that the forest guards charged money even from people who logged trees on their lands, and they arrested the ones that refused to pay them. They also claimed that the forest guards turned their duties into illegal sources of income and spent more than their salaries. The villagers recommended that the deputies to inquire into the money orders of the guards by which they transferred their illegal incomes to their families.<sup>1143</sup>

The deputies argued in their 1943 report that the villagers would not be able to prove the gendarme's wangling money out of the villagers through the misuse of power and some times even the use of exercising of violence. Despite the people delivered petitions which reached the authorities after long bureaucratic procedures, they were also aware of the fact that even the highest administrative offices in the province could not control the misconduct of the gendarme. So the villagers were afraid to file complaints against the gendarme units and they believed that even if they did, they would not get any results. In addition the villagers were reluctant to give any testimony against the gendarme due to the fact that in most of cases, the accused gendarme remained at his post during the inquiry process, and in this period he was able to take revenge on the petitioners or witnesses.<sup>1144</sup>

The gendarme misused his authority in the process of trailing those escaping from the forced labor regime, and exercised violence on their relatives as well. The villagers informed the Zonguldak deputies in 1942 that the gendarme soldiers ill-treated and even beat the family members of deserting laborers.<sup>1145</sup> It was one of the more common experiences of the villagers to be beaten by a gendarme. In a telegram sent by a villager from Ömer Köprü village of Bartın to the RPP General Secretariat on May 13, 1944, the villager complained a

---

<sup>1141</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], The responses to the 1943 inspection report of the Zonguldak deputies

<sup>1142</sup> 20/01/1942; Catalog no.[PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 721 .467..1. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1941

<sup>1143</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943

<sup>1144</sup> 2/11/1945; Catalog no. [PMRA 490..1.0.0 / 723.473..1.], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 1943

gendarme soldier and his sergeant who had beaten his brother and his brother's son.<sup>1146</sup> The Secretary commanded RPP provincial branch to investigate the incident. According to the testimonies given to investigator, the gendarme staff beaten both İsmail Özgün and his son Mehmet, under the influence of a family who had hostility toward the Özgün family. The rival family made a false accusation, claiming that the Özgün family stolen certain amount of good from their grocery.

According to the testimonies in the investigation report, the rival family members and the gendarme sergeant went to the village of Özgün family and beat them there badly. As if that was not enough they also took the father and the son to the gendarme station to continue the beating. When Mehmet Özgün was badly injured, the sergeant became scared, he released the father and tried to cure the son with water. In petitioner Kamil Aksezer's words,

Being terribly disturbed for a barbarous act staged by a government officer obliged me to resort to RPP General Secretary... A gendarme corporal performed insult, torture and aggravation, which are strictly forbidden by the laws of Republic, and he committed these actions under the influence of other family, although he is expected to be impartial. These will be revealed with the testimony of the witnesses...<sup>1147</sup>

There were also several witnesses who were present on the same day in the gendarme station for different reasons. When the RPP inspector inquired about the incident they confirmed that the gendarme had beaten and tortured Özgüns. According to the communiqué written by the RPP General Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on January 5, 1945, the inspector confirmed the claims.<sup>1148</sup> It is not clear what kind of action was taken against the commander of the gendarme after the inquiry. Most probably the gendarme corporal was appointed to another town after a long juridical and administrative inquiry.

---

<sup>1145</sup> 28/08/1943; Catalog no. [ PMRA 490.1.0.0 / 513.2061.2. ], Inspection report of Zonguldak Deputies, 8/10/1942.

<sup>1146</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Kamil Aksezer's petition , dated 13 May, 1944

<sup>1147</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], The inquiry report of RPP provincial branch in regard to Kamil Sezer's petition.

<sup>1148</sup> 24/10/1945; Catalog no.[ PMRA 490.1.0./ 0491.1978.1. ], Communiqué sent to Minister of Internal Affair Hilmi Uran, dated 5, II. kanun 1945

## CHAPTER 11

### CONCLUSION

This study focused on the relations between the Zonguldak mine workers, the mining companies and the state in the Ereğli-Zonguldak coal basin during the early Republican era, and the impact of the forced labor regime on the relations between the community of the basin and the state during the Second World War period. The study aimed to investigate the economic, political and socio-cultural dynamics in the making of a mine worker community which at the same time continued its ties to subsistence agricultural pursuits and to village life, and the impact of the rural-industrial interaction in the work relations in the context of coal mining. Throughout the study it was argued that during the early Republican era and the period of the forced labor regime, the identity of the Zonguldak mine workers, their forms of solidarity and modes of struggle against the mining companies and the state, came into being within the complex relations between the village community, the foreign and native companies, the local mine operators and the state. The labor, capital and state relations in the basin were conditioned under the labor-intensive production choice and low wage policy of the mining companies, the changing scale of demand for coal in the internal market in the 1920s and 1930s, the state's industrialization policies and its political concerns and the interplay between the means of coercion and the means of struggle of the mine workers in the basin. This study made an effort to understand the complex relations between the actors of the basin through analyzing the village community-industry, state-industry and state-community linkages.

The main statement of the dissertation is that; in the early Republican era, the Zonguldak mine workers came on the scene as a modern workforce with a flexible space and

time organization in their relation to mining. It is inappropriate to identify them as a transitional worker phenomenon, a deviation from the classical proletariat or simply peasant/worker due to their rotational work pattern between mining and subsistence farming and their continuous residence in their villages. Instead, they constituted a modern form of labor arising from the compatibility of the unskilled labor of the male population of the villages with the labor-intensive production conditions of the coal mining in the basin, and of the subsistence agriculture to the low-wage policy of the companies. The relationship between mining and subsistence agriculture as two different production fields was a harmonious one. This harmony led to the articulation of coal mining to the existing social texture and the subsistence economy of the village-based community.

Once the relationship is comprehended not as a juxtaposition of two different production fields, but as an articulation, then it is revealed that the subsistence agricultural production of these land-poor villagers articulated the capitalist production relations in the coal mining as a specific form of reproduction of labor power. As long as the basin served as a pool of unskilled labor and reproduced labor power through feeding and housing the laborers with their families, the mining companies were able to determine the wages at a level which would provide for the subsistence of a single worker and a small margin to meet the most urgent cash requirements of the family. In terms of the mine workers, the hard working conditions in the mines, the low wage rates below the level of subsistence of the whole family and the opportunity to maintain rural pursuits with mining prevented them from cutting their ties to the land and from becoming full-time mine workers residing with their families near the mines.

In this context, the mine workers of the basin were not peasants, but simply unskilled and cheap labor for the mines. Compared to the surface workers, the mine workers constituted the lowest segment in the labor market, with their unskilled labor power, with their lower wages, disregarded status and with their poor living and working conditions at the work



site. In a similar vein, as long as the mining was articulated to the texture of the village community in the basin, the already existing power relations in the village community were also articulated to the work relations in the mines. Hence, the local power figures such as village headmen, landlords, merchants and the local representatives of the state articulated the work relations in the mines easily.

The identity of the mine workers, their forms of organization and action, their relations to the mining companies and the state, and last, their perception of these relations were made up of the articulation of their social-cultural realm to the work site. As the actors of their history the mine workers lived, died, obeyed, retreated, reconciled, organized, struggled, acted and reacted in their own terms during their lives that passed between the mines and the villages. Their subject position cannot be comprehended from an elitist point of view. They were neither pre-modern laborers, resisting to cut their ties with land, owing to their conservative peasant mentality, nor the silent mass that suffered from the coercive policies of the state or from the exploitation of the mining companies due to their inability to act collectively or to identify themselves as workers in their relations to the ruling classes. Contrarily, they constituted their repertoire of struggle on the very junction of the village and the work site. In accordance to the circumstances, they resorted to this repertoire in their contentions with the state and/or the mining companies. Both the local networks and shared experiences at the work site constituted plurals of autonomous struggles, one of which was collective action. The 1908-1913 and 1923 strike waves proved that the mine workers of the basin transformed their common experience of exploitation into collective action. The participation of the surface and underground workers in the strikes showed that the work site and the shared working experience prevailed over the divisive regionalism. Under the repressive labor policies of the single-party era, the mine workers resorted to other kinds of collective action. Crew organization under the leadership of fellow worker headmen was typical of this. Surely the

mine workers developed various sorts of fragmented and unstructured practices to improve their conditions or to deflect the oppressive practices of the mine operators as well. The means of struggle they used were complex, dynamic, spontaneous and diverse. When they avoided direct forms of struggle against the mine operators and the state, they tried to subvert the already established power relations within itself. The hierarchical power relations were neither invulnerable nor stable, but ambivalent. The ambivalence in the power relations brought contingency for struggle as well. In this hierarchy the actors of the basin configured and reconfigured them continually in respect to each other. Regardless their forms and ends, this gave the practices of the mine workers a political dimension.

By means of their repertoire of practices, the mine workers transformed various opportunities such as the crew organization, the critical role of headmen, labor shortages, the health services, social aid, compensations, the visits of official bodies, the RPP's petition mechanisms and local congresses into favorable situations so that they imposed their demands. In addition, they resorted to practices of quiet encroachment in order to acquire their basic necessities in a quiet and illegal fashion at the cost of the companies or the *Amele Birliđi*. The illegal use of health service or stealing coal and other materials belonging to the mines were some of the practices carried out by the mine workers. In short, throughout the period in question, the mine workers and the ordinary inhabitants of the basin intervened in their relations with the companies and the state as the actors of their lives. They grounded their action on popular consensus about what were legitimate and just in work relations and what were not.

As soon as there were power relations, there was possibility of struggle. Considering the mine workers living and working experiences, their means of struggle can be comprehended only in relation to the means of control. The symbiotic relationship between the coal mining and the rural community of the basin brought the socio-cultural realm of the daily

life into the very heart of the work relations in the mines. Both the means of labor control and of the struggle were in continuous interaction, at the junction of the socio- cultural realm of the mine workers and the work site. The subject position of the mine workers stemmed from this very junction. The work relations and the informal networks of the daily lives created oppression and solidarity and the opportunity to collective struggle simultaneously.

As discussed in various chapters of the study, the regional segmentation of the labor market functioned both as a means of control and solidarity. Since the Dilaver Pasha regulation, the installation of regional segments into the organization of the work restricted free entry to the labor market and the free movement of the workers between different occupational categories. The regional/cultural attributes fixed the hierarchical work relations. Despite the high turnover rates in the mines, the inflow of workers from different regions, hence, did not threaten the existing hierarchy between laboring groups. In time, while the workers from the basin's village constituted a part-time, temporary and productive labor force, the non-local workers constituted the full time, permanent workforce and specialized in auxiliary underground and surface jobs. Hence, the manual work force was divided in itself as the indigenous villager versus Laz, the rotational worker versus permanent worker, Turk versus Kurd or Alevi. With the assignment of managerial and supervisory positions to foreign workers, the labor market was further segmented on an ethnic basis. The regional, ethnic and other cultural marks indicated the demarcation of the ranges in the hierarchy. Social policies towards the different segments enhanced the demarcation. The discriminatory social policies can be observed from the late nineteenth century up to the late 1940s. Hence, while some of them occupied well paid, prestigious work categories and received better social services from the companies, the others occupied lower paid, disregarded categories and poor social services.

The regionally segmented labor market infused a strong regionalism among the mine

workers. On the other hand, there is no sign that regionalism brought about tension or hatred between the manual workers. Furthermore, common regional roots became a source of solidarity among the men from the same regions or villages. As discussed in Chapter Six, the regional identities of the workers brought about a horizontal solidarity between fellow townsmen at the work site. While the villages constituted the spatial dimension of this solidarity, the local communal relations constituted its experience dimension. With the interweaving of the work relations with the informal relations of the village communities, the mine workers easily transmitted the village-based solidarity to the work site as well. They solved their housing and provisioning problems cooperatively. The concentration of workers from the same villages in certain occupational categories and pits gave the workers the opportunity to work with their fellowmen on the same crews. The worker headman, who was usually from the same village, managed the work process. Albeit coercive in itself, the patronage relations between the headman and the laborers brought coercion and protection simultaneously.

The debt-bond relations between the local authorities and the workers were certainly one of the most effective means of coercion. As discussed in Chapter Three, the informal relations of the village community, easily turned to means of coercion in work relations. The mine operators and the companies incorporated the local authorities in the process of recruitment and utilized the existing power relations in the village community to bind workers to the mines. Particularly, to bind the workers to the mines, the mine operators and the local actors frequently resorted to the debt-bound mechanism, provisioning workers with payment in kind and giving them small loans. The junction of all these relations was the surely contract labor. Contract labor was the most functional and the most widespread practice to which the mine operators resorted. The gang bosses, recruitment agents, aghas and village headmen appeared as local labor contractors in collaboration with the mining companies.

It is necessary to differentiate the worker headman who recruited men from his village for work in the mines, from other local actors, such as aghas, muhtars and local mine operators. Unlike them, the worker headman was involved in the actual work process as a worker, and so was subjected to the oppression of supervisory cadres as well. While the authority of the first group was derived solely from their position in the local power relations, the worker headman utilized his craft knowledge along side the village ties as a source of authority and respect. In addition, the work crews, organized under the leadership of the headmen, constituted the nucleus of the workers' organization and of the collective action against the mining companies. The village-based community relations gave the worker headmen excessive power, both at the work site and in the labor market. The worker headmen were able to utilize this power both to oppress their fellows in the labor process, and to impose the collective demands of their followers over the mine operators. The dependency of the mine operators on the worker headmen as labor recruiters and as supervisor of the laborers strengthened the hand of the worker headmen, particularly when the labor shortage increased competition in the labor market. At such moments, the worker headmen acted as the representatives of their fellow workers, trying to maximize piece rates in favor of the crews under their control.

Above all, the rural roots of the mine workers, and their common work experience created a strong solidarity among them. The shared work experiences, the dangerous and uncertain nature of the underground work, the deaths, accidents and illness created a sense of common fate. Furthermore, the crew organization of the underground labor process, the craft nature of the jobs, and the dependence of the crew members on each other enforced the group solidarity and occupational identity. The hardship of the underground labor process alienated those who shared its hardship from those who did not. The common experience of the mine workers derived from the unjust piece rates, the inhumane treatment, the over- work,

the production pressure, fines and wage cuts, and made them aware of their class position in their own terms in respect to the mining companies. The villagers from the vicinity of the mine districts and from the Black Sea regions who constituted the underground workforce of the Zonguldak mines were first of all mine workers and resembled mine workers everywhere. The mechanisms of labor control, and the means of struggle the mine workers developed in the Zonguldak coal field resembled the experiences of the mine workers working in different coal fields in the West in the pre-mechanized era of the coal mining.

Indeed, the first chapter of the study provided to compare and contrast the working and living experiences of the mine workers in western coal fields, their sources of solidarity and forms of action. The rise of coal mining as one of the leading industries in the nineteenth century industrial growth in Europe and the United States, and the fall of the sector in the inter-war years were analyzed in reference to the capital, production and market aspects of the industry. In the following sections of the chapter the organization of the labor process, work relations, recruitment and supervision processes, and the characteristics of the labor market were evaluated. Last, the rise of the mining communities in the coal fields and the social and demographic characteristics were underlined in the context of the source of solidarity and militancy in the traditional mining communities in the coal fields of Europe and the United States. This chapter provided an opportunity to compare and contrast the development of coal mining industry and traditional mining communities in the leading industrial countries and Turkey.

As stated in the first chapter, coal mining as an industrial activity was run with similar principles everywhere. However, its production and market conditions in the industrialized countries interacted with the increasing scale of demand for coal and as a result brought about over-expansion, a surplus-capacity in production and the entry of large-scale capital in the sector. In parallel to this, coal fields attracted huge numbers of unskilled laborers from the

vicinity of the mines and the distant regions where the agriculture did not provide a livelihood anymore. As a response to the growth in coal mining, with time there appeared mono-industrial communities mostly settled in company towns or near the mines and became dependent on coal mining as a livelihood.

The community-industry linkage and work relations in the Zonguldak basin can not be comprehended without considering the interplay between the state and the coal mining industry, state and capital and last state and labor. Throughout the chapters the complex set of relations between the state, labor and capital in the Zonguldak basin were evaluated in detail. The relations between the Zonguldak miners and the state were more complicated and decisive in terms of the outcomes. The mining community in the Zonguldak basin was first formed by the Ottoman state under a forced labor regime. Until 1882, the coal mining developed under a state monopsony and primarily served the Ottoman navy and the state's factories. In this period, the Dilaver Pasha regulation arranged both the market and production conditions of coal mining and its labor aspect under the forced labor regime. Comparing the state, capital and labor relations in the era of state monopsony and in the 1930s when the state appeared as the prime actor in the industrialization projects, there were some similarities. From the point of continuities, in both periods, the productive and marketing aspects of the coal mining were determined by the state whenever it became the prime consumer of coal. The state either established a monopson market where the coal operators were compelled to sell all the coal they extracted to the Naval Ministry, as was the case between 1850 and 1882, or arranged market conditions and became involved in the production process as a direct producer, as was the case in 1935 and later.

Similarly, the labor supply, particularly via the state's legal coercion, constituted one of the remarkable features in the labor history of the basin. Whenever the industry served the state's needs, the heavy reliance of the coal mining on manual labor compelled the state to

solve the problem of labor supply by means of political-legal coercion. In both periods the involvement of the state in the coal mining as prime consumer brought a forced labor regime over the villager inhabitants of the basin. The first forced labor regime was implemented in 1867, just after the basin began to serve the needs of the Ottoman navy. Similarly, in the late 1930s, to stabilize coal production, the state and the mining companies began to search for legal means to bind the mine workers to the mines. The second forced regime came on the scene as a decisive solution to the problem of labor supply just after the outbreak of the Second World War. However, forced labor regime was not peculiar to Turkey in this period. Britain was another country that sought to solve the problem of labor supply in mines by means of compulsory labor laws. Due to the strategic role of coal in war economy, the war itself justified forced labor regime in the countries where it implemented.

During the first and the second forced labor regimes, an unequal relation in labor exchange between the state and the mine workers was established, through the equation of working in the mines with the military service. Since such a relationship turned the mine worker soldiers in the service of the state, the mine workers could not receive an identity as workers who could struggle for free labor exchange in an economic relationship. The articulation of labor exchange on a political legal ground, structured to a great extent the state's perception of the mine workers not as free laborers but as servants working for the benefit of the nation, or as humble peasants pursuing their livelihoods in mining temporarily. Similarly the mine worker's perception of the state was conditioned under the excessive political power of the state, which appeared as master with its capacity to both coerce and protect them, depending on the state's needs in coal and their obedience to its authority. Hence, the state appeared in this relationship not as an employer with which the mine workers would contend with their rights, but as a political power to which they were subjugated.



