

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
CULTURAL STUDIES Ph.D. PROGRAMME**

Ph.D. THESIS

**THE DİVRİĞİ IRON MINES OPERATION AND
THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN ANATOLIAN
TOWN DURING THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD
(1938-2006)**

**GÖKSEL KAYA
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**THESIS SUPERVISOR
Prof. Dr. AYŞEGÜL BAYKAN**

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ABSTRACT

THE DİVRİĞİ IRON MINES OPERATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN ANATOLIAN TOWN DURING THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD (1938-2006)

**Göksel Kaya
December, 2022**

After the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, various aspects of social and spatial life in Turkey were inspired by Western social structures. The economic policies of the nineteen thirties, along with policies regarding urbanisation and public works carried out by the state during the following decades contributed to the social and spatial change of the country. Economic growth was regarded as a primary tool in turning Turkey into a modern state. The state aimed in this way to implement the transformation and modernisation of the country at large. Therefore, it strove to put projects into practice to incorporate modern life into everyday life by establishing industrial enterprises and new forms of architectural settlements for employees. The transformation intended to create a modern society in every social and cultural field. This was to be achieved not only by changes in urban space but also by changing modern city life to be formed in that space. In this context, Divriği Iron Mines Operation set up in 1938 contributed substantially to the urban life and modernisation of the town of Divriği, whose population was until that time predominantly composed of peasantry. This study, based on the example of a state-owned enterprise in Divriği, aims to highlight how state policies, investments, and regulations over patterns of macro structures and the microstructures of everyday lives were becoming interconnected in modernist perspectives of the era. This study aims also to present the social structural changes in the political sphere during the later decades and the consequences of the privatisation of the enterprise. Furthermore, based on an ethnographic survey of historical documents, interviews of employees and the local population, this study aims to present how in particular the enterprise with the settlements allocated for its employees affected the lives of the people in the region during the given time period.

Key Words: Early 20th Century Modernisation, Urban Life, Cultural Transformation, Mining Settlements.

ÖZ

DİVRİĞİ DEMİR MADENLERİ İŞLETMESİ VE CUMHURİYET DÖNEMİNDE (1938-2006) BİR ANADOLU KENTİNİN DÖNÜŞÜMÜ

Göksel Kaya
Aralık, 2022

1923'te cumhuriyetin ilanından sonra, Türkiye'de sosyal ve mekansal hayatın çeşitli yönleri batılı sosyal yapılardan etkilenmiştir. 1930'lu yılların ekonomi politikaları, takip eden on yıllar boyunca devlet tarafından yürütülen kentleşme ve bayındırlık politikaları ile birlikte ülkenin sosyal ve mekânsal değişimine katkıda bulunmuştur. Ekonomik büyüme, Türkiye'yi modern bir devlet haline getirmenin temel bir aracı olarak görülüyordu. Devlet bu şekilde ülkenin dönüşümünü ve modernleşmesini bütünüyle hedef olarak gördü. Bu nedenle, sanayi işletmeleri ve çalışanlar için yeni tür mimari yerleşkeler kurarak modern yaşamı gündelik hayata dahil etmek için projeler hayata geçirmeye çalışmıştır. Dönüşüm, her sosyal ve kültürel alanda modern bir toplum yaratmayı amaçladı. Bu, yalnızca kentsel mekândaki değişikliklerle değil, aynı zamanda bu mekânda oluşturulacak modern şehir yaşamını değiştirerek de sağlanacaktı. Bu kapsamda, 1938 yılında kurulan Divriği Demir Madenleri İşletmesi, o zamana kadar nüfusu ağırlıklı olarak köylülerden oluşan Divriği'nin kent yaşamına ve modernleşmesine önemli katkılarda bulunmuştur. Divriği'deki bir kamu iktisadi teşebbüsü örneğinden yola çıkılarak yapılan bu çalışma, gündelik hayatın makro ve mikro yapı kalıpları üzerine gerçekleştirilen devlet politikalarının, yatırımlarının ve düzenlemelerinin nasıl birbiriyle bağlantılı olduğunu dönemin modernist bakış açısıyla aydınlatmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, aynı zamanda daha sonraki yıllarda siyasi alanda yaşanan sosyal yapısal değişiklikleri ve işletmenin özelleştirilmesinin sonuçlarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, tarihi belgelerin etnografik yöntemle incelenmesine, çalışanlarla ve yerel halkla yapılan görüşmelere dayanan bu çalışma, özellikle çalışanlarına tahsis edilen yerleşim yerleriyle işletmenin belirli bir zaman diliminde bölgedeki insanların yaşamları üzerinde nasıl bir etkisi olduğunu ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erken Yirminci Yüzyılda Modernleşme, Kent Yaşamı, Kültürel Dönüşüm, Maden Yerleşkeleri.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AP	: Adalet Partisi/ Justice Party
AKP	: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/ Justice and Development Party
ANAP	: Anavatan Partisi/ Motherland Party
CHP	: Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/ Republican People's Party
DİSK	: Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu/ Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey
DİVHAN	: Divriği ve Hekimhan Madenleri Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş. / Divriği and Hekimhan Mining Industry and Trade Incorporation
DİVKOOP	: Divriği Üretim ve Pazarlama Kooperatifi/ Divriği Production and Marketing Cooperative
DP	: Demokrat Parti/Democrat Party
EMEP	: Emek Partisi/ Labour Party
ERDEMİR	: Ereğli Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ Ereğli Iron and Steel Works
ERMADEN	: Erdemir Madencilik San. ve Tic. A.Ş./ Erdemir Mining Industry and Trade Inc.
İSDEMİR	: İskenderun Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ İskenderun Iron and Steel Works
KARDEMİR	: Karabük Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ Karabük Iron and Steel Works
MC	: Milliyetçi Cephe/ National Front
MHP	: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi/ Nationalist Movement Party
MİT	: Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı/ National Intelligence Organisation
MTA	: Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü/ Mineral Research and Exploration Institute
OYAK	: Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu/ Turkish Armed Forces Assistance and Pension Fund
ÖDP	: Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi/ Freedom and Solidarity Party
PKK	: Kürdistan İşçi Partisi/ Kurdistan Workers' Party
SCF	: Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası/ Free Republican Party
SHP	: Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti/ Social Democratic Populist Party
SODEP	: Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi/ Social Democracy Party
TOKİ	: Toplu Konut İdaresi/ Mass Housing Development Administration
TÜİK	: Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu/ Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜRK-İŞ	: Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu/ Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
WWI	: Birinci Dünya Savaşı/ World War I
WWII	: İkinci Dünya Savaşı/ World War II

YERALTI MADEN-İŞ : Yeraltı ve Yerüstü Devrimci Maden İşçileri Sendikası/
Progressive Union of Under-and Overground Mine
Workers of Turkey



1. INTRODUCTION

During the early twenties, the economic policy carried out by the new state of the Turkish Republic was insufficient in industrial production. The profits made in the fields of commerce and banking and the agricultural surplus couldn't yet be turned into promoting industrial production¹. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the newly-established state aimed to draw a road map for the first years of the Republic by convening in the 1923 Economic Congress of Turkey in İzmir where decisions such as the economic development of a new nation-state led by the private sector were taken. The transition into nationalism is thereby one of the milestones of the state bureaucracy on the way to create a nationalist industry with a bourgeois class having a liberal ideology in economics. However, the failure of the private sector to undertake this development and the effect of the Great Depression of 1929 that negatively affected the world market, the state committed itself to the economic development and the state intervention in the economy increased². Consequently, the state attempted to take responsibility for both the industrial and agricultural development of the young nation.

In 1931, the congress of the ruling political party the CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, Republican People's Party*) defined the political order as a single-party regime, with the right to form the government under the guiding doctrines of republicanism, nationalism, populism and secularism, adopted during the previous programmes, and etatism and reformism that were now added as main tenets of the party. With etatism, they aimed to define the state's position as above the conflicts of class relations and

¹ Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, **Türkiye Ekonomisi**. 16. Ed. (İstanbul: Remzi Kitapevi, 2004), 61.