The state-capital relations in the basin during the early Republican era evolved in accordance to its National Economy policy in the second half of the 1920s and protectionist-estatist policies in the 1930s. Until the mid-1920s, the state was not involved in the production and market conditions of coal mining, neither its capital composition. The single remarkable change in the capital composition of the basin was the departure of the Christian mine operators from the basin. Afterward, the basin witnessed the efforts of foreign companies to enforce their monopolistic position through the elimination of the remaining small scale mine operators. In response to this pressure, the small scale mine operators called for the state's interference in the uneven conditions of competition in their favor. Indeed the Republican government in the first half of the 1920s had no coal policy as a strategic part of a long-term industrialization project. The effective readjustment of the production and market conditions in the coal sector appeared on the agenda of the state in the 1930s. By 1925, it tried to create favorable conditions for the growth of large-scale national capital in the basin. The state's renewed interest in 1925 in the basin seems to have been related to its intention to expand railway network under the direct control of the national companies and to establish an iron and steel industry, both of which were prime consumers of coal. Until the mid-1930s the government refrained from direct involvement, preferring, instead to support the mining companies of İş Bankası in the basin through modifying certain articles of the Mine Regulation and transferring the pits under the direct control of the state to the İş Bankası companies.

In the inter-war period, while the coal mining industry throughout the world suffered badly from a sectoral crisis, in Turkey in the same period the coal sector was running in the opposite direction. Certainly, the entry of İş Bankası brought about a new balance in the composition of capital in the basin. The government intervention brought a provincial nationalization of the capital composition, which was compatible to its economic policies of the 1920s. In the new balance, large scale national and foreign companies collaborated with each

other and monopolized coal production. In the late 1920s, a strong tendency towards the concentration of the mines in the hands of the companies appeared which forced the small entrepreneurs to leave the area. Regardless of their national origin, the four large-scale companies managed the production and market conditions of coal in favor of their cooperative interests. By eliminating small scale enterprises and preventing the entry of new actors in the sector, they protected the industry from over-expansion, surplus capacity and competition, which would have brought about the decline of coal prices. They were able to develop both a corporate domination over the coal production and also a cartel position in the internal market. In the same period, unlike the mechanization tendency in the coal fields of Europe and the United States, mechanization did not come on the agenda of the mining companies in Turkey. Along with the geological constraints, the choice of labor intensive production with low wages brought about more opportunities to the companies than the relative cost advantages of mechanization in such a stagnant coal market. The part-time nature of the Zonguldak miners further saved the mining companies at great deal from the cost of reproduction of labor. Hence the existing production and particularly market situation of the early 1930s in the coal sector was compatible with the interests of the companies. In these conditions, the coal mining companies had no rational reason to either reduce costs, and hence the market price of the coal, or to improve production conditions. Similarly despite of the export inducements of the early 1930s, the coal mining companies showed less interest in exportation than the government expected.

However, by the mid-1930s, the high coal prices and stagnant coal production began to clash with the targets of the Five-Year Industrial Plans of the government. The existing situation would impede the attainment of cheap and abundant coal in the service of the public sectors, particularly in the Karabük steel and iron plants and the state railways. By 1935, the state began to reorganize production conditions and coal prices via legal and institutional

devices. In 1936 the government nationalized the Ereğli Company. With the entry of Etibank into the basin, the state became the largest coal producer in the basin. To increase coal production the government imposed production targets on the companies. However, by the late 1930s, the project of the fusion of the mines under a single management system came on the agenda of the government. The project ended with the nationalization of the basin under full state ownership and the basin came under the management of EKI. The nationalization of the basin opened a new epoch in the history of the basin and the lives of the mine workers.

It is impossible to comprehend the state-labor and capital-labor relations in the basin without considering the market conditions of coal in Turkey and the state's labor policies in the early Republican era. Until the mid-1930s, the state was interested in labor conditions in the basin in the political context. The first intervention of the new political elite came under the extraordinary conditions of the National Struggle. With these arrangements, the new ruling elite showed its sympathy towards the most oppressed sections of society, which were well represented by the mine workers. The dominance of foreign capital in the basin provided suitable ground for a new ruling elite who sought legitimacy. As the laws did not cover the workers outside of the basin, their regional character proves their symbolic importance and the conditional interest of the ruling elite towards the workers. On the other hand, the discussions held in the Grand National Assembly on the two labor laws of 1921 and then the establishment of the *Amele Birliği* indicate the early vision of the ruling elite on the labor question and its populist-paternalist solution. In this model the state was positioned as the protector and supervisor of the mine workers, assumed not to be able to defend themselves because of their profound ignorance in the face of the excessive exploitation of the foreign capital. The same ignorance of the workers was assumed to make them a threat to the social order as well. The solution to both threats was the establishment of an official worker's association, which would put the work relations in the basin under state control. Likewise, the

establishment of *Amele Birliđi* just after the 1923 strike waves in the basin proves the state's desire to prevent further labor unrest and organized labor movement through a social security instrument. The abolishment of the *Kahya Teşkilatı* was an early signal of the state's intolerance of any independent labor organization as well.

In the 1920s, neither the government nor the mine operators were concerned about the improvement of conditions of the workers via social services. The indifference of the state and the capital was the outcome of the stagnant demand for coal and the government's shifting interest from labor to the capital aspect of the sector. As long as the basin served as an all-inclusive company village which provided cheap labor with no reproduction cost, the mine operators had no reason to provide them with social services. Hence, until the early 1930s, the living and working conditions of the mine workers did not come on the agenda of either the government or the mine operators. However, in parallel with the rise of the etatist industrialization plans the government renewed its concern about the conditions of the workers. After the direct involvement of the state in the industrialization process of the country, the market dynamics of the coal sector changed sharply, particularly in the second part of the 1930s. Parallel to this process, there appeared a tendency toward creating a productive, permanent and skilled work force. In the context of labor productivity, by the mid-1930s the companies began constructing workers barracks and providing meal services to the mine workers. In the same period, the living and the working conditions of mine workers, their rotational work pattern and continual ties to land and villages began to be reconsidered by the government in the context of worker's productivity. Although the companies tried to increase productivity in the mines by applying the long-wall mining system, and introducing mechanical coal cutters and conveyors, the mechanization of production remained limited. Under the increasing production pressure, the government and the mining companies began to search for possibilities of binding the villagers to the mines as full-time, professional waged workers.

The social policy implementations and the projects of company villages came on the agenda of the government and the mining companies in relation to worker's productivity, work discipline and the containment of the labor force under company control in the late 1930s.

Until the 1930s, the rotational work pattern of the mine workers and the continuation of subsisting agriculture ran to the benefit of the companies. However, in the changing conditions in the 1930s, the flexible work pattern began contradict to the production targets. To increase production levels, the companies had to employ more workers in the mines. However, as a result of the low wage policy of the companies, the mine workers arranged their work cycles between mining and farming in accordance to the requirements of subsisting agriculture. At this point, the prevalence of rural pursuits over mining among the mine workers began threatened the coal production. Hence, the mining companies were faced with a labor shortage and increases in wages. The free movement of workers between the mines in search of better working conditions and higher wages created a competitive labor market to the detriment of the coal operators. The only way to cope with such problems was to restrict the free exchange of labor and to bind the workers to the mines by means of extra-economic coercion. However, the companies' cooperative attempt to bind the workers to the mines through assigning villages to the mine districts was met with great resistance by the mine workers. The workers organized under the leaderships of the worker headmen and resisted the new recruitment system. They advocated their rights to the free exchange of their labor in reference to the 1936 Labor Code. The triumph of the mine workers proves the effectiveness of their crew-based labor movement. Then, to take control of the labor market and to lower wages, the mining companies called the Prime Ministry to enact a law or governmental decree to bind the workers of draft age to the mines.

Similarly, in the late 1930s, both the mining companies and the government became aware that as long as they did not take control of the labor market and did not eliminate the

village-based informal networks, the workers would utilize labor shortages and demand continue to high wages. Hence, under the changing market conditions the informal networks of the mine workers and their traditional work relations became problematic. To establish firm control over the labor market and to undermine the workers' potentials to contend with the companies, both the government and the companies began to search for models to turn the symbiotic relation of the mining companies with the villages into a one-way dependency of the mine workers. Two alternatives appeared. One was to cut the ties of the workers from their respective villages radically and to contain them in company villages. The company village life was expected to turn the workers into permanent laborers entirely dependent on wages so that they would become restricted under the company's authority. Granigg's Worker Village project constituted the basis of this model. However, due to its financial burden, the potential resistance of the villagers to leave their villages, and the potential threats the new mining community of the company village would bring, made the government hesitant to realize this model.

Instead, the government developed two models for short and long-term use. In the short run it decided to exercise legal coercion to put the labor reservoirs of the basin under full state control. Two acts in 1940 provided the government the opportunity to take the labor, production and market aspects of the coal mining under the full state control. The nationalization act brought full state control over the management of the coal production and its sale. However, nationalization alone could not bring governmental control over the labor market. In 1940, the National Emergency Act provided the government the opportunity to impose a forced labor regime on the male population of the basin who had a more or less work tradition in the mines. Although the state tried to legitimize the forced labor regime with the pretext of the war threat, it was reluctant to abandon it immediately when the war ended in 1945 and maintained the forced labor regime until the end of 1947.

Certainly, the period between 1940 and 1947 constitutes the most tragic episode in the memories of the basin's people. Throughout the period, the relations between the state and the inhabitants of the basin became considerably tense. The actual existence of the state in the basin was extended and deepened simultaneously by means of both the nationalization of the coal mining and the implementation of the compulsory labor regime. In the 1940s, the government intervened intensively in the lives of the basin's people. The provisioning policy of the war economy made it impossible for the villagers to keep their previous control on their agricultural activities and their yields. Allocating a part of their produce to the state surely deteriorated their self provisioning. As small- land proprietors, the basin's villagers engaged in subsistence agriculture which primarily served their survival. The compulsory labor act, on the other hand, made numbers of the villagers involved in the mining forcefully. Hence, in the 1940s, the villagers of the basin lost their control over their wages, their work place, their work period, in short, over their labor. Although they were paid, the wages were too low to compensate their loss. Under legal restriction, they lost their chance to work elsewhere with relatively higher wages. They lost the chance to arrange work cycles between the mines and the land on their will. As the organic ties between the worker headmen and their fellow laborers were cut, they lost their ground.

The forced labor regime mobilized approximately 40,000 men from the villages of the basin to the mines. With the workers from the Black Sea provinces and the surface workers and EKI's personal, the number of total workforce reached approximately 60,000. EKI managed a huge number of workers with its insufficient infrastructure. The "at any cost production policy" of EKI multiplied the misery of the workers. They worked at low wages, in the worst living and working conditions and under the oppression of EKI and the local functionaries of the forced labor regime. Under these conditions EKI only met the most urgent requirements of the workers and took effective measures only when the worst conditions

began to threaten the production quotas. The discriminatory social policies towards the white collar employees and their relatively high wages in respect to the mine workers worsened the situation.

It is true that the compulsory labor act provided the necessary number of laborers to the mines and ensured a certain amount of coal production. However, considering the rate of increase in production amounts, the force labor regime achieved a limited success in respect to the human loss for which it paved the way. The increase in numbers of the workers did not bring a proportional increase in the total amount of coal. Indeed, the increase in the numbers of workers in a high labor-low machine ratio production was only able to bring a limited increase in coal production. Moreover, the high production costs put EKI in continuous loss. It is obvious that the burden of the policy of selling coal at a price below its cost was imposed to a large extent on the workers of the basin through low wages and insufficient social facilities. In response to the legal coercion, the obliged workers worked with low productivity. The low productivity of the workers was to a great extent the outcome of the forced nature of the regime itself.

The basin's inhabitants, who felt unlucky by residing within the borders of the basin, did not respond to the forced labor regime with patriotic feelings. In a short time, the basin turned into an arena of struggle between the state and the inhabitants of the basin under the forced labor obligation. The obliged workers battled the state instead of simply submitting to the legal servitude. They defied the law with a wide repertoire of practices, comprising open violation of the law, everyday practices of resistance and formal-legal forms. Fleeing from the mines constituted a form of open violation. Despite the severe punishment, until the end of the forced labor regime, running away remained widespread among the obliged workers. In addition to running away, the obliged laborers mostly manipulated the deficient points of the compulsory labor act, such as the exemption conditions, age limits and working elsewhere and the



permission pretext, making use of them in their favor. Another practice to which they widely resorted was bribing the functionaries of the Act who arranged the lists of the obliged workers, attendance sheets, and medical reports for excusing workers from work. Similarly, they incorporated local agents of the Act, those were compulsory labor follow-up officers, village headmen, gendarme, or other local officials at low ranks, by bribing. However, bribery, misuse and corruption at the same time were turned in the hands of the executors of the forced labor into means of coercion, extortion and squeezing certain gains such as money from the obliged laborers and their families.

Most of the everyday practices they developed comprised ruses, tricks, and make-shift creativity. As fragmented and heterogeneous in nature, the everyday practices were more a non-movement rather than systematic movements. They tried to escape from or soften the hardship of the forced labor without directly and collectively opposing the law. On the other hand, they achieved a certain degree of success and made things difficult for EKI in labor supply. But still, since the executors of the forced labor regime constantly enforced it as a response to its manipulation, the obliged workers had to find new occasions or resorted to different practices at different times in parallel to the newly discovered internal weaknesses of the forced labor practice. The manipulative practices were mostly defensive against the state's coercion rather than offensive. Certainly, all forms of violation of the regime were legitimate actions in the eyes of the obliged laborers. The dangerous nature of the mine work, low wages, inhumane treatment, miserable living conditions, the necessity of allocating time for the maintenance of subsistence farming and the responsibility of looking after family members further justified their covert and open violation of the law. Although these fragmented practices did not bring about a collective demand making process or an uprising, their relation to the power gave them a clear political dimension.

Along with the open and covert violation of the law, the obliged workers and the basin's people resorted to various legal-formal channels to soften the implementation of the law or to improve their working conditions in the mines. They delivered their complaints, requests, and demands and expressed their annoyance to the members of the local bureaucracy, the RPP's local and central bodies, the party's inspection committee, the Zonguldak deputies, and the party's provincial congresses. By various formal means they tried to expand the exemption criteria, requested the improvement of housing, transportation and provisioning conditions in the mines and demanded the punishment of the local officials who misused their authority to oppress the people or to make personal gain. Indeed the people turned formal communication channels into opportunities to express their demands and to pressure the authorities to take effective measure. At the end they sometimes achieved certain improvements, such as an increase in quantity of bread for underground workers or the construction of waiting sheds at train stations. Sometimes demands were made collectively, with the involvement of the local-official representatives of the village communities, such as headmen and/or the council of elders. The *muhtars* as representative of the village community made collective demands to the official bodies on behalf of their villages. They at the same time used a new power resource , the Act, as a means of oppression as well.

Certainly during the forced labor regime, the peoples of the basin struggle against the local officers charged with crucial functions in both the dispatching of the obliged workers to the mines and the extraction of the state's share in their agricultural products. During the war years, the follow-up officers, the gendarme units, the village headmen and some administrative units at the village and town levels became the main targets of popular annoyance. The new power resources in the hands of the officers merged the already existing power relations in the province. Indeed, legal coercion extended to bribery, corruption, oppression and misuse among the local rulers. Even though the basin population had from

time to time taken advantage of these relations in order to rescue themselves from the compulsory labor act or smuggled the government's share of their seeds, they eventually became the victims of the excessive powers of the local rulers. Furthermore the local bureaucracy collaborated within itself to oppress the villagers. This collaboration was more obvious among the lower ranks of the hierarchy, who had direct contact with the villagers. However, the high ranking functionaries supported their alliance, either pretending not to see their misuse or deflecting the complaints of the villagers. While some complaints were investigated by the local branches of the Party, nobody took effective measures against the oppression of the local officers. Indeed the state and its central offices also pretended not to see the corruption unless it threatened the interests of the state or foundation of the regime.

In the end, the indifference of the government, the ministries, the RPP and other central political bodies to the oppression of the local bureaucracy brought about a considerable degree of human suffering. Indeed, the policy makers were concerned primarily with the ends, not the process of the implementations of the legal measures and their articulation to the local power struggles. The tacit agreement between the state and its local representatives on the safe maintenance of the coal production at any cost, and the allocation of the government's share from agricultural products multiplied the oppression of the local bureaucracy. The RPP with its various communication channels positioned itself in the local power struggles as the protector of the poor and oppressed villagers. By means of complaints and requests mechanisms, the party assumed an arbitrator role in solving the local disputes. The paternalistic image of the party served such an end that, when the prefect, the gendarme, the village headman, follow-up officers, and forests guards used their power to oppress people, their corruption was considered as a deviation from the original rationale of the laws, rather than as the mere reflection of the state coercion at the local level. In this picture the party situated itself as arbitrary, listening, evaluating and defending its citizens against the corrupted

local representatives. Hence the party created turbidity in the sight of the people. It veiled both the organic relationship between the state and its local representatives, and between the coercive nature of the state and coercive nature of its polices in the basin.

However, as the RPP used communication channels to construct legitimacy, the villagers of the basin used the same means to criticize the legal oppression and to call for a just and lawful governing. As long as the party communicated the villagers, the villagers turned it into a dialogue. The dialogic interaction with the ruler also created the opportunity to appropriate the words of the ruler and to impose new meanings to them in line with their rights. Hence through putting their own voices, the villagers turned the monologue of the ruler with its subjects to a dialog between the state and the citizens. The villagers appropriated key components of the language of the state, such as duties, rights, legal, illegal, just, unjust, and imposed on them their own meanings. In this dialogue, they portrayed themselves as citizens performing their legal duties properly, obeying the laws, and believing in the Republican regime and the RPP's principles, particularly its populism, so that they legitimized their demands. Indeed, the villagers constructed a moral language with the words of the ruler in the context of reciprocity between the ruler and the ruled. In such reciprocity, they represented themselves not as poor and self-sacrificing villagers, but as true citizens who performed their duties and now demanded their rights. They turned upside down the power relation between the state and the villagers through replacing the state's rights- citizen's duties set by the state's duties-citizen's rights. Hence, in such a rhetorical battle, there appeared an implicit call for a just and lawful ruler who would protect the rights of the ruled.

Likewise the basin's people achieved some gain in their rhetorical battle. They made the political bodies realize that the existing language of the elite had lost its grounds in creating legitimacy and consent among the people. They clearly proved to the political

elite that their vision of the poor, obedient and self sacrificing Turkish villager was no longer valid. For instance, the portrayal of the villagers by the political elite as illiterate and poor peasants whose rights should be protected only by the government was shaken after the travels of the deputies to the basin. The reality within which the villagers portrayed themselves was different from the vision of the political elite. By means of their demands and their moral battle within the language of ruling elite, the villagers forced the ruling elite to see them not as subjected to the state's will, but as the subjects of their own lives. The new reality indicated that, the words, which defined state-society relations on the basis of the duties of the people and rights of the state, no longer worked. When the people obtained a chance to dialogue with the rulers, they compelled them to think and question their very elitist perception of ordinary people. Consequently as long as the people achieved to make the elite reconsider their language and revise its main components, the people's battle of words achieved a political end as well.

Associated with the fifteen year long authoritarian regime of the RPP, the policies of the war economy and their implementations by the local bureaucracy undermined the RPP's legitimacy among the people of the basin to a considerable extent. Likewise the erosion in the legitimacy of the party would later give rise to the Democrat Party's opposition and its ten year rule in the post-war period. There is no doubt that the state was confronted with a legitimacy crisis as the outcome of both the forced labor practice and the coercion of the local bureaucracy. The practices of the National Emergency Act brought about both a deep discontent among the villagers and a legitimacy crisis of the party. Hence, the RPP could not renew its legitimacy among the basin's people until the 1970s.

However, the relations between the state and the basin's people were restored by EKI after the abandonment of the forced labor regime. From the late 1940s on, EKI functioned as a state within the state in the basin, arranging the whole life of the basin's

people as their employer, protector, and indeed as, their ruler. The state's paternalism turned into an industrial paternalism in the basin. The government's long run model to solve the problem of labor supply, while keeping the traditional work patterns of the mine workers achieved a certain success. During the forced labor regime, the government was well aware that it could not maintain legal coercion for a long time. In the long run it decided to keep the symbiotic relations between the mines and villages as in their traditional form, but to contextualize this relationship in more broader relationship that was state paternalism. By the 1940s the government began to prepare a road construction plan. It aimed at connecting the labor reservoirs of the basin to the mines, hence stabilizing the rotational work pattern between the mines and the villages. Hence the villages would continue to house, feed and reproduce the work force. In a sense the government kept the main rationale of Grannig's worker village projects, with a small difference. Instead of constructing company villages near the mines and confining the mine workers there, it decided to confine the already existing villages by means of a web of roads. The government's road web plan seems to have been more viable in terms of its financial burden than Grannig's project. Moreover, the road web plan would not disturb the peace and order in the villages since it would not entail the detachment of the workers from their respective places. Hence, the already existing villages would be turned into company villages under the control of the company, the state.

After the Second World War, the government put its project into practice. EKI preserved the rotational work pattern and settled a limited number of skilled workers into company houses. On the one hand, it facilitated the rise of a permanent mining community comprising a skilled workforce near the mine districts; on the other hand, it tried to turn the villagers of the basin into a permanent labor force in their respective villages, through encouraging them to expand their work duration in the mines by offering additional social

services and premiums. In addition, EKI did not abandon the informal ties of the workers, but instead took under control the intermediate actors such as the *muhtars* and worker headmen and other recruiters through integrating them into the formal recruitment mechanisms of EKI. It made them semi-official recruiters. In addition, by means of the vocational schools it established in the late 1930s and the 1940s, it trained low level supervisory cadres and technicians from among the mineworkers, hence forming cadres who became more loyal to EKI than to the village-based mining community. Through discriminatory social policies and wages towards the different sections of the manual labor it further alienated the natural leaders of the underground crews from their followers to a certain extent.

From the 1940s and on, EKI as the employer of the workers and the representative of the state, formed a paternal vision, providing the workers, bread, work, a series of social facilities, a social security system and protection in a form compatible to their traditional way of living and working in-between the mines and the villages. In return, it was expected that the village communities of the basin would consent to work in the mines as the workers of the state. As long as they were contained in their respective villages under state control and the villages articulated the mines with flexible ties, the mine workers would not turn into a close knit, well integrated mining community with a potential to turn the common work experience and class position to union-based organized actions. Although trade unionism began in 1946 in the basin, it was then shaped under the state control and served as a device in controlling labor movements rather than integrating different sections of the workers, particularly the underground workers, to the union. The success of the government's long run model can be measured only by further investigations on the mining community-state, state-coal industry and the coal industry-economy linkages in the second half of the twentieth century. However, it is obvious that the long lasting compromise between the state and the village based-mining communities of the basin came to an end with the state's privatization projects of the public

enterprises in the 1990s, which also meant that the state retreated from its paternalist role in the basin.

In the end, this study looked at the state-capital-labor relations in a specific period of Turkey's social, political and economic history in a regional/ sectoral context. The rural roots of the mine workers, their flexible work patterns between mining and farming, the unskilled nature of their labor and the symbiotic relations between the industry and the agricultural community in the basin contain clues about the living and working experiences of the laboring groups originated from rural agricultural communities and coming into contact with the industrial production with flexible work patterns. Although the interplay between coal mining industry and mining community bore various peculiarities, the living and working experiences of the mine workers, their forms of organization and action, their relations to mining companies and the state and last, their perception of their position in these relations give some hints on the laborers in continual motion between industrial centers and the subsistence agriculture, and whose history has been ignored at great extent due to elitist perceptions.



## APPENTIX A

### Originals of Excerpts Quoted in the Text

#### Chapter 4

page 122, note 463

Havza-i fahmiyyede kömür istihsalatında çalışan işçiler umumiyetle havzaya muhit olan Ereğli, Devrek, Bartın kazalarıyla Yaban Abad, Çankırı, Safranbolu, Araç, Daday ve kısmen de Trabzon, Erzurum ve havalileri ahalisidir. Her memleket halkının sayı başka başka sahadadır. Bi-lfarz havzaya mücavir mahaller ahalisi on iki yaşımdan itibaren ocakların dahili imalâtında, yaban Abad ahalisi harmanlardan vagonlara kömür tahmilâtında, Araç, Daday ahalisi sayıs ve dekovil işlerinde, Trabzon civarı ahalisi [Kesene=Götürü]işlerde, vilayet şarkiyye ahalisi ise harman işlerinde çalışmaktadır. Son zamanlarda vilâyet-i şarkiyye ahalisinin ocakların dahili imalâtında girdikleri görülmekte.

page 124, note 465

Havzai fahmiye işçilerinin %88 i Zonguldak vilayeti ile civarı vilayet ahalisi ve %12 si işçiler vilayati vesaire ahalisidir. 12 sini teşkil eden vilayati saire ahalisi giyinmesini yemesini oldukça bilir. Ve 88 i teşkil eden ve kömür istihsalinde en ziyade sai görünen kısım ne giyinmesini ve ne de yemesini bilir. Bunların giyecekleri elbise Amerikan bezinden veya basmadan mamul ve her tarafı yırtık bir gömlek ve bir dondan ibaret olduğu gibi ekserisinin ayağında güneşte kurutulmuş bir sığır derisinden mamul ve kınnap ile bağlı bir yarım çarıktan ibaret olduğu gibi soğuktan muhafaza için de eline geçirebildiği bir eski hırka ceket bir redingot gibi cins ve nevi muhtelif ele alınmaz elbise ve eski eşya istimal ederler. Bugün bu ameleyi tesirâtı havaiyeden muhafaza eden libas, üzerlerindeki don ve gömlek değildir. Belki mesanatına nüfuz etmiş olan kömür tozları ile bir müşemma halini alan muzır kir tabakasıdır. Bu amelenin yediği şey de ya köylerinden getirdikleri mısır unundan mamul bulamaç veya esmanı istihkaklarından katolunmak üzere madenci tarafından her gün tevzi olunan bir kilo ekmektir. Sıcak yemek nedir, et nedir bilmez hatta diyebilirim ki soğan katığından başka katık bilmezler... Şimdi sırtında Amerikan bezinden mamul bir gömlek ve bir don, ayağında güneşte kurutulmuş bir çarık bulunan ve günde ancak katıksız bir kilo ekmek yiyen bir işçi günde 8 saat galerilerde maden kuyularında ayakları su içinde çalışır ise bu işçinin sıhhati ne olur. Bundan yetişecek nesil ne olacaktır. Bu hal birkaç sene daha devam edecek olursa yetişecek bünyeleri bir Laponyalı vücudu gibi küçük ve gayet cılız olacağından şüphe yoktur.

page 126, note 473

mültecî lazların öteden beri Ereğli halkına karşı bir husûbet beslemekte ve huzûr ve sükûnu her vesile ile ihlâl sebeb olmakta ve kaçakçılık ile de hazine-i hükûmeti izrar eylemekte bulundukları cihetle..." harb-i umûmîyi müte'âkib mülteci olarak Ereğli'ye vurûd eden ve Ereğli'de ihtiyar-ı ikâmet eyleyen Trabzon vilayetinin muhtelif kazâları ahâlîsinden olanların Ereğli'de namuskar bir ma'îşet temini

gâyesinden ziyade kaçakçılık ve nehb ve sirkat gibi ef'âl-i cürmiye ve gayr-ı meşrû'ayı irtikâbı i'tiyâd ettikleri ve âilelerinin de dâima bunlara yataklık eyledikleri ve kaza zâbitasıncâ bunlar hakkında dâima müteyakkuzâne hareket olunmakta ise de sâhilde ikâmet eden ve ekserîsinin birer taka veyahut motorlu kayığı bulunan bu kısım halkın mevcut kuvvetle harekât ve sükenâtının sâati saatine ta'kîb ve nezaret altında bulundurulması kâbil olamadığı diğer taraftan da gece gündüz iş ü işret ve sekene-i mahalliyeye karşı izhar-ı huşûnet ile meluf olan mülteciler halk ile mu'aşerete de tevessül etmedikleri ve şu halden Ereğli halkının da gayr-ı memnûn bulundukları cihetle yerliler ile mülteci-i merkûmûn arasında âtiyen en ufak bir vesîle ile ikinci bir hadise-i müessifenin zuhûru ihtimâlden ba'id olmadığından selâmet-i idare ve emn ü âsâyiş-i mahallînin hüsn-i muhâfazası ilcâsıyla Trabzon vilayeti halkının bila istisnâ maskat-ı re'slerine i'âdeleri mütâla'ası dermeyen kılınmaktadır.

## Chapter 5

page 138, note 492

Bu kısım suallerime tam cevap verilmemiş olduğundan geçen yıllar rakamlarıyla mukayese ederek kaza sayısının azalıp azalmadığını tesbît mümkün olmadı. Her halde şunu işaret etmeksizin geçemem: birinci sualim şu idi: [38 ibtidasından gayesine kadar, 38, 39 Son Kanunlarıyla Şubatlarında: amelenin kaçığı hangi hastalığa tutulmuş, kaçığı ölmüş kaçığı köyüne, yahut memleketine gitmiş te dönmemiş?] bu sualime geçen yıllar verilen cevaplar dolayısıyla hülasamda demişim ki: [Teşkilatsızlık neticesi olmak üzere hastalanıp da köylerinde ölmüş amele meçhulümüzdür mealinde bir cevap verilmekle iktifa edilmiştir. Ocaklarda hastalananlar, ölenler için bile bir söz yoktur] halbuki bu seneki cevabda sualime mutlak bir sükût ile mukabele edilmiştir./ Vicdanlara sığınırım! bu ne haldir?...14 kurbanın öksüzleri namına ikame edilen da'vaların (11)'ini neticelenmiş (3)'ü (39)'a devir edilmiş a'la, fakat (10) da'va daha ikame edilmiş.

page 138, note 493

Amele müfettişliği kazalar dolayısıyla ma'dencilerin mahkum oldukları nakit yekununu (10890) lira gösteriyor. Halbuki Adliye Vekaletinin cevaplarından sa'atlerce uğraşarak çıkardığım neticeye göre olan yekûn (7370) liradır. Yani müfettişlik (3520) lira fazla yazıyor. Daha garibini işaret edeyim. Adliye yekûnu (28-38 /1912-1922) seneleri i'tibarıyla tam (10) yıllıktır.

page 139, note 497

Memlekette her aile gelişi güzel yaşar. Köylerde bazı eski ailelerde mazbut ve esasî itaat ve hürmete müstenid usul maişetlere tek tük rast gelinirsede hemen istisnaidir. Yalnız ailelerde türkûn mezayî fitratından olan mahviyet ve sükunet ve kanaat dairesinde herşey bahşı tabî'si ile ceryan eder gider... Erkek çocuklarına ehemmiyet vermekle beraber bakılması yetiştirilmesi hiç düşünülmez. Çocuk kendi kendine düşüp kalkarak ne bulursa yiyerek hastalıklarla çırpınarak yetişebilirlerse ne ala.. Heba olup gidince hükm kaderdir denilir oturulur. Yetişkinler de bakımsızlık yüzünden sıksa ,cılız büyür... Şehirlerde zenginler ve orta halli aileler herşeyi yiyebilirler. Fakat ekseriyet gıdayı hamurlu madeler teşkil eder...Sebze ikinci

derecede ve et üçüncü derecede bir gıda telakki olunur. Köylülerin zenginleri bulgur ve sebze, fakirleri dağlardan topladıkları mancar tabiri umumiyesiyle yad ettikleri otlar haşlamasını yerler.

page 146, note 517

Daimi olmayan amele miktarının tehalüfü muhtelif ayların istihsalatı bir grafik üzerinde tetkik edilecek olursa bilfarz temmuzda 7208 tona düşmüş iken ağustos ayında 103841 ve eylül ayında ise 113014 miktarına çıkmıştır. /Daimi olmayan amelenin tedariki bilhassa ahvali ziraiyeye tabi bir keyfiyettir. Amele ekseriye civar gölerde çalışan erbabı ziraatten olduğu için zerriyat mevsimi olmadığı veya köylerinde hayatlarını kazanamadıkları zaman ocaklarda çalışmaya gelmektedir. Bu şerait tahtında görülüyorki havzanın kudreti istihsaliyesinin iyi bir şekilde tanzimi bilhassa daimi amelenin bulunmasına mütevakıftır.

page 151, note 526

Havzada amele hayatı böyle bir modern işletme tarzının tesisine başlıca bir engel teşkil eder. Ameleler muvakkattır ve ocağa bağlı değillerdir. Hayat şartları fenadır. İptidaidir. Onları madenlere bağlamak, işlerine alıştırmak, fakat aynı zamanda kendilerine iyi bir hayat, köylerini aratmayacak bir hayat hazırlamak lazımdır....Burada asıl yenilmesi icabeden taraf, amelenin ananevi iytiyadıdır.

Halbuki, Havza'da hususi amele mahalleleri yapılmakla, amelenin kendi köyünü büsbütün terkederek daimi surette madenler civarına gelüp yerleşeceği kat'iyetle temin edilemez. Bu bir zaman ve mücadele işidir, bir terbiye mes'elesidir ...

page 155, note 538

kömür istihsalatında maliyete giren en büyük emsal amele ücreti ve bilhassa randımandır. Amelenin disiplinli bir surette çalıştırılması ile elde edilebilecek müsbet neticeler pek büyüktür...

evela Havza'da amele adedi azalmamış bilakis çoğalmıştır. Saniyen istihsalat artmakla beraber randıman çoğalacağına azalmıştır. Kanaatimizce bunun sebebini muhtelif emsaller arasında bilhassa amelenin rekabet tesirile şımartılmasında aramak icabeder. Bu rekabet amele arasında disiplini bozduğu kadar vasati yevmiye fiyatlarını arttırmak suretilede maliyetin çoğalmasına sebebiyet vermiştir. Bu yüzden havzanın senelik kaybı en nikbin bir tahminle sekizyüzbin liradan aşağı değildir.

page 156, note 539

havzada amele isteyip dilediğinden ziyade iytiyat sevkiyle biraz da istemeyerek çalışıyor. Havzanın inkişafı, amelenin burada çalışmakta menfaat görmesinde, ve maişetini Havza'dan beklemesindedir. Bu itibarla, havza etrafında, ailesiyle birlikte oturan işçi kitlesi yaratmak, bunların ihtiyaçlarını ucuz tedariki, , ayrıca ailesiz gelen işçilerin de sıhhi yaşamalarını mümkün kılacak, teşkilat vücuda getirmelidir.

page 158, note 544

Zonguldak -Kozlu havalisi dağlık, vadiler gayet dardır. Burada teknik tesisat için bile kafi yer yoktur...Filyos ile Çaycuma arasındaki mıntika büyük bir ovadır. Vadi geniş

vesathı mailler kısmen tatlı meyillidir. Zonguldak- Kozluda işçiye kümes hayvanatı, koyun ve keçi beslemeye elverişli yer vermek imkansızdır, binaenaleyh burada işçi bilmeceburiyet topraktan ayrılacaktır.

page 159, note 545

Filyos-Çaycuma'da ise her işçi ailesine kolaylıkla 1000-2000 m<sup>2</sup> veya daha fazla arazi verilebilir. Burada işçi aynı zamanda köylü de olabilir ve karısı ile çocuklarını çalıştırabilir. Burada kümes hayvanı besleyebilir ve karısı Zonguldak pazarında tavuk ve yumurta satabilir. Burada işçi, daha doğrusu ailesi sebze ekebilir ve bunları Zonguldakta satar.(Zonguldak-Kozluda istihlak olunan bütün sebzeler bugün İstanbuldan gelmektedir.)

Filyos-Çaycuma'da işçi keçi ve koyun sahibi olacak ve Zonguldak-Kozluya süt, peynir ve et satacaktır.

page 160, note 547

İçtimai tarih açıkça gösteriyor ki işçinin toprakla alakasının kesilmesi, muhtelif sınıai memleketlerde o kadar sefalet ve karışıklıklar meydana getirmiş olan proleterin doğmasına sebep olmuştur.

Filvaki, hakiki sanayiinin doğuşundan beri, tahminen 1830 tarihinden 20 inci asır başlangıcına kadar işçinin ancak pek kötü ve gayri sıhhi evi vardır (halen Zonguldak-Kozluda olduğu gibi),.Bu vaziyetin teessüfe şayan olan neticeleri iyice malumdur ve üzerinde durmakta faide yoktur. Bilhassa umumi harpten sonra anlaşılmaya başlanmıştır ki Sanayi ile Ziraat iki düşman, bir birinin zıddı kutup değil fakat , bilakis, sanayi amelesine işleyebilecek toprak vermekle Ziraat ile Sanayi i telif etmek mutlak surette mümkündür .

page 163, note 552

Bekir Vehbi Ergene: Bizim gitmek istediğimiz hedef şudur. Ocaklara civar köy halkı zürradır, yedi, sekiz bin ev yapmak lazımdır. Bu iş onbeş senelik iştir. Bizim gitmek istediğimiz köydür.