² Boratav, **Türkiye'de Devletçilik** (Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2006), 137-140.

used it to account for the one-party system embedded in the government³. The founding ideology of the Republic took its shape with a potent centralised government to gather workers, peasants and all other groups of the society around common interests through a homogeneous Turkish identity. In this regard, the economic policies of etatism were implemented to increase industrial production and the state carried out policies to ensure the unity of ideology and economic planning overall. The party tended to fulfil a program of industrialization through the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialization in 1933 and adopted etatism as the main principle of the driving force for the industrialization of the country⁴. In addition, the new state further adopted western social structures, such as in education and in legal structures, in order to help create a new individual identity and a spatial and social life. Hence, the republican principles politically led to the adoption of a new social and individual identity, and the new economic policies of the state contributed more and more to the social and spatial change of the country⁵. In short, economic growth was considered a necessary and primary tool to achieve the goal of modernization. The state aimed at the transformation and modernization of the country. Therefore, it strove to put architectural projects into practice to incorporate modern life into everyday life. The principles adopted by the newly-established state could thereby be seen in the new architectural forms as well. The transformation intended to create a modern society in every social and cultural field. This was to be achieved not only by changes in urban space but also by changing modern city life to be formed in that space. In this regard, it was thought that modernization would only be possible by transforming the daily and social life of the residents⁶. The industrial enterprises, and settlements built around them in many parts of Anatolia, played a crucial role in the formation of a modern identity and they affected the places where they were established, with the idea that people could live in modern spaces in line with the principles of the newly-established Republican state.

³ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, **1929 Dünya Buhranında Türkiye'nin İktisadi Politika Arayışları** (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2009), 212-213.

⁴ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, **Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiye'de Devletçiliğin Oluşumu** (Ankara: ODTÜ, 1982), 80.

⁵ Burak Asiliskender, "Cumhuriyet Sonrası Kalkınma Hareketi Olarak Sanayileşme ve Mekansal Değişim", **Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi**, No. 12 (2009): 153.

⁶ Sinem Kaya, "İdeoloji, Gündelik Yaşam Pratikleri ve Mekân Etkileşiminde Karabük Demir Çelik Fabrikaları Yerleşiminden Öğrendiklerimiz" (Master's Thesis, Gazi Üniversitesi, 2001), 13-14.

The First Five-Year Industrial Plan that was put into practice after the Great Depression was a turning point in economic policy and the first reformist move of the new economic organisation, which gave an impetus to the discovery of the iron ore in Divriği. Within the framework of the plan to make an industrial breakthrough, many factories were set up in many parts of Anatolia and Divriği was one of these districts where iron ore was high. In 1936, the presence of iron ore was observed during the land surveys made by the geologists of the MTA (*Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü/ Mineral Research and Exploration Institute*) around Vazıldan Sub-district. A year later, while the determination of the Sivas-Erzurum Railway route was made, a strong magnetic field was detected and the main production areas such as *A-Kafa*, *B-Kafa* and *C Placer* were found out. Thus, following the discovery of the iron ore in Divriği in 1937 during the first great industrialisation move of the Republic, it was commissioned by Eti Bank on May 19, 1938, taking into account the size and richness of the ore deposit. As of December 15, 1940, it continued its activities as the *Divriği Iron Mines Operation*. On June 21, 1955, the plant was incorporated into another state-founded establishment, the Turkish Iron and Steel Enterprise, and took the name of *Divriği Iron Mines Enterprise*. In 1993, both Divriği and Hekimhan Iron Mines merged under the name of DİVHAN (*Divriği ve Hekimhan Madenleri Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş. / Divriği and Hekimhan Mining Industry and Trade Incorporation*). After it was sold by tender to ERDEMİR (*Ereğli Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ Ereğli Iron and Steel Works*) by Privatisation Administration in 2004, it was entitled ERMADEN (*Erdemir Madencilik San. ve Tic. A.Ş./ Erdemir Mining Industry and Trade Inc.*) Both ERMADEN and ERDEMİR were incorporated by OYAK (*Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu/ Turkish Armed Forces Assistance and Pension Fund*) into its company in 2006 and has operated its activities so far.