Başvekil: Onbeş seneye kadar yavaş yavaş gideceksiniz. Köye şimdilik ilişmeyelim.

page 170, note 571

Sayın başkan, işçi ile patron, hak ve assığ (menfaat)larının nasıl birbiriyle uyumlu(ahenktar) ve dengeşik (mütevazin) bulunduğunu ve bunların nasıl birbirine güvenen, birbirine dayanan bütün ve tek varlık olduğunu anlattı ve sınıf ve bırakığ (imtiyaz) ayırım(fark) larını kaldıran partimizin halkçılık ve ulusal birlik ülkülerini aydınlattı

page 170, note 572

Burada işçi ve işyar hepsi bir arada, bir sırada...işleyenlerle işletenler aynı düzeydedir.İşçi sabah akşam sıcak yemek yer, temiz karyolalarda yatar..yıkama evleri,içeri ve dışarı için ayrı giyimleri,ihtiyaçlarını ucuz ve maliyet tutarına sağlayabileceği satış yerleri..sıkıntı ve darlıklarına yetişen türlü yardım kurumu...vardır.

page 170, note 573

Sosyete, işçilerin sağlusal ve sosyal durumlarıyla çok yakından ilgilenerek onlara yüksek sevgenlik göstermiştir...Onlara insaniğ haklarını tanıtmıştır. Sıcak yemek vermiştir, yaşayışlarını düzene koymuştur. İşçilere, işyarlara, bekarlara, evlilere özgü (mahsus) kurağlarla modern bir işçi uramı kurmağa başlamıştır. .

Okul, bedenîğ eğitim, oyun ve eğlence yerleri, bağçeler, sinema ve başkaca her türlü hayatîğ ihtiyaçlarına cevap verecek kurumlar meydana getirmiştir."

## Chapter 7

page. 245, note 798

Köylülerimizin asırlardan beri bir ağaya bağlanmak lüzumunu duymasının başlıca sebebi iktisadi ve emniyet zaruretidir. Emniyet zaruretinin Cumhuriyet Hükümetinin sağlam tedbirleri ortadan kaldırmış veya kaldırmakta bulunmuştur.

Acı da olsa itiraf etmek lazımdır ki iktisadi zaryretleri henüz ortadan kaldıramadık ve bu kolay bir iş değildir. Köylü en mübrem ihtiyaçlarını karşılayabileceği kapıya bağlanmakta mızdardır. İşte amele meselesinin hal şeklinde bu düstur esas olarak göz önünde tutulmalıdır. Daha kestirme bir ifade ile, Devlet maden ocakları, işçilerin ve bunların mensup olduğu köylerin ağalık vazifesini yapmalıdır. Ancak bu suretle amele meselesinin kısa bir zaman içinde halline imkan elverilebilir. .

## Chapter 8

page 266, note 864

Havza dahilinde çalışan amele sabahları saat beşbuçuktan Ona kadar müddet içerisinde, ocak işlerinden çıktıklarında...sabah çorbasını içer. Saat Onikiden Ondörde kadar müddet içerisinde bir def'a bile karnını doyurmayan bir yemek ve bir pilavdan ibaret listede iki öğünde gösterilen yemeği bir def'ada yer. Saat Ondörtte fasılasız Sekiz saat çalışmak üzere ocağına girer gece yarısı ocaktan çıkar aç karnına yatar uyur. Bu suretle gece yarısı ocaktan çıkan ameleye yemek verilmez. Diğer ikinci vardiya amelesi gece yarısı kömür ocağına çalışmak üzere girer sabah altıda ocaktan çıkar sabah çorbasını içerek uyku ve istirahat etmek üzere barakasına girer saat oniki ile ondört arasında kalkarak öğle ve akşam istihkakı yekûnü olan yemeğini bir def'ada yiyerek çalışmak üzere tekrar ocağına girer ve bu suretle amele yirmidört saat zarfında bir çorba ve ...gayri kafi bir gündüz yemeği ile iktifaya mecbur tutulduğu ocaklarda yapılan son tahkikatlarda teeyyüt etmiştir

Netice: Ağır işlerden madud bulunan ocaklarda çalıştırılan ameleye listelerde yazılı olan çiy erzak mukabili tam olarak pişmiş verilmediğinden ve bir netice amelenin ihtiyacı olan kaloriyi alamadığından dolayı birer ay münavebe ile çalıştırılan Kömür amelesi ay nihayetinde köylerine daha zayıf bir halde gittikleri müteaddit teftiş neticesinde görülmüştür.Fasılasız günde sekiz saat ziyadan mahrum ve mühim bir kısmı tahtezzeemin ocaklardaki ağır işlerde çalıştırıldığına mukabil gıdasını tamam alamayan ve bir kısmı rutubetli ve zıyasız barakalarda iskan olunan kömür amelesinin maruz gayri kafi iaşeleri yüzünden gün geçtikçe kuvvet ve sıhhatlarını gaip ettiklerini, dairei

intihabiyelerini dolaşan mebuslarımızında bu vaziyeti görmüş ve anlamış olduklarını ehemmiyetle arz eylerim.

## Chapter 9

page.313 note 1004

...toprak işlerine diğer yerlerden olduğundan daha bağlıdır. Bu sebeble 45 günlük fasıla ile madende çalışmak bilhassa yaz zamanlarında halkın tarım faaliyetini önemli surette zarara uğratmaktadır. Gündeliklerinin azlığını ve 45 gün çalışma mukabili alınan paranın ancak bir çift gön kunduraya yettiğini ve maden içinde bir çift kunduranın en çok bir buçuk, iki ay dayandığını ve böylece köylünün aşağı yukarı boğaz tokluğuna madenlerde çalıştığını yana yakıla anlattılar. Köylerinde erkek kalmadığından tarlalarda kadınların çalıştığını söyleyorlar.

page 314, note 1005

Kendilerine kömür istihsalı işinin, askerlik vazifesi kadar mühim olduğunu, bir askerin vatan muhafazası için silah altında durmasından şikayeti nasıl yersizse bunun kadar önemli olan mükellefiyet işinden de fedakar türk köylüsünün yüksünmesi caiz olmayacağını söyledim. Bazı köylüler ve bilhassa az çok okumuş yazmış olan köy muhtarları köylünün bu mükellefiyete bunca yıldır katlandığını ve harp bitmiş olduğundan artık mükellefiyetin de kaldırılması lazım geldiğini ve yarın öbür gün ordu terhis olunursa mükellefiyete eskisi gibi devam etmenin açık bir haksızlık olacağını söylediler.

page 315, note 1006

bir hakikati bu münasebetle söylemeyi vazife bilirim ki o da şudur: seçim bölgemin bir çok yerlerinde ve hususen Çaycuma, Ereğli ve Devrek gibi liman yol veya tren güzergahı olan bazı bölgelerinde köylünün irfan seviyesi ve düşünce kabiliyeti çok artmıştır.

Bazen öyle suallere maruz kalmakta ve bazı sözlerime öyle cevaplar almaktayım ki, bu muhavereler beni ciddi düşünceye sevk etmekte ve köylüye ancak mutlak hakikatlara dayanan demeçlerde bulunmanın maslahata daha uygun olacağı neticesine vardırılmaktadır. Bu iytibarla kömür havzasındaki mükellefiyet davasının bir an evvel ele alınarak bu konu etrafında ciddiyetle düşünülmesi ve acilen bir tedbir alınması gerektiğini burada bir defa daha belirtmeği bir borç ve ödev bilirim. .

page 321 , note 1019

İşletmenin yedi senelik emektarı ve sekiz nüfus aile sahibiyim. Uğradığım haksız ve keyfi muamele fevkalade mutazarrır etmiş bulunmaktadır. Bir vatandaş sıfatile yüksek vicdanlarınıza dahalete mecbur kaldım. Bütün deliller daha henüz çıplaklığı ile meydana iken tahkikatın mahalli Cumhuriyet Halk Partisince yapılarak hakikatın tezahür ettirilmesini aksi sabit olduğu taktirde aleyhimde kanuni takibat yapılmasını bir Türk ferdi olarak istida ve istirham eylerim.

## Chapter 10

page 350, note 1073

...bundan dört sene evvel nahiyemize gelen Kaza kaymakamı, Jandarma Kumandanı ve amele takip Memuru köylerimizin amele işlerini tetkik ettiler ve bu sırada muhtarlarla da bir toplantı yaptılar. Bu toplantı ve tetkikat sonunda Kurucaşile'nin altı köyünün öteden beri maden ameleliği ile iştilal etmekte olmalarına göre mükellefiyete tabi tutulmalarına kalan yirmi yedi köy halkının bir kısmının ihtiyaçlarını temin edebilmek için öteden beri Kurucaşile'den hariçte İstanbul ve sair yerlerde tuğla ustalığı ile iştilal ettiği, bir kısmının da rençberlik ve bu da kafi gelmediğinden maden direği ihzar ve nakliyatı ve kerestekeşlikle meşgul oldukları neticesine varılarak yirmi yedi gün yirmi yedi köy maden amelesi mükellefiyetine tabi tutulmadı.

page 351, note 1074

Vaziyet bu şekilde devam etmekte iken 7/Haziran/1943 te hububat işleri için biz muhtarlar kaza merkezinde kaymakamlıkta bir toplantıya çağrıldık. Benim köyüm Kurucaşile'den üç saat Bartın tarafındadır. Ve Bartına yürüyerek 10. Saat mesafededir. Bu sebeple ben toplantıdan bir gün evvel 6/Haziran/1943 te köyümden çıkarak Bartına geldim. 7/ Haziran'da deniz yolu ile Bartına gelen Kurucaşile esnaflarından Murat Sarı ile Hacı köyü muhtarı Hakkı Bartında beni buldular. Nahiye müdürü sana bir kağıt göndermişti, biz kaybettik fakat kağıt münderecatı Karaman Muhtarı Hasan'ın İşmükellefiyetine uğramalarına dairdir dediler. Hububat işleri hakkında toplantıyı müteakip iş mükellefiyetine uğradım. Mükellefiyet başmemuru Seyfi Güven Muhtar; köyün nüfus defterini çıkar 307-926 doğumlulara kadar köydeki erkekleri amele olarak listesini yapacağız ve mühürlieceksiniz dedi.

page 351, note 1075

(Mükellefiyet başmemuru) Sen nüfus defterini benden saklıyorsun şimdi kaymakamın yanına gidince duyar ve görürsün. Kalk kaymakama gideceğiz dedi. Kaymakamı belediye dairesinde bulduk. Kaymakam sen neden amelenin listesini vermiyorsun dedi. Ben de benim böyle bir şeyden malumatım olmadığı için nüfus defterini getirmediğim. Bana üç gün müsaade ediniz gidip köyden defteri getireyim. Bununla beraber köy erkeklerinin yarısı esasen köyde yoktur İstanbul ve sayir yerdedir. Deyince kat'iyen müsaade edilemez getirin bu herifi ve jandarma Başçavuşuna ifadesini alsın, mühürlerini alsın ve tahkimata sevkedilmek üzere Şubeye teslim etsin dedi. Başçavuşa gittik. Benden evvel içeri giren Mükellefiyet Memuru Seyfi ile görüştüktan sonra odaya beni çağırdılar ve Bölük Komutanı vazifesini gören Başçavuş Şahap Yurdagüven: çıkar muhtarlık mühürlerini şu masa üstüne bırak dedi. Ben bırakmak istemedim ve bu bana tevdi edilmiş memuriyetime ait kıymetli bir emanettir. Ancak bunu kanuni şekilde teslim ederim dedim. Döğmeğe kalktı, korktum, mühürleri masanın üzerine koydum.

page 352, note 1077

Hükümetimizin dayandığı partimizin altı vafından birinin halkçılık olduğuna köylünün efendiliği hakkında mütevali beyanatınıza inanarak arz ediyorum ki hiç bir sebebi kanuni olmadan Bartın Kaymakamı tarafından muhtarlığım men edildi Eski mükellefiyet müd tarafından hürriyeti şahsiyem tahdit olundu. Bir müfettiş göndererek

benim gibi bir çok yurttaşların nasıl ezildiği nasıl haksızlıklara kurban verildiğinin tahkikini halkça ve hükümetçe bir muhtar ve bir vatandaş olarak rica ederim.

page 355, note 1083

Bu cedvele istinaden Tüccar, esnaf, san'atkar sakat dahil olduğu halde iş mükellefiyeti tatbik edildi. Bunlardan tüccar, esnaf bir çok masraflara ve zahmetlere duçar olarak kanuni haklarını almakla mükellefiyetten çıkarıldı. Diğer san'atkar, sakat olanlar gitti hakkı kanunilerini aramak için yol masraflarını te'min için evlerinde satmadık ne öküz nede inek bırakmadılar. Bu sebebden hem kendileri koşacak ve sağacağı kalmadığı gibi bir çoğunun haneleri söndü. Yok oldu.mahkemeler işgal edildi. Zabıta meşgul oldu bir çok Hükümetin galesi çoğaldı. Sırf bu hata nahiye müdürünün alacağı bir maaş veya daha ziyade alacağı ikramdan ileri gelmiştir.

page 358, note 1090

Biz de bu listeleri bize verin köyümüze gidelim köyümüzde bu koordinasyon kararına göre maden ocağına gitmesi lazım olanların künyesini çıkaralım dedik. Nahiye müdürü buna asla razı olmadı. Çünkü bizim bu tasdik edeceğimiz listeler içersinde durumları bu kanuna ve kararnameye aykırı olanlar varsa bizler mes'ul oluruz dedik. Çünkü hilafına beyanname ve liste tanzim ve tasdik etmek bir cürüm ve mesuliyet olduğundan bizler tasdikten çekindik. Bu yerinde haklı olan cevabımızı yerine getirmek istemediler.

page 359, note 1092

"Kaymakam hiddetlenerek hepimize eşeoğlu eşek, hayvan muhtarlar neden benim emrimi dinlemediniz ve bu vazifeyi neden yapmadınız diye hiddetle bağırdı. Ben daha sizlere neler yapacağım görürsünüz dedi. Bu fena sözleri söyledikten sonra vazifelerinizi yapın diye köylerimize serbest olarak gitmemize izin verdi

page 360, note 1096

Oğlumun listeleri tetkikten sonra tasdik edeceğini söylemesi makul bir cevaptır. Anlamadan dinlemeden listeleri tasdik ederse yanlış bir hareket olacağından mesuliyetten korkmasından ileri gelmiştir.

Oğlum Niyazi Muhtarlıktan evvel veya sonra hiçbir süihali görülmemiş dürüstlikle vazifelerini başarmıştır. Oğlum hiçbir ihtar yapılmadan tahkimata aniden sevk edilmesi, ne bir makam tarafından ve ne de bir heyet tarafından isticvab edilmediği, oğlu muhtar niyazinin bu listeleri tetkik etmeden tasdik etmesi bir kusur ve kabahat ise Yüksek mahkemelerimize gönderilmesi icabederdi. Oğlum Niyazi'nin tahkimata sevkı usulsüz ve gayri kanunidir. Bir an evvel hakkında tahkikat icrasıyle tahkimattan geri çevrilmesine delaletinizi Yüksek Partimizden can ve gönülden yalvararak dilerim..

page 361, note 1097

Beni bu şekilde mağdur ve perişan edenlerin iddialarının hakikat olup olmadığını tetkik ve tahkik edilmek üzere ilgili ve selahiyetli bir hey'et tarafından tahkikat yapılmasını ve töhmetli isem Yüksek mahkemelerimize sevkedilmeliğimi ve çıkacak hüküm ve karara her zaman için boynum ve başım eğri olduğunu bundan ötürü bir Vatan



evladının şahsi ve şeref haysiyetinin korunmasını ilgili makamlara söylenmesini yalvarırım.

page 363, note 1100

Gelen Jandarma onbaşı çaylıoğlu karakolunda Faik onbaşı nezdine misafir edilmiş ve misafir kaldığı müddetçe şişelerle rakılar içilmiş tavuklar yenmiş ve şikayetçi olarak benim gösterdiğim şahitler bin bir türlü hakaretlere maruz bırakılmak suretile ifadeleri alınmış ve hatta bunlardan orta köyden tabak oğlu Arif çavuşla saltuklu köyü muhtarı ismail dögenin hemen o gece samanhaneleri yakılmış ve her birimiz ayrı ayrı hakarete maruz bırakılmış (ve siz burada yaşamayacakmısınız ?) gibi sözlerle tehdit edilmiş bulunmaktayız. halkçı olan Cumhuriyet Hükümetimizin altı umdesinden biri olan köylünün efendiliği bu suretle ayaklar altına alınmakta ve adeta mıntıkamız dahilinde bir dere begliği kurulmak suretile icrayı hükm edilmektedir.

page 364, note 1101

Bir karakol onbaşısının halk fırkası mutemedi süsünü veren bir eyyüp pehlivanla birlikte ticaretle iştiğal etmesi ve çifte at beslemesi ve köy halkından cebren satın aldığı mısırlar içine kum karıştırmak suretiyle ihtikar yaparak başkalarına satması ve bilhassa halk fırkası mutemedi süsünü veren eyyüp pehlivanın mıntika dahilinde istediği muhtarı azl ve istedigig nasb eylemesi ve köy halkını (sizi mükellefiyetten kurtaracağım) diyerek her birinden ikişer üçer yüz lira para almak suretile dolandırması gibi meseleler göz önüne alınarak acilen bu gibi yolsuzlukların önüne geçilmek üzere lazım gelenlere yüksek emirlerinizi temiz vicdanlarınıza dehaletle diler ve yalvarırım.

page 365, note 1103

Ruhen müstebit olarak yaşayan bu adamın civar köyler üzerinde nüfuzunu bir kat daha kuvvetlendirmek için Çaylıoğlu J.K. Komutanı Vahip onbaşısı avlamış ve bu sayede halkı istediği gibi idare etmek yolunu bulmuştur. Malumat edinilmek üzere kendilerile konuştuğumuz bir çok bitaraf köylüler bidayeten eyyüp pehlivan'ın korkusundan hakikatı söylemek için hayli sıkıntı çekmişler, adlarının verilmemesi için pek çok ricalarda bulunmuşlardır. Bu kadar korkmaları sebebini kendilerine sorduğumuzda: Aman efendim bu adam aleyhinde söz söylediğimizi duyarsa Evlerimiz ve samanlıklarımız yakılır ve hayvanlarımız çalınır ve buna yakın cevaplarda bulunmuşlardır.

page 368, note 1107

kanunları, nizamları ve koordinasyon kararlarını çiğneyerek hınç almak maksadıyla müessesemi yıkmak ve beni maddi ve manevi büyük zarara sokmak maksadıyla 1945 yılının 2 ci kanununda mürettep ocak amelesi meyanına soktuğunu ve beni sevk edeceğini öğrendim. Şahsi bir kinle vatandaşları oyuncak yapan muhtar adeta bir diktatör gibi köyün sosyal durumunu ve fertlerini her türlü amaline hizmet ettirmek gayesini gütmektedir.

page 370, note 1111

Toprak Cuma jandarma karakol kumandanı zekeriya onbaşıya hadiseyi yine anlattık müddei umumiliğe telefon açtırdık. Biz namusumuzla, şerefimizle yaşamak isteyen vatandaşlar bu ademi salıverdiğiniz bir tabanca daha alarak silahla bizi tehdit ettiğini bundan doğacak her hangi bir hadiseden makamınız mesuldür. Bu vaziyet karşısında ne yapacağız dedik aynı sözlerin jandarma komutanlığınada bildirdik. Her ikisi de ortada bir hadise yoktur. Bir şey yapılamaz dediler. Kaymakam vekiline gittik vaziyeti anlattık bıktık bu adamın şikayetlerinden bu adam bu memleketten çıksın gitsin dediler bizi tatmin edecek bir cevap alamadık..

page 371, note 1112

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşlarının her alanda san'at işlerinde çalışan evlatlarını korumak ve ilerletmek için bütün yardımları yapmaktadır. Ben aynı zamanda bu sanatımı yanımda çalıştırdığım vatandaşlarıma öğretiyor, gösteriyorum...1945 yılı maden ocağına gidecek mürettep amele meyanına idhal ettiğini öğrendim ve bittabi kanunlarımızın ve Cumhuriyet Halk partimizin böyle Vatandaşları bigarezin oyuncak yapmak isteyenlerin en büyük adaleti göstereceğine emin olduğumdan bu ifadelerimin aynen yazılmasını dilerim.

page 372, note 1113

Biz devletimizin kanunlarını bağlı hürmetkar insanlarız. Kanunlarımızın emrettiğini yerine getirmek namus borcudur. Hükümetimiz Vatandaşlarımızı mahvedin demiyor. Nizamı, usul, ne ise tarlanın verimine göre Devlet payını her kes seve seve versin diyor. Bizler ise asla bundan kaçmadık ve kaçmıyoruz. Hepsini tamamen veriyoruz. Akpınar köyü içinde en çok Devlet payı veren benim. Benden başka çok veren yoktur. Bunun için adaletin yerine getirilmesini yolunda ifade verdim diye beni ezmek isteyen Muhtar Nuri Aytaç'ın yaptıklarının yanına kar kalmamasını dilerim.

page 373, note 1114

"Muhtar köyde şerefiyle namusu ile ve istikametiyle çalışan her yurttaşı keyfi maşa istediği şekilde türlü türlü kötü muamelelerine maruz bırakmaktadır. Halbuki, Cumhuriyet devrinde köyün muhtarı, vatandaşları korumak, onları düşünmek ve sanat sahiplerini her zaman için teşvik ve himaye etmek vazifesi olduğunu bilmemektedir. Bu itibarla Cumhuriyet halk partisinin köylümüzü eza ve cefa içinde kıvrandıran muhtar Nuri Aytaç'ın hakkında gerekli tahkikat ve takibatın yaptırılmasını ehemmiyetle dilerim.

page 374, note 1116

Geçen gün bir çok amelei mükellefiyeyi hasta göstererek müdür yeni yaptığı binada çalıştırıyordu bunları ve evine yüze yakın bahçesini ve tarlasını ekmek için İbrıcak köyü muhtarından kadın istemiş vaktiyle angaryaya kadınları sevketmiyen muhtar öyle bir dayak attı ki sormayınız hemen kadın çoluk çocuk tarlasının mısır ekmesini ter ederek müdürün angaryasına koştu ve bir hafta işinden kaldı. Arabasıyla taş çekmiyen ve çeltik köyünden olan Kasap Selim yılmaza halk arasında öyle bir dayak attı ki çiftini bırakan Selim hemen günlerce taş çekti. Bunun gibi yüzlercesi dayak korkusuyla nahiyeye gelmez oldu ve ticaret durdu biz ne yapalım

page 380, note 1132

Bu kaza mıntıkasında hayvan hırsızlığı vakalarının taaddüdü; köylünün hayvanlarını başıboş olarak meraya bırakması, günlerce aramaması, hayvanı gaybolunca kendiliğinden aramaya başlaması ve derhal alakalılara haber vermemesinden ileri gelmektedir. Günler geçtikten sonra işe mutalli olan zabıta, takibe koyulmakta isede bir çok müşkillerle karşılaşmakta bulunmaktadır. Diğer bir sebep de mıntıkada mevcut kıptilerin hayvan hırsızlığını kendilerine sanat edinmiş olmalarıdır. Bunlar; bu hırsızlıktan mükerreren yakalanmışlar, mahkum olmuşlar, sürgün edilmişler, fakat ceza müddetlerini bitirdikten sonra yine kötü itiyatlarından vaz geçmemişlerdir. Hayvan hırsızlığının önüne geçilmesi ve gerekli mani tetbirlerin alınması için alakadarlara yeniden tebligat yapılmıştır.

page 381, note 1134

Hırsızlık vakalarının gereği gibi önlemlerle takip edilmemesi bilakis (bir gelir kaynağı) olarak kabul edilmiş olması keyfiyeti halkı en yakın Hükümet kapısından soğutmuş ve devlete olan itimadını sarsmıştır.. O kadar ki köyde bir çok hırsızlıklar hükümete haber verilmeyerek mal sahibi tarafından takip edilerek para mukabilinde hırsızlardan kurtarılmaya çalışılmaktadır. Bu dirlik ve düzensizlik halkta bedbinliği arttırmakta ve (sahibimiz yok hükümet yok) gibi isyankar sesler yükselmektedir. Dünyanın bu nazik anında velev yurdun küçük bir parçasında dahi olsa halkın hükümete olan itimadının sarsılması milli birliği saracak mahiyettedir. Mevki ve selahiyetini hasis menfaatine alet eden bu adam tecziye edilmeli. Memleketin huzuru ve sükunu iade edilmelidir. Memleketin selameti namına şikayetlerimizi döktük (Halkın sesi hakkın sesidir)

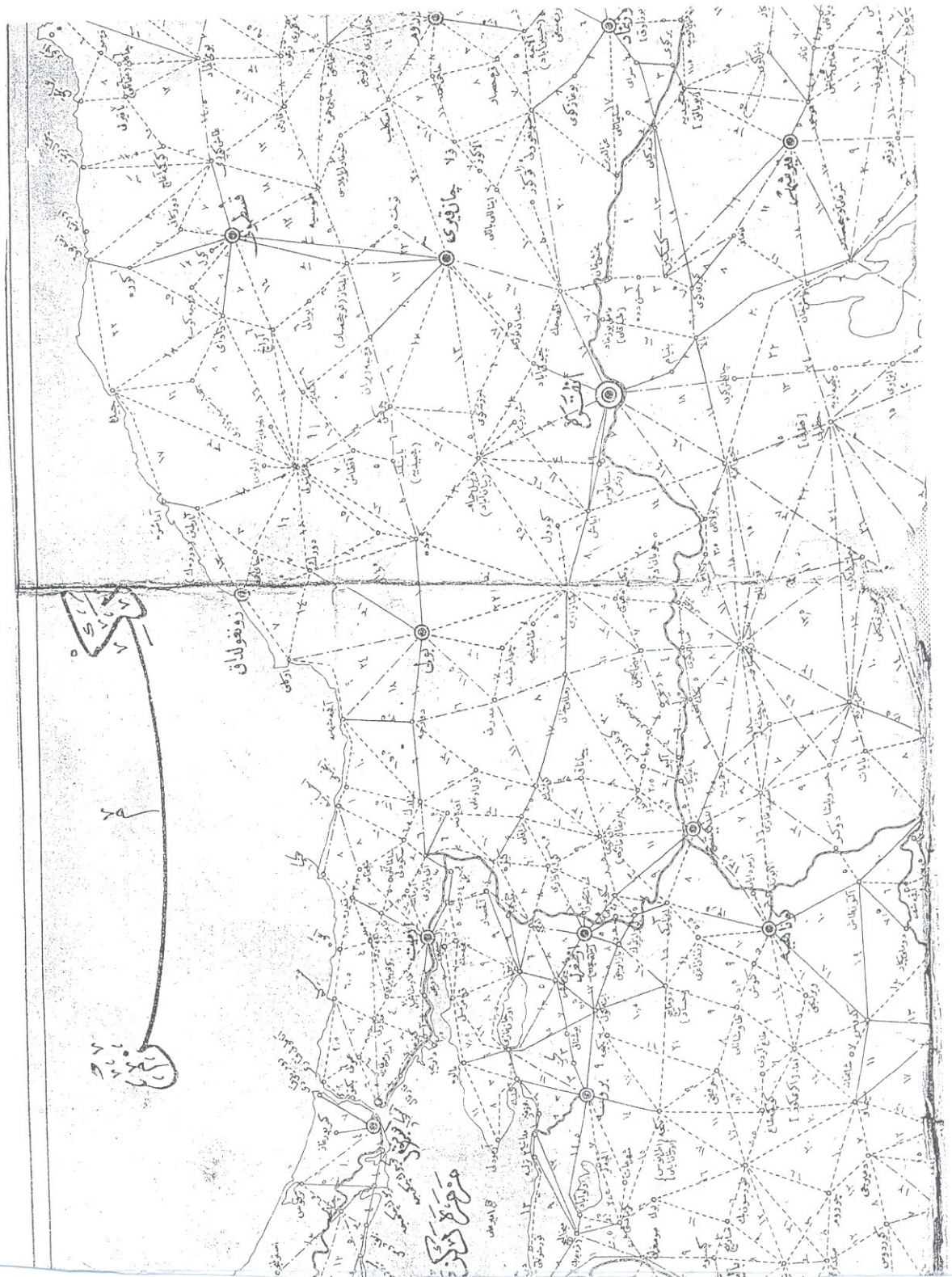
Page 385, note 1147

kanunun tamamen hakim bulunduğu ve aramızda böyle bir Devlet memurunun barbar hareketinden çok derin duyduğum tesir beni C.H.P. genel Sekreterliğine müracaat etmek mecburiyetinde bırakmıştır...

Cumhuriyet kanunlarının şiddetle menettiği ve bitarafane hareket etmesi lazım gelen bir Jandarma Başçavuşu öbür tarafın teşvikine kapılarak arzettiğim hakaret ve dövme ve işkenceyi aynı zamanda hazır bulunan şahitlerin şهادetleri ile hakikat meydana çıkacaktır...

## APPENDIX B

### MAPS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

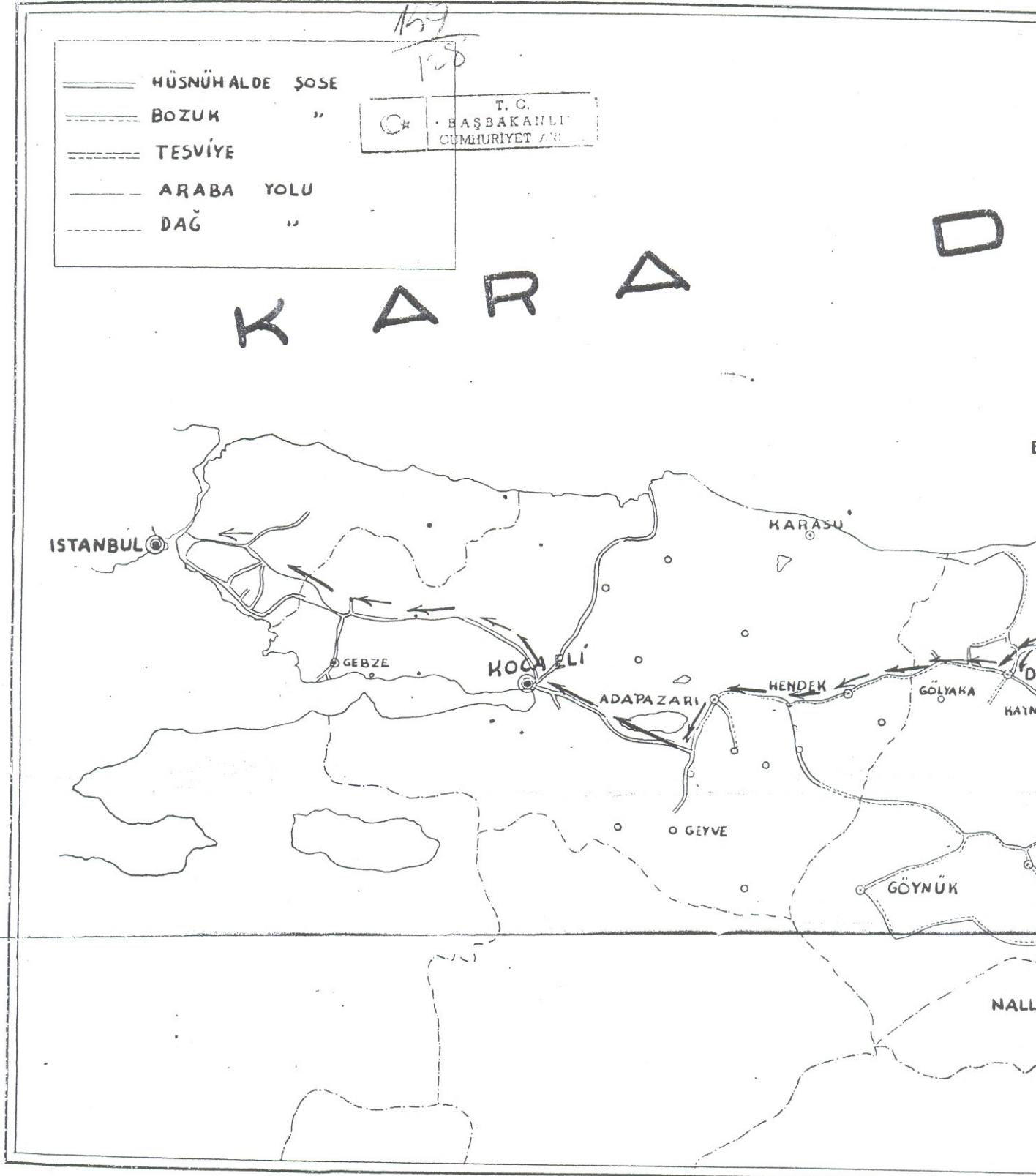


Zonguldak province and distances between the settlements, 1927 (Ministry of National Defense)



The road web and planned lines between the districts of the basin, and between Zonguldak and the adjacent provinces, 1942 (Prime Ministry Republican Archive)

ZONGULDAK VİLİYETİ YOL ŞEBEKELERİNİN MÜTASAVVER İNKİŞAFLARININ İSTANBUL İRTİBATLARINI GÖSTEREN « 21 / 8 / 1939 » TARİHLİ VE « 7149-62 / 7439 » SAYI İLE NAFİA

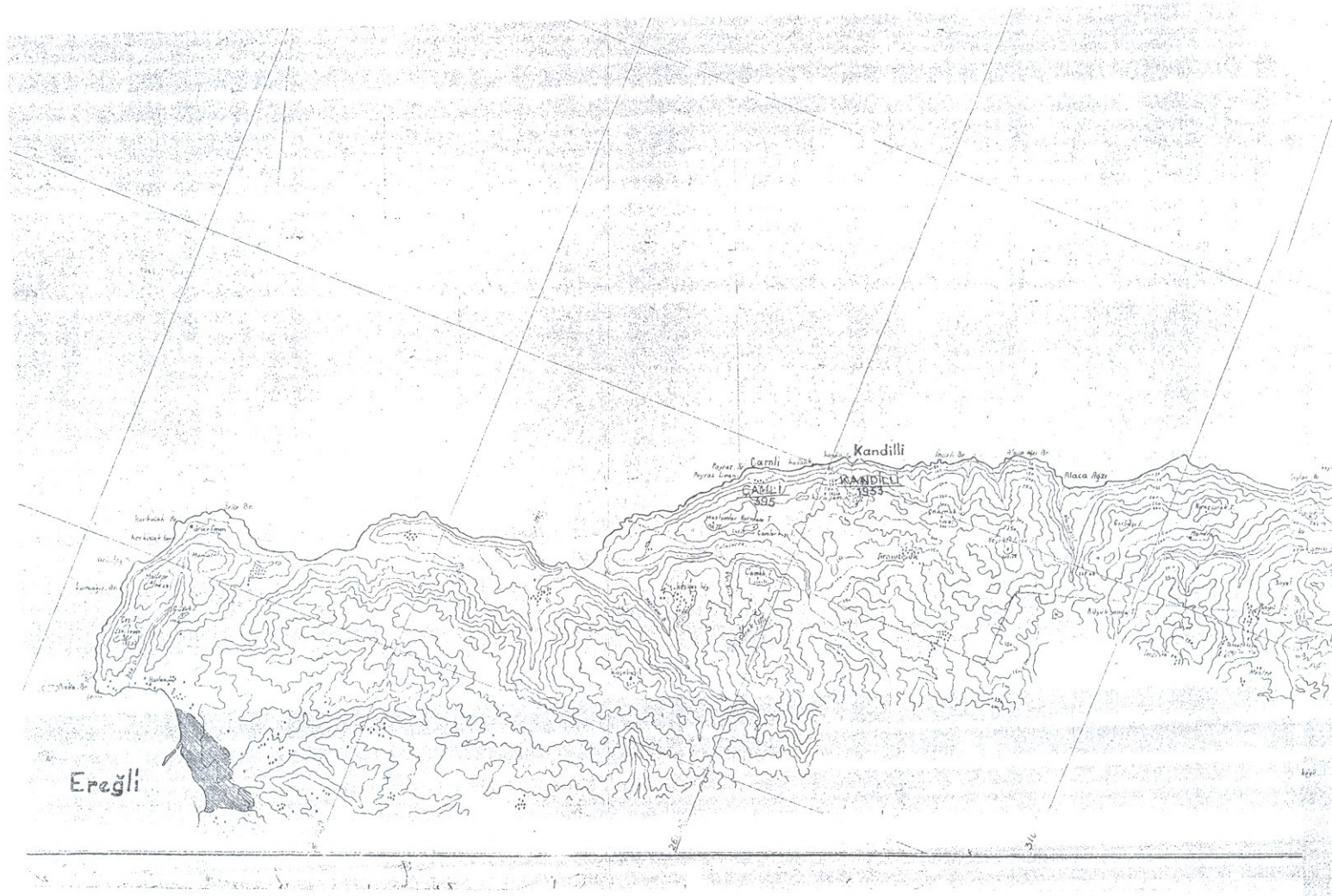


KASTAMONU, ÇANKIRI VİLÂyetLERİ İLE DEVLET MERKEZİ OLAN ANKARA  
İLÂLETİNE EVVELCE GÖNDERİLMİŞ OLAN MÜZEKKEREYE BAĞLANMIŞ HARİTADIR





Zonguldak mines with daily number of the mine workers, 1940s (MTA Archive)