Divriği is a town situated in the eastern part of the Central Anatolia Region whereas a part of its territory belongs to the Eastern Anatolia Region. The distance to the centre of Sivas, the province which the town is part of is 184 km and the altitude is almost 1250 metres, which makes life difficult for the people to maintain. It is located near the Çaltı Stream, a branch of the river Euphrates. It is neighboured in the east by Erzincan, in the south by Malatya, in the east by Kangal, and in the north by İmranlı and Zara. Divriği's relations with others regions have remained limited due to the inadequacy of roads connecting villages, city centres and other provinces. However,

the town lies on the rail line between the East and West, and it has benefited from the policy developed by the newly-established state to transport the iron ore from the town to the western part of the country.

The inauguration of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation in 1938 created new employment opportunities for the people of the region who previously led a settled life in agriculture and animal husbandry in the villages nearby. The new enterprise called for a need to build a settlement that would be allocated for employees of different status such as the workers, managers and civil servants. With the establishment of the enterprise, housing problem of employees coming from other cities and almost every village in the town was solved by constructing a new settlement, which contributed to the formation of a new urban culture with a cosmopolitan atmosphere. In particular, Cüreğ assumed a modern new identity especially by means of the principle of etatism in the early Republican period. Those living in the boarding houses in Cüreğ seemed to create a separate settlement with their life level above the town's average level. As their daily routine was not combined with the town, it seemed as if two different cities had emerged. The workers coming to work in the mines in Cüreğ, which is approximately 10 km away from the centre of Divriği, started to live in the workers' boarding house or in the villages near the enterprise. In the course of time, the settlement area extended to other parts of Divriği through the construction of new settlements called Taşbaşı and Selavattepe as spatial expansion in the centre of the town ensued from the population growth.

1.1 Content

This study aims to examine the contributions of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation to urban life, and the historical and social development of the town will be analysed in detail. It will be shaped by a three-layer structure regardless of the conceptual framework. The first layer includes the development of both agriculture and industry along with the enterprises established after the foundation of the new Republican state which adopted a liberal economic policy intended for the construction of a new national bourgeoisie under the auspices of the state. The outbreak of the Great Depression caused this policy to fall through and the state thereby took precautions to further the economy by cutting down imports implemented by the privately-owned business. Hence, the main centre of this study will be on how the principle of etatism

was adopted through political and ideological centralisation and how the Divriği Iron Mines Operation was established on this economic axis.

The second layer will examine demography going back to the 19th century to figure out when both internal and external migration took place as well as the history of education, socio-economic and administrative-political life in the aftermath of the foundation of the Republican state. Hence, it will help understand the effect of the enterprise on people's daily routine in the urban space compared with rural life and it is thereby much easier to make out how a city grows through the presence of an enterprise.

The very beginning of the last part is concerned with the historical stages of the mining enterprise, which entails a reflection on how it went through an experience of transformation from a state-owned enterprise to a private one in the line with the economic policy of the forthcoming governments as opposed to the industrial breakthroughs made following the foundation of the Republic. Besides, the economic structure of Divriği went through a transition from handcraftsmanship and agricultural production to industrial production. This transition resulted from the labour process. In the early years of mining, the production was made through primitive methods and labour didn't require any qualifications. The peasantry making up the majority of the population in the 1940s started flowing into the city centre at a slow pace. Likewise, the town dwellers who were craftsmen were employed in the aftermath of mechanisation. Hence, it also demonstrates how the transformation of relations of production had an impact on the life of the people living in both town centre and villages. The list of the names of the managers, visits made by the politicians along with an overview of the history of the workers who were also peasants are presented. It thereby illustrates the formation of the working class as well as the social and historical dynamics of the class issue and unionist struggle which dominated the process. All in all, it will help clarify how the traditional life of the villages has been integrated into urban life. Given this, this study will also examine the process of the peasants' transformation to both workers and urban residents.