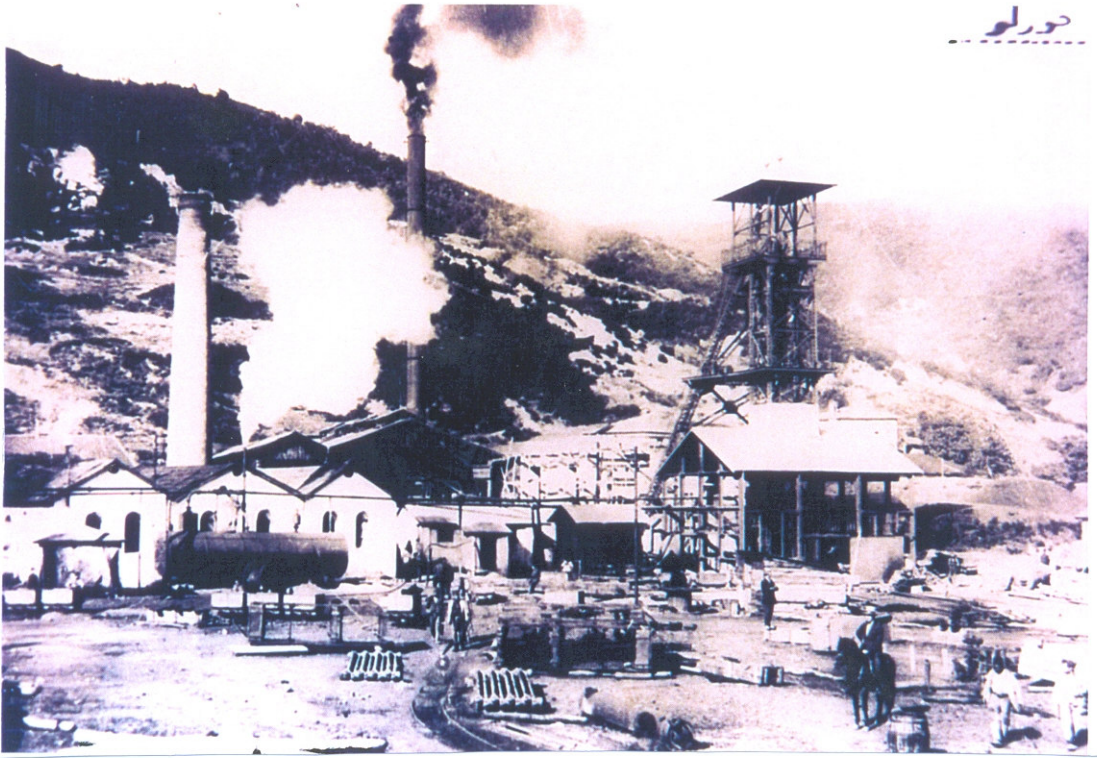




Ereğli Company's central washery, Zonguldak, 1906 (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)

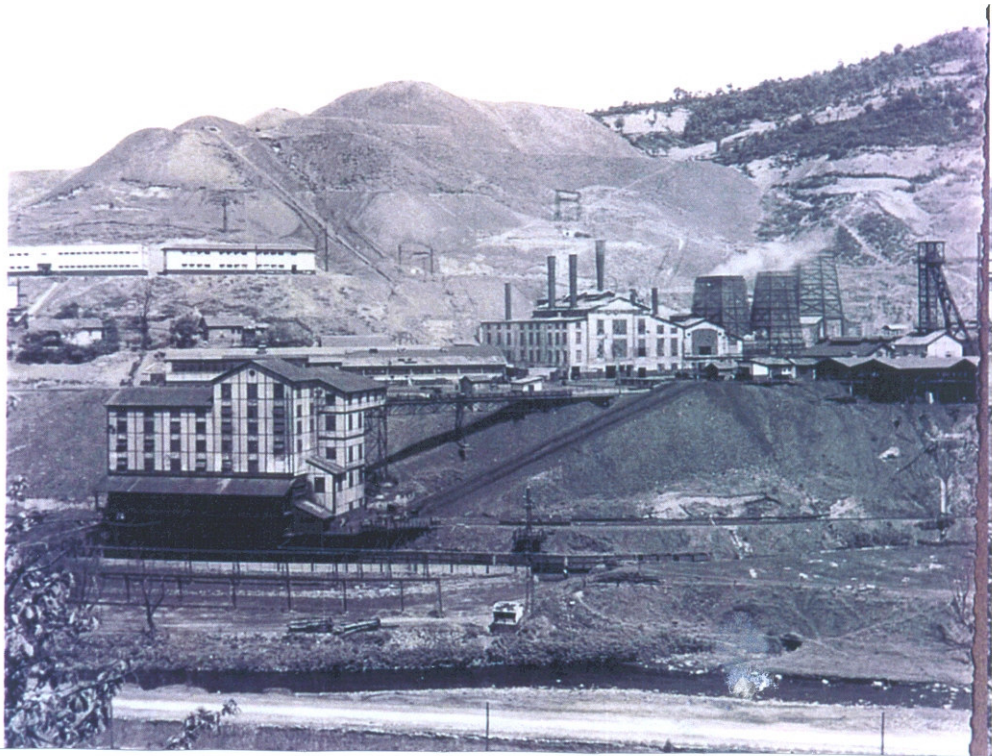


Çaydamarı production field, initial years of 1900s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)

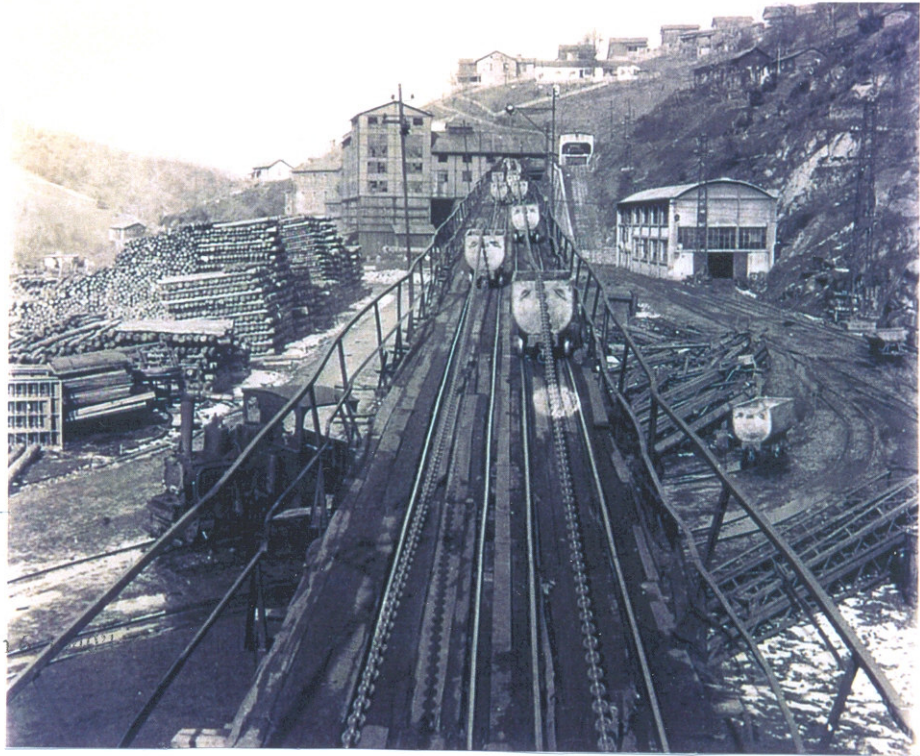


Kozlu production field, initial years of 1900s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





Kozlu production field, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



Gelik production field, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



Zonguldak quay and coal loading bridge, mid-1920s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





A mine worker in 1910s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



An underground tunnel, undated (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



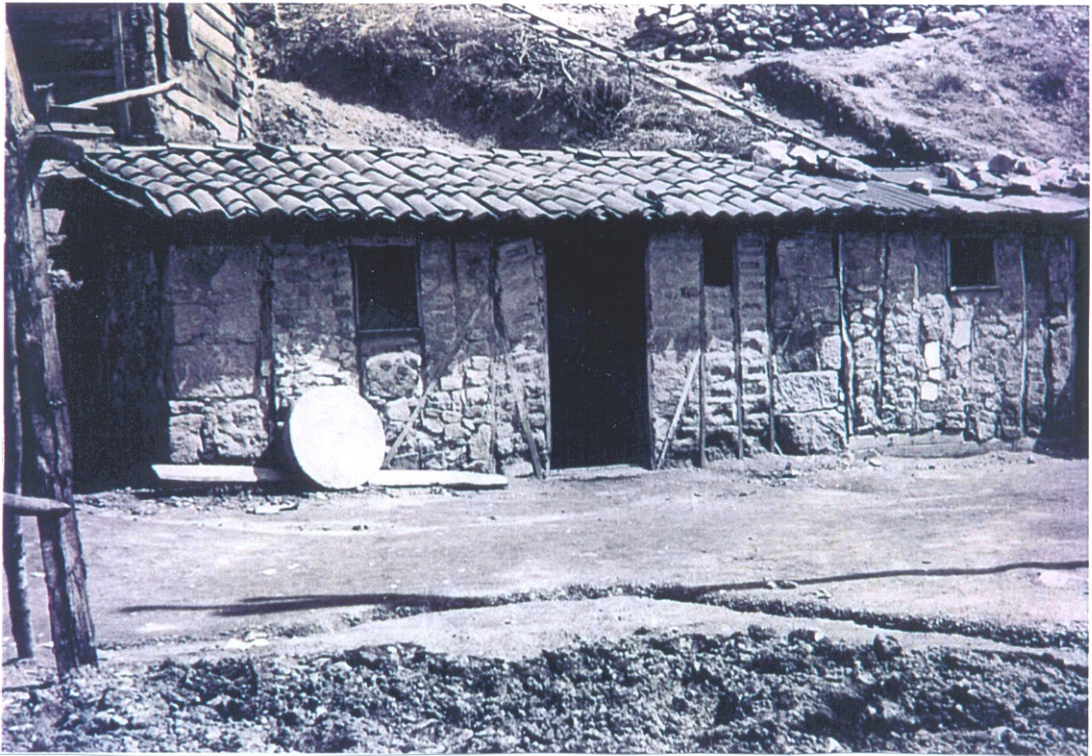


Mine workers at a pith mouth, Üzülmöz 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



A worker's barrack, undated (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)

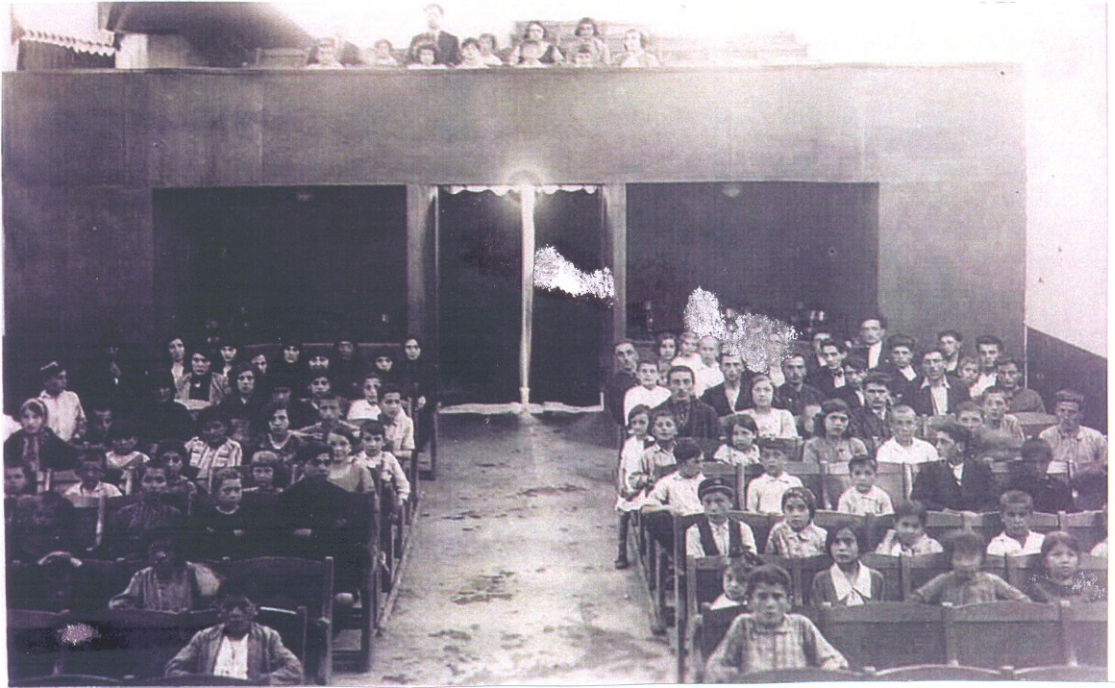




A worker's barrack, undated (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



A dinning hall and workers at lunch, 1930 ( Mehmet Atalı Collection)



EKI's cinema hall at Üzülmöz, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





Worker dormitories, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



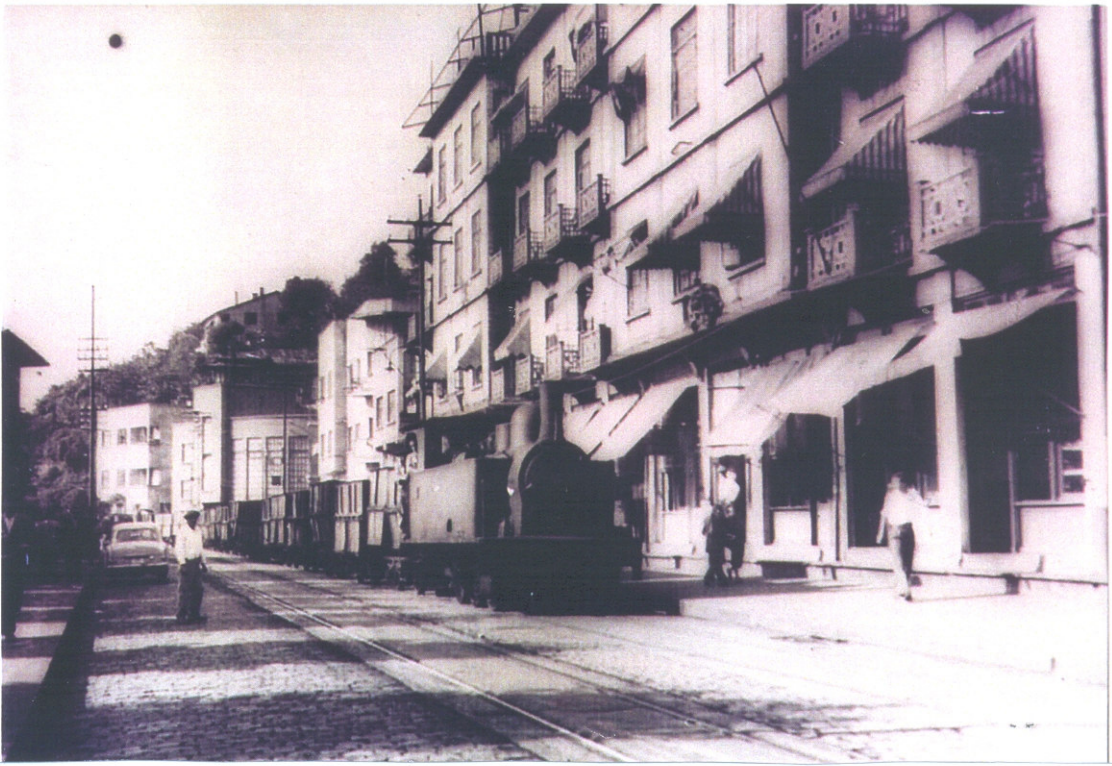
Company houses at Zonguldak, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





Fener quarter in 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





Railway line passing through Gazi Paşa Street in Zonguldak, undated (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)

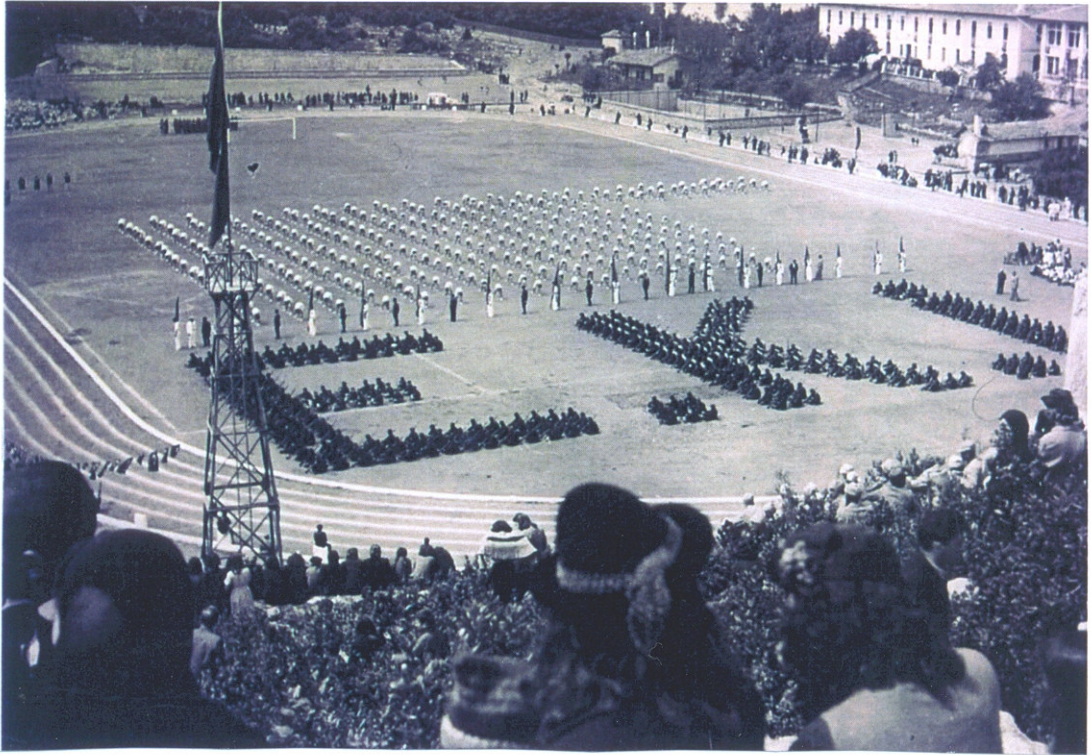


Brass band of Kozlu Kömür İşleri Company, 1929 (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



Mine workers of the Kozlu Türk Kömür Company, saluting the people in "*Cumhuriyet Bayramı*" parade, 1930s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





A "Cumhuriyet Bayramı" ceremony in Zonguldak, 1940s (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



President İsmet İnönü, inspecting the mine workers, 1948. (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



President İsmet İnönü, touring Zonguldak with the officials, 1948 (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





İhsan Soyak, EKI general director, 1942-1950 (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)



Zonguldak School of Mining Engineer, undated (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)





Students of the Zonguldak Coal Basin Rescue Organization (*Zonguldak Kömür Havzası Tahlisiye Teşkilatı*), 1938 (Mehmet Atalı Private Collection)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Archival Documents

#### Official Archives

- PMRA      Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Prime Ministry State Archive Office of Republican Archive (*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Cumhuriyet Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı*)
- Catalogue of General Directorate of Transactions (*Muamelat Genel Müdürlüğü Kataloğu*), Catalog no. 030..10.0.0
- Catalogue of General Directorate of Land Settlement (*Toprak İskan Genel Müdürlüğü Kataloğu*), Catalog no. 272.0.0.11 and 272..0.0.12
- Catalogues of Council of Ministers' Decrees (*Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları Kataloğu* (1920-1928) Catalog no. 30.18.1.1
- Catalogues of Council of Ministers' Decrees (1928 and afterwards) (*Bakanlar Kurulu Kararları Kataloğu* (1928 ve Sonrası), Catalog no. 30..18.1.2
- Catalogue of Archives of the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Kataloğu*), Catalog no. 490..1.0.0
- Catalogue of Prime Ministry Private Secretariat Directorate (*Başbakanlık Özel Kalem Müdürlüğü*), Catalog no. 30..01.0.0
- KUA      Karaelmas University Archive
- Incoming Document Files (*Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri*)
- Sending Document Files (*Evrak İrsalat Defteri*)
- TTK      Turkey Anthracite Organization (TTK) Human Source Training Office (*Türkiye Taşkömürleri Kurumu İnsan Gücü Eğitim Dairesi Arşivi*)
- Incoming Document Files (*Gelen Kağıt Kayıt Defteri*)
- Sending Document Files (*Evrak İrsalat Defteri*)

TTK Turkey Anthracite Organization Training Office Directorate  
(*Türkiye Taş Kömürleri Kurumu, Eğitim Daire Başkanlığı*)  
İhsan Soyak Archive

MTA Archive of Mine Investigation and Exploration Institute  
(*Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü*)  
Institute Archive

#### Private Archives

Ekrem Murat Zaman Private Archive /Zonguldak

Ali Kaya Private Archive /Zonguldak

#### Official Statistics

Başbakanlık İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı*, Vol.15, 1942-1945 İstanbul: Hüsnütabiat Basımevi, 1946.

Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *İstatistik Yıllığı*, Vol. 17, 1949.

T.C Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, 28 Teşrinievvel 1927, *Umumi Nüfus Tahriri, Fasikül III, Mufasssal Neticeler* Ankara: Başvekalet Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1929.

T.C. Ekonomi Bakanlığı Neşriyatı, *Türkiye Madenleri ve Kömürleri*. Ankara: 1935.

T.C. Ekonomi Bakanlığı Maden İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1942,1943,1944 *Maden İstatistiği*.Ankara, 1948.

TC. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, *Madenlerimiz 1938-1939*. Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyat Müdürlüğü, 1940.

T.C. İktisat Vekaleti Maadin Umum Müdürlüğü, *Madenlerimiz*. 1940-1941 Ankara, 1943.

T.C.Ekonomi ve Ticaret Bakanlığı, Ekonomi ve Ticaret Müdürlüğü, *Türkiye'de Kömür İstatistik Yıllığı 1941-1949*. Zonguldak, 1950.

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, 28 Teşrinievvel 1927, *Umumi Nüfus Tahriri, Fasikül I, Mufasssal Neticeler, İcmal Tabloları*. Ankara: Hüsnütabiat Matbaası, 1929.

## Yearbooks

*Kastamonu Vilayeti Salnamesi 1310 Hicri Senesi (1892) def'a 16* (Kastamonu: Kastamonu Vilayeti Matbaası, 1892)

*Kastamonu Vilayeti Salnamesi 1317 Hicri Senesi (1899) def'a 20* (Kastamonu: Kastamonu Vilayeti Matbaası, 1900)

*Kastamonu Vilayeti Salnamesi 1321 Hicri Senesi (1903) def'a 21* (Kastamonu: Kastamonu Vilayeti Matbaası, 1904)

*Bolu Sancağı Salname-i Resmisi* (Bolu: Hükümet Matbaası, 1334/1918)

*Türkiye Cumhuriyeti 1925-1926 Devlet Salnamesi* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1926)

*Türk Ticaret Salnamesi, Birinci Sene, 340-341* (İstanbul: Ebbüziya Matbaası, 1341-1924).

## Turkey Grand National Assembly Minute Registers

T.C., TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 3, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 1 Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1981.

T.C., TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 10, Devre 1, İçtima Senesi 2 Ankara, TBMM Matbaası, 1958.

T.C., TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 17, Devre 2, İçtima Senesi 2 Ankara, TBMM Matbaası.

T.C., TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Cilt 71, Devre 3, İçtima Senesi 2 Ankara, TBMM Matbaası

T.C., Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Sicilli Kavanini, 4. 1926-1928

## BUMH (Prime Ministry Inspection Reports )

Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Eti Bank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1940 Yılı Raporu* İstanbul: Fazilet Matbaası, 1941.

Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Maden İşletmelerinin İşçi Meseleleri ve İçtimai Teşkilatı Hakkında 1941 Yılı Raporu*. Ankara Basım ve Cildevi, 1941.

Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1941 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*. İdeal Matbaa, 1942.

Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi 1942 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*. Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1943.

Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1943 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*, İdeal Matbaa 1944.

Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1944 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*.

Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1946 Yılı Raporu*.

Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Raporu*.

Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1948 Yılı Raporu*.

Başbakanlık Umumi Murakabe Heyeti. *Etibank Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1949 Yılı Raporu*.

#### Inspection Reports of Companies

EKİ. *Etibank, Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Müessesesi 1947 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporuna Cevap*. Ankara : Etibank, 1948.

*Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu*. Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940.

*Etibank Bilanço ve İdare Meclisi Raporu Sene 1939 s.5* and *Etibank 1939 Yılı Murakabe Heyeti Raporu* n.p.: Alaeddin Kırıl Basımevi, 1940.

Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1936.

Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1937.

Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1938.

Kozlu Kömür İşleri Türk Anonim Şirketi İdare Meclisi Raporu Ankara: T.C. Maarif ve Derleme Müdürlüğü, 1939.

#### Journals

*Arkitekt*, 1935.

*Çalışma Dergisi*, 1945-1947.

*İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 1940-1948

*İstanbul Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 1946.

*İş ve Düşünce Dergisi*, 1944.

*Meslek*, 1925.

*MTA-Maden Tetkik Arama Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 1937-1942.

*Karaelmas Zonguldak Halkevi Dergisi*, 1941.

*Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları*

*Türk Ekonomisi*, 1944.

#### Newspapers

*Zonguldak Gazetesi* (Zonguldak), 1934-1946.

*Ocak* (Zonguldak), 1942.

#### Interviews

Ali Bahadır, 27/9/2003, Teyp Record, Zonguldak.

Ali Kaya, 27/9/2003, Teyp Record ,Zonguldak.

Sefa Elibol, 28/9/2003, Teyp Record ,Zonguldak.

#### Books and Articles

Afetinan. *Devletçilik İlkesi ve Türkiye Cumhuriyetinin Birinci Beş Yıllık Sanayi Planı 1933*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1972.

Ağralı, Levent. *Göçük*. Milliyet Yayınları, 1976

Ahmad, Feroz. "The Development of Class Consciousness in Republican Turkey." *In Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East*. Edited by Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher. London: Tauris, 1995.

Ahmet Naim. *Zonguldak Kömür Havzası: Uzun Mehmet'ten Bugüne Kadar*. İstanbul: Hüsniyat Matbaası, 1934.

Ahmet Naim. "Havza İşçimiz İçki Kullanmaz." *Zonguldak Gazetesi*. 14 November 1945.

Ahmet Naim. *Bir Yudum Soluk. Maden İşçilerinin Ocak İçki Yaşantıları*. Ereğli: Şirin Ereğli, 1983.

Ahmet Naim. *Emekçi Hikayeleri*. Kdz.Ereğli: Demokrat Ofset, nd.

Ahmet Refik. *Osmanlı Devrinde Türkiye Madenleri 967-1200*. İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası:İstanbul,1931.

Akagündüz. *Milli ve İktisadi Tetkikler Can Damarlarımıza Dair İkinci Tetkik Kırk Milyon Liramızı Çalıyorlar. Zonguldak Ereğli Havza-i Fahmiyyesine ve Türk Madencileriyle Madencilerin Düşar Oldukları Feci' sui Kasıdlardan Bir Kısımına Aid Tetkiklerin İkinci Kısım*. Yenigün Matbaası, 1341.

- Acun, Niyazi. *Toprakaltı Servetlerimiz*. İstanbul: Sinan Basımevi, 1947.
- Alsaç, Orhan. "İşçi Evlerine Dair." *Çalışma Dergisi*, 2 (November 1945): 50-56.
- Anıl, Mustafa Nuri and Merey Nejdî. *Türkiyede Maden Mevzuatı*. I-II. İstanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1942.
- Akın, Yiğit, "Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Sosyal Tarihçiliğinde Dilekçeler", *Toplum ve Bilim*, 99 (Kış, 2003/2004): 98-128
- Akkumru, Nizamettin. *Şimşir Kokardı Azlağa*. İstanbul: Çiviyazıları, 2005.
- Arkan, Seyfettin. "Zonguldak M.K.I. Amele Evleri Mahallesi Umumi Planı," *Arkitekt*, 5, no. 9 (1935):253-258.
- Atabarut, İhsan. "İşçi Evlerinin Sosyal Esasları Hakkında," *Çalışma Dergisi*, Sayı 2 (November 1945): 57-60.
- Aydın, Suavi. "Türkiye'nin Demiryolu Serüvenine Muhtasar Bir Bakış," *Kebikeç*, 11 (2001): 49-94.
- Aytekin, Attila Erden. *Workers of The Ereğli-Zonguldak Coal Basin, 1848-1922*. Master's thesis, Bilkent University, 2001).
- Apak, Kemalettin, Aydınelli, Cevdet, Akın, Mehmet, Toros, Hüsamettin. *Türkiye Devlet Sanayi ve Maadin İşletmeleri*. İzmit: Selüloz Basımevi, 1952.
- Avni. H. *İstanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası 1926-1927-1928 Seneleri Faaliyet ve Muamelatına Ait Umumi Rapor*. İstanbul: İstanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Neşriyatı, 1934.
- Abdullah Cemal. *Türkiyenin Sıhhi İctimai Coğrafyası:Zonguldak*. Ankara: Öğüt Matbaası, 1922.
- Babanzade, Şükrü. "Milli Korunma Kanunu," *İ.U. İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, I. no. 3 (1940):319-351.
- Barım, Hürrem. *Ücretli İş Mükellefiyeti*. Zonguldak: Doğan Matbaası, 1941.
- Barkın, Rebii. "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında Kalifiye İşçi Davası," *Çalışma Dergisi*, 3 (January 1946): 15-20.
- Bayat, Asef. "Politics of Informal People," *Third World Quarterly*, 18, no.1(1997):53-72.
- Bayat, Asef. "Activism and Social Development in the Middle East," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 34, (2002):1-28.
- Bengi, Hüsnü. *Milli Korunma Kanun ve Kararları*. Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Matbaası, 1945.
- Boran, Behice. "Sanayide Köylü- İşçi," *Yurt ve Dünya*, 3 (March -April 1942): 80-84.
- Boratav, Korkut. *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2002*. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2004.

- Bulmer, M.I.A. "Sociological Models of the Mining Community," *The Sociological Review* 23 (February, 1975): 61-92
- Buğra, Ayşe. "Bir Toplumsal Dönüşümü Anlama Çabalarına Katkı: Bugün Türkiye'de E.P. Thompson'ı Okumak." In E.P. Thompson, *İngiliz İşçi Sınıfının Oluşumu*. Translated by Uygur Kocabaşoğlu. İstanbul: Birikim Yayınları, 2002.
- Buğra, Ayşe, "Devletçi Dönemde Yoksulluğa Bakış ve Sosyal Politika," *Toplum ve Bilim* 99 (Winter 2003/2004): 75-97.
- Certeau, Michel De. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. California: University of California Press, 1984.
- Cipolla, Carlo M. *The Economic History of World Population*. Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1972.
- Cipolla, Carlo M. *The Fontana Economic History of Europe, the Industrial Revolution*. Great Britain: Colins, 1978.
- Clay, Christopher. "Labor Migration and Economic Conditions in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Anatolia," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no.4 (October 1998):1-32.
- Çağlar, B.K. "Randıman ve Metot," *MTA Mecmuası* 2, no.1 (January-February 1937): 36-39.
- Çatma, Erol. *Asker İşçiler*. İstanbul: Ceylan Yayıncılık, 1998.
- Çıladır, Sina. *Zonguldak Havzasında İşçi Hareketlerinin Tarihi 1848-1940*. Ankara: Yeraltı Maden/İş Yayınları, 1977.
- Çıladır, Sina. *Zonguldak Havzasındaki İşçi Hareketleri ve İşçi Örgütleri 1908-1993*. Karadeniz Ereğlisi: İlke Yayınları.
- Çıladır, Sina. "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında İşçi Hareketi ve Sendikacılık." In *Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi*. İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı, 1996.
- Corrigan, Philip. "Feudal Relics or Capitalist Monuments? Notes on the Sociology of Unfree Labour," *The Journal of the British Sociological Association* 11, no. 3 (September, 1977): 435-463.
- Court, W.H.B. *Coal*. London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1951.
- Court, W.H.B. "Problems of the British Coal Industry between the Wars." *The Economic History Review* 5, no. 1/2 (1945): 1-24.
- Çumralı, Sedat, Karay, Talat. *Son Değişikliklere Göre Şerhli ve İzahlı Milli Korunma Kanunu*. Ankara: Ulusal Matbaa, 1943.
- Denizer Şemsi. *Şemsi Denizer Anlatıyor, Zonguldak Gerçeği*. Zonguldak: Uyanış AŞ, 1991.
- Dix, Keith. "Work Relations in the Coal Industry: The Handloading Era, 1880-1930. In *Case Studies on the Labor Process*. Edited by Andrew Zimbalist. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979.



- Dosdoğru, Sabire. "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasında Lekeli Tifo". *İstanbul Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Mecmuası* 9, no.2 (1946): 175-184
- Dosdoğru, Sabire-M. Dosdoğru, Hulusi. *Sağlık Açısından Maden İşçilerimizin Dün, Bugünü*. İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1990.
- Dölen, Emre and Koraltürk. Murat. *İlk Çimento Fabrikamızın Öyküsü 1910-2004*. İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 2004.
- Duman, Doğan. *Ulusal Ekonominin Yapılanmasında Yerli Malı Haftası*. İzmir: Dokuzeylül Yayınları, 2001.
- Eldem, Vedat. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik*. Ankara: TTK, 1994.
- Eldem,Vedat. *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomisi*. Ankara: TTK, 1994.
- Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England; New York: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Enver, Sadrettin. "Maden Kazaları," *MTA Dergisi* 4, no. 3 (July 1939): 19-33.
- Enver, Sadrettin. *Zonguldak Kömür Havzamız*. Etibank Yayını, 1945.
- Erali, Naci. "Halkevcilerin Tetkikleri Ereğli Kömür Havzasında Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesinin Bugünkü Durumu," *Karaelmas*, no. 3 (1941): 11-12.
- Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi Kültür Sevisi, *Maden İşçisi Okuma Kitabı*. Osmanbey Matbaası, 1947.
- Erdoğan, Necmi. "Devleti "idare etmek": Maduniyet ve düzenbazlık," *Toplum ve Bilim* 83 (Winter 1999/2000): 8-31
- Ergin, Feridun. *Harp Zamanında Devletin Ekonomiye Müdahalesi*. İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1943.
- Erkün, Ş. Safa."Kömür Havzamızda Hükümlülerin Çalıştırılması," *İş Dergisi* 11, no. 45 (May 1945): 22-26
- Ete, Muhlis."Bizde ve Başka Memleketlerde İş Mükellefiyeti," *Türk Ekonomisi* 1, no.10 (15 April 1944): 315-318.
- Ete, Muhlis."Sanayide Rasyonalizasyon," in *Sanayi Kongresi Raporlar- Kararlar-Zabıtlar*. Edited by Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti. Ankara: Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti Yayını, 1930.
- Etingü, Turgut. *Kömür Havzasında İlk Grev*. İstanbul: Koza Yayınları.
- Fenmen ,Refik. "Zonguldak Yüksek Maadin ve Sanayii Mektebi," *İş ve Düşünce* 10, no. 2/38 (April 1944): 21-27.
- "Genel Evlerin Murakabesi," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 10 April 1946.

- Greasley, David. "Economies of Scale in British Coalmining between the Wars," *The Economic History Review* 46, no.1 (February 1993):155-159
- Gülmez, Mesut. *Türkiye'de Çalışma İlişkileri 1936 Öncesi*. Ankara: Türkiye ve Ortadoğu Amme İdaresi Enstitüsü, 1983.
- Güzel, Mehmet Şehmus. " Capital and Labor during World War II," in *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839-1950*. Edited by Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher. London: Tauris, 1995.
- " Hastalık Şaiyaları Asılsızdır," *Ocak Gazetesi*, 25 November 1942.
- "Hırsızlık," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 14 August 1935.
- Hardt, M., Negri, A. *Çokluk*. Translated by Barış Yıldırım. İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2004.
- Hickey, S.H.F. *Workers in Imperial Germany: The Miners of Ruhr*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Hines, Walker D. et. al. *Türkiye'nin İktisadi Bakımdan Umumi bir Tetkiki 1933-1934*, 1, 2. Ankara: Köyöğretmeni Basımevi, 1936.
- Hines, Walker D. et. al. *Türkiye'nin İktisadi Bakımdan Umumi bir Tetkiki 1933-1934*, 5-7. Ankara: Mehmet İhsan Matbaası, n.d.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Extremes The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991*. London: Michael Joseph, 1994.
- Hobsbawm, E.J. *Sanayi ve İmparatorluk*, translated by Abdullah Ersoy. Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 2003.
- Holmes, Douglas R. "A Peasant-Worker Model in a Northern Italian Context," *American Ethnologist* 10, no. 4 ( November 1983): 734-748.
- Holmes ,Douglas R. Holmes and. Quataert, Jean H. "An Approach to Modern Labor: Worker Peasantries in Historic Saxony and the Friuli Region over Three Centuries," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28, no.2 (April 1986):191-216.
- Holter, Darryl. *The Battle for Coal, Miners and Politics of Nationalization in France, 1940-1950*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1992.
- İstanbul Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası. *1933 Oda Kongresi Rapor ve Kararları*. İstanbul: Matbacılık ve Neşriyat Türk Anonim Şirketi, 1933.
- İlkin, Selim. "Devletçilik Döneminin İlk Yıllarında İşçi Sorunlarına Yaklaşım ve 1932 İş Kanunu Tasarısı," *Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Gelişme Dergisi Özel Sayısı* (1978): 251-338.
- "İş Bankası Maden Havzamızda," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 26 August, 1935.
- İmer, Hüseyin Fehmi. *Ereğli Maden Kömürü Havzası Tarihçesi*. Zonguldak: Ali Rıza İncealemdaroğlu Matbaası, 1944.

- Johnson, W. "Entrepreneurial Efficiency in the British Coal Industry between the Wars: A Second Comment," *The Economic History Review* 25, no.4 (November, 1972): 665-668
- Kahveci, Erol. "The Miners of Zonguldak." In *Work And Occupation In Turkey*. Edited by Erol Kahveci, Nadir Sungur and Theo Nichols. London: Mansell, 1996.
- Kalaycı, İ. Behçet. *Kıvırcık, Genç Bir Madencinin Öyküsü*. Ankara: R Prodüksiyon, 1992.
- Kanunu Lahiyası Münasebetiyle Ereğli Ma'den Kömürü Havzasındaki Madencilerin Muta'alatı ve Temenniyatı*. 11 December 1340(1924).
- Karpat, Kemal H. *Osmanlı Nüfusu 1830-1914. Demografik ve Sosyal Özellikleri*. Translated by Bahar Tırnakçı. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003.
- Karakışla, Yavuz Selim. "The Emergence of the Ottoman Industrial Working Class 1839-1923." In *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839-1950*. Edited by Donald Quataert and Erik Jan Zürcher. London: Tauris, 1995.
- Karaömerlioğlu, Asim. "The Village Institute Experience in Turkey" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no.1 (1998): 47-73.
- Karaömerlioğlu, Asim. "The People's Houses and the Cult of the Peasant in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no.4 (October, 1998): 67-91.
- Katznelson, Ira, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons." In *Working Class Formation Ninetieth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*. Edited by Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Kessler, Gerhard. "Türk İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 4, no.1 (October 1942): 236-255.
- Kessler, Gerhard. "Zonguldak ve Karabük'te Çalışma Şartları," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 9, no.3 (1948): 173-196.
- Knapp, A. Bernard. "Social approaches to the Archaeology and Anthropology of Mining," in *Social Approaches to an Industrial Past: The Archeology and Anthropology of Mining*. Edited by A. Bernard Knapp et al. London; New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Kıray, Mübeccel. *Ereğli, Ağır Sanayiden Önce Bir Sahil Kasabası*. Ankara: Devlet Karayolları Matbaası, 1964.
- Kirby, M.W. *The British Coal Mining Industry 1870-1946: A Political and Economic History*. North Haven, CT: Archon Books, 1977.
- Kaur, Amarjit. "Hewers and Haulers: A History of Coal Miners and Coal Mining In Malaya," *Modern Asian Studies*, 24, no.1 (Frb. 1990): 75-113.
- Kerkvliet, Benedic J. Tria. "Everyday Resistance to Injustice in a Philippine Village," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 13, no. 2 (January, 1986): 107-123.

- Kirby, M.W.B. *The British Coalmining Industry 1870-1946*. Great Britain: The Macmillan Press, 1977.
- Knowles, R. and Waering, J. *Economic and Social Geography*. n.p.: Madesimplebooks, 1985.
- Kocabaşoğlu, Uygur. *Türkiye İş Bankası Tarihi*. İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2001.
- Koçak, Cemil. *Türkiye'de Milli Şef Dönemi 1938-1945*. I,II. Ankara: İletişim Yayınları, 1986.
- Koraltürk, Murat. *Sümerbank In the Vanguard of Turkish Economy*. Translated by Sue Çelik İstanbul:Creative Yayıncılık ve Tanıtım Ltd., 1997.
- Kömür Havzasında Türkiye İş Bankası 1926-1937*. Devlet Basımevi: 1937.
- Kurtbek, Seyfi. *Harp ve Ekonomi*. İstanbul: 1942.
- "Lekeli Hummadan Korunalım," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*. 1 December 1944.
- Lewis, L. Roland. "From Peasant to Proletarian: The Migration of Southern Blacks to the Central Appalachian Coalfields," *The Journal of Southern History* 55, no. 1 ( Feb., 1989): 77-102.
- Lockman, Zachary, ed. *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East, Struggles, Histories, Historiographies*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- McCaffray, Susan P."Origins of Labor Policy in the Russian Coal and Steel Industry, 1874-1900," *The Journal of Economic History* 47, no. 4 ( Dec., 1987): 951-965.
- "Madencilğe Dair Haberler," *Maden* 1, no. 2 (April, May, June 1936): 12-16.
- "Madenci Gençleri Beden Terbiyesi Kazalarla Mücadele Dersleri," *MTA Mecmuası*, Sene 7, Sayı1/26 (January-February 1942): 163-172.
- "Madenlerde Amele Randımanı," *MTA Mecmuası* 5, 2/19 (April 1940): 248-259.
- Makal, Ahmet. *Türkiye'de Tek Partili Dönemde Çalışma İlişkileri*. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1999.
- Makal, Ahmet. "Sanayileşme Sürecinde İşgücü Sorunu ve Sosyal Politika," *Toplum ve Bilim* 92 (Bahar 2002): 35-70
- Makal, Ahmet "65. Yılında Milli Korunma Kanunu." *Toplum ve Bilim* 102 (2005): 55-91.
- Mears, E. G. *Modern Turkey*. New York: 1924.
- "Mecburi Aşı," *Ocak*, 28 December 1942.
- Migdal, Joel S., *State in Society Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Milward, Alan S. *War, Economy and Society 1939-1945*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979.

- "Muhterem Halkın ve Tüccarın ve Esnafın Nazarı Dikkatine," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 30 November 1943.
- Nichols, Theo, Kahveci, Erol."The Condition of Mine labor in Turkey: Injures to Miners in Zonguldak, 1942-90," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no. 2 ( April, 1995): 197-228.
- "Okullarda Tifo Aşısı," *Ocak*. 30 December 1942.
- Saffettin, Pınar. "Zonguldak Kömür Havzasının İşçi İskan Politikası," *İş Dergisi* 10, no.2/38 (April, 1944): 28-32.
- Sanus, Dr. Orhan. "EKİ Sağlık Kalkınması," *Maden* 1(1945): 33-35.
- Quataert, Donald. *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908. Reactions to European Economic Penetration*. New York, NYU Press, 1983.
- Quataert, Donald."Social History of Labor in the Late Ottoman Empire." In *The Social History of Labor in the Middle East*. Edited by Goldberg, Ellis Jay. Colorado, Oxford: Westview Press, 1996.
- Quataert, Donald. "Ottoman Workers and the State, 1826-1914." In *Workers and the Working Classes in the Middle East, Struggles Histories Historiographies*. Edited by Zachary Lockman .Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- Quataert, Donald. "Zonguldak Maden İşçilerinin Hayatı, 1870-1920," *Toplum ve Bilim* 83 (Kış 1999-2000): 80-90.
- Quataert, Donald. "Masallar, Öyküler, Gerçekler Zonguldak Kömür Ocakları." *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 139 (July 200): 59-61.
- Quataert, Donald and Duman, Yüksel, eds. "A Coal Miner's Life during the Late Ottoman Empire," *ILWCH* 60 (Fall 2001):153-179.
- Ökçün, A. Gündüz. *İktisat Tarihi Yazıları*. Ankara: Sermaye Piyasası Kurulu, 1997.
- Öz, Esat. *Tek Parti Yönetimi ve Siyasal Katılım*. Ankara: Gündoğan Yayınları, 1992.
- Özalp Namık, *Zonguldak ve Kömür Havzası*. Zonguldak: Üzülmüş Özel İlkokulu, 1955.
- Özeken, Ahmet Ali. *Ereğli Kömür Havzası Tarihi Üzerine Bir Deneme*. İstanbul: Kanaat Matbaası, 1944.
- Özeken, Ahmet Ali. *Türkiye Kömür Ekonomisi Tarihi, Birinci Kısım*. İ.Ü. İktisat Fakültesi: İstanbul, 1955.
- Özeken, Ahmet Ali. "Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçiyi Barındırma Problemi," *Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları* 3: 103-130.
- Özeken, Ahmet Ali. *Türkiye Sanayiinde İşçilik Mevzuunun İktisadi Problemleri*. İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi, 1948.
- Özdamar, Sevim. *Çalışma Mevzuatı 1920-1996*. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1996.

- Pamuk, Şevket. "War, State Economic Policies and Resistance by Agricultural Producers in Turkey." *New Perspectives on Turkey* 2, no. 1. (Spring 1988): 19-36
- Roy, Delvin. "Labor and Trade Unionism in Turkey: The Ereğli Coalmines." *Middle Eastern Studies* 12, no. 3. (October 1976): 125-172
- Reid, Donald. *The Miners of Decazeville A Geneology of Deindustrialization*. Harvard University Press, 1985.
- Reid, Donald. "Industrial Paternalism: Discourse and Practice in Nineteenth Century French Mining and Metallurgy." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27, no. 4 (Oct. 1985): 579-607.
- "Roosevelt's Tree Army: A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps." Available [online] at <http://www.cccalumni.org/history1.html> (accessed 5.7.2005).
- Rothstein, Franches. "The New Proleterians: Third World Reality and First World Categories." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28, no. 2 (April, 1986): 217-238.
- Sanus, Orhan Zihni. "Maden İşçisinde Kömür Tozu ve İnfilakların Önemi." *Çalışma Dergisi* 2 (June 1947):40-43.
- Sarc, Ömer Celal . *Harp Ve Ekonomi*. Profesör Cemil Birselle Armağan'dan Ayrı Bası. İstanbul, Kenan Basımevi ve Klise Fabrikası, 1939.
- Sarıkoyuncu, Ali. *Milli Mücadele'de Zonguldak Havzası*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1992.
- Sargent, A.J. *Coal In International Trade*. London: P.S. King and Son Ltd., 1922.
- Savaşkan, Bahri. *Zonguldak Maden Kömürü Havzası Tarihçesi 1829-1989*. Zonguldak: İlkadım Matbaası, 1993.
- Scott, J. "Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 13, no. 2 (January., 1986): 5-35.
- Shubert, Adrian. *The Road to Revolution in Spain: The Coal Miners of Austrias. 1860-1934*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987.
- Semiz, Yaşar. *Atatürk Döneminin İktisadi Politikası. Milli İktisat ve Tasarruf Cemiyeti* Konya: Saray Kitabevi, 1996.
- Seyda, Mehmet. *Yanartaş*. İstanbul: Ararat Yayınları,1970.
- Stearns, Peter N. *Paths to Authority, The Middle Class and the Industrial Labor Force in France, 1820-48*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- Steinberg, Marc W. "A Way of Struggle': Reformations and Affirmations of E.P. Thopmson's Class Analysis in the Light of Postmodern Theories of Language." *The British Journal of Sociology*,48, no. 3 (September, 1997): 471-492.
- Steinberg, Marc, W. "Capitalist Development, the Labor Process and the Law I." *The American Journal of Sociology* 109, 2 (Sep. 2003): 445-495.

Steinfeld, Robert. *Coercion, Contract, and Free Labor in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge [England], New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

"Son Günlerde Zabıta Haberleri," *Zonguldak Gazetesi* 12 November 1934.

Stocking, George Ward. "Labor Problems in the American Bituminous Coal Industry," *The Economic Journal* 37, no. 146 (June, 1927): 213-225.

Supple, Barry. "The Political Economy of Demoralization: The State and the Coalmining Industry in America and Britain between the Wars." *Economic History Review* 41 (November, 1988): 566-591.

"Şeftali Boğazında İşçileri Soyanlar Yakalandılar." *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 14 Ağust 1935.

Tahsin, Hamit, Saka, Remzi. *Sermaye Hareketi*. İstanbul: Amedi Matbaası, 1930.

"Taşkömür Ocaklarında Teknik Rasyonalizasyon Meseleleri," *MTA Mecmuası* 6, 4/25 (29 October 1941): 642-655.

T.C. Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı. *Ereğli Kömür Havzası Amele Birliği Biriktirme ve Yardımlaşma Sandığı*. Ankara: Varan Matbaacılık, 1998.

TC. Ekonomi Bakanlığı. *Türkiye Madenleri ve Kömürleri*. Ankara: TC. Ekonomi Bakanlığı Neşriyatı, 1935.

TC. İktisat Vekaleti Sanayi Tetkik Heyeti. *2 inci 5 Yıllık Sanayi Planı*. Ankara: Başvekalet Matbaası, 1936.

Tekeli İlhan and İlkin, Selim. *Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiyede Devletçiliğin Oluşumu*. Ankara: Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi, 1982.

Tezel ,Yahya S. *Cumhuriyet Döneminin İktisat Tarihi*. İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994.

Tesal, Necip. *Zonguldak Vilayetinin İktisadi Ehemmiyeti* . İstanbul: 1957.

Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

Thompson, E.P. "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (Feb., 1971):76-136

Thompson, T. Edgar. "Mines and Plantations and the Movements of Peoples," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 37, no. 4 (Januray 1932): 603-611

Toprak, Zafer. *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat. 1908-1918*. Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982.

Tunçay, Mete. *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar 1908-1925*. İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1978.

Tunçay, Mete. *1923 Amele Birliği*. İstanbul: BDS, 1989.

Tuncer, Kadir. *Tarihten Günümüze Zonguldak'ta İşçi Sınıfının Durumu Kampanyalar Dönemine Geri Dönüş*. İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1998.

- Tuna, Orhan. "İş İstatistikleri," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 6, nos. 3-4 (October 1944-January 1945): 325-348.
- Tuna, Orhan. "Türk İş Hukuku ve Milli Korunma Kanunu," *İ.U. İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 1, no. 3 (1940): 330-351
- Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ali İktisat Meclisi Umumi Katiplik. *Türkiyede Sanayi Nasıl Teesüs ve İnkişaf Edebilir?* Neşriyat Serisi A. No.12 Ankara: Başbakanlık Müdevvenat Matbaası, Ankara,1933.
- Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ali İktisat Meclisi Umumi Katiplik. *Madenlerimizden En İyi Surette İstifade Şekli Nedir* Neşriyat Serisi A. No.14. Ankara: Başbakanlık Müdevvenat Matbaası, Ankara,1933.
- Türkiye Ekonomisi Bakımından Kömür*. Ankara: İktisat Vekaleti Neşriyatı. 1937.
- Türkiye İş Bankası On Yılı 1924-1934* . Devlet Matbaası,1934.
- Türkiye İş Bankası 26 Ağustos 1924 Kuruluşu, Çalışmaları, Eserleri*. Ankara,1942.
- Türkiye Kömür İşletmeleri Kurumu, Cumhuriyet'in 50. Yılında Türkiye Kömür İşletmeleri Kurumu*. Çam Matbaa.
- Türkiye Pamuk Keten Kendir,Kimya, Demir Sanayii Hakkında Sovyet Mühassısları Tarafından Verilen Raporlar*. Ankara: Başvekalet Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1932.
- Toros, Hüsamettin. *Türkiye Sanayii "Devlet İşletmeleri"*. I. İstanbul: Güven Basımevi, 1954.
- Tör,Vedat Nedim. "Kömürde Devletçilik," *Kadro* 3, no. 25 (February 1934). In *Tıpkı Basım A.İ.T.A., Van, 34, Ankara, 1980*.
- Tuncer, Kadir. *Tarihten Günümüze Zonguldak'ta İşçi Sınıfının Durumu Kampanyalar Dönemine Geri Dönüş*. İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1998.
- Turner, Raymond. "English Coal Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *The American Historical Review* 27, no.1 (October, 1921): 1-23
- Türkiye'de Dergiler -Ansiklopediler (1849-1984)*. İstanbul, Gelişim Yayınları, 1984.
- Us, Asım. *1930-1950 Hatıra Notları Atatürk İnönü İkinci Dünya Harbi ve Demokrasi Rejimine Giriş Devri Hatıraları*. İstanbul: Vakit Matbaası,1966.
- Üstel, Füsun. *Makbul Vatandaşın Peşinde II. Meşrutiyetten Bu Yana Vatandaşlık Eğitimi*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004.
- "Üzülmaz Bölgesinde Madenci Uramı Kuruluyor," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 8 July 1935.
- Wallace, F.C. Anthony St. Clair. *A Nineteenth Century Coal Town's Experience with Disaster Prone Industry*. Iteca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Williams, Chris. *Capitalism, Community and Conflict The South Wales Coalfield. 1898-1947*.Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998.



- Wright, T. "Growth of the Modern Chinese Coal Industry: An Analysis of Supply and Demand 1896-1936," *Modern Chine* 7, no.3 (July 1981): 317-350
- Wrigley, E.A. "The Supply of Raw Materials in the Industrial Revolution." *The Economic History Review* 15, no. 1 (1962): 1-16
- Wrigley, E.A. *Industrial Growth and Population Change a Regional Study of the Coal Field Areas of North West Europe in the Later Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- Wolf, Eric. *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982
- Yalçın, İrfan. *Ölümün Ağzı*. Gölge Yayınları, 1980.
- Yarrow, Michael. " The Labor Process in Coal Mining: Struggle for Control". In *Case Studies on the Labor Process*. Edited by Andrew Zimbalist. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979.
- Yavuz Erdal, "The State of the Industrial Workforce, 1923-1940. In *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*. Edited by Quataert and Zürcher E.J. London: I.B. Tauris, 1995.
- Yersel, Kadri. *Madencilikte Bir Ömür Anılar Görüşler*. İstanbul: Maden Mühendisleri Odası, 1989.
- Yiğiter, Ümran Nazif. *Kömür Havzasında Amele Hukuku*. Zonguldak: İncealemdaroğlu Matbaası, 1943.
- Yunt, Kerim. ed. *Seçkin Türk Ormancısı Hüseyin Fehmi İmer Hayatı Hatıraları 1871-1960*. İstanbul: Baha, 1973.
- Yurt Ansiklopedisi. Zonguldak, 10. İstanbul: Anadolu Yayıncılık A.Ş., 1982-1983-1984.
- Zonguldak Kömür Havzası ve Ereğli Kömürleri İşletmesi*. Ankara: Rönesans Reklam, 1956.
- Zonguldak Sanayi Odası. *Cumhuriyetin On Yılında Zonguldak ve Maden Kömürü Havzası*. İstanbul: Sanayii Nefise Matbaası, 1933.
- Zonguldak CHP İlyön Kurulu. *923-938 Cumhuriyet'in XV. inci Yıldönümü Hatırası*. İstanbul, 1938.
- "Zonguldak M.K. C.M.U.liğinden," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 20 August 1944.
- "Zonguldak M.K. C.M.U.liğinden," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 16 October 1942.
- "Zonguldak Milli Korunma C. Müddeiumumiliğinden," *Ocak Gazetesi*, 5 December 1942.
- "Zonguldak Milli Korunma C. Müddeiumumiliğinden," *Zonguldak Gazetesi*, 19 November 1943.