1.2 Methodology

To begin with, the first question to be posed, while deciding on one specific field study, relates to why it should be distinguished from others. Although there have been some

books and theses written about history, demography, education, economic and social life, administrative and political life in Divriği, none of them has mentioned the fast transformation of both urban and rural life comprehensively. Hence, it was essential to bring to forefront a study about Divriği with a more comprehensive approach including the experience of the residents and workers of the town. In this respect, this study will be important to cast light on especially the life of the workers in the town and it will be an appropriate case to portray the transition process from peasantry to labour after the establishment of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation. In this regard, this study aims to examine the economic, social and cultural effects of such an enterprise in the town and in the neighbouring regions. The foundation of the enterprise provided a high rate of employment for the local people of each village, yet the policy implemented by the central power, especially in the 1980s suspended it for the sake of the ones living in other cities, which made workers break off their ties with their territory and move to other cities to maintain their life. In addition, the privatisation of the enterprise accelerated the population flux and transformed Divriği into a backward town. Before the entire experience of the town occurring in chronological order comes to the fore, it is also aimed to highlight the steps taken in political, economic, social and cultural spheres in the country from the foundation of the Republic to the inauguration of the enterprise, and the outcomes of these steps in compliance in accordance with objective data of the early Republican era.

The main component of this study is centred on oral history. Paul Thompson regarded as the pioneer of this methodology draws attention to this type of history in which researchers turn to not only the written sources but also primarily to the individual lives forming the basis of history: "... they are brought back from the grand patterns of written history to the awkwardly individual human lives which are its basis"⁷. In the theoretical and methodological framework of the oral history studies based on the individual and collective memory, recollections and memory take a prominent space⁸. Data are collected through what individuals remember and past experiences of the individuals are interpreted to find meaning at present and in the future: "Oral history

⁷ Paul Thompson, Joanna Bornat, **The Voice of the Past: Oral History**, 4. Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 9.

⁸ Şükrü Aslan, Bülent Bilmez, Gülay Kayacan, **Toplumsal Bellek, Kuşaklararası Aktarım ve Algı: Dersim '38'i Hatırlamak** (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2011), 20.

is rather a method of gathering material, a contribution to the general process of making sense of the past so that we can better understand the present and plan for the future. It is one type of historical source among others ...”⁹. In addition, the individuals whose experiences are interpreted are ordinary people: “Oral history is a history built around people. It thrusts life into history itself and it widens its scope. It allows heroes not just from the leaders, but from the unknown majority of the people”¹⁰. The main feature which distinguishes the oral history from the written history is that it does not depend on the prominent figures of the history, but the ordinary people becoming the new agent of the history.

Some books drawing on this methodology were influential in writing this study. They all discuss the transformation of urban or rural areas based on the factories and places where they are located. ‘Patron Baba ve İşçileri: İşçi Sınıfı, Köylülük ve Paternalizm’ written by Hasan Güler aims to make out what consequences the industrialisation experience caused by the privately-owned enterprise has in rural areas by examining the Çanakkale Ceramic Factory inaugurated in the town of Çan in Çanakkale in 1960. ‘Camın İşçileri: Paşabahçe İşçilerinin Sınıf Olma Öyküsü’ written by Hakan Koçak mentions the Paşabahçe Bottle and Glass Factory established in the neighbourhood of Paşabahçe in İstanbul in the early Republican period and the formation of working class on site. Apart from these two books, ‘Sözlü Tarih Görüşmeleriyle Kağıthane’ written by Şükrü Aslan, Besime Şen and Hatice Kurtuluş, and ‘Toplumsal Hafızada Zamanda ve Mekanda: Maltepe’ written by a research group touch on social, spatial, economic, political and cultural aspects as well as social history of both districts situated in İstanbul. Above all, ‘Ereğli: Ağır Sanayiden Önce Bir Sahil Kasabası’ written by Mübeccel B. Kıray sets a model for the following studies centred on the transformation of urban and rural areas. It aims to examine the social structure of the town along with the construction of the iron and steel factory funded by the state itself. In parallel with the methodology and content of these books, this study aims to examine the effects of a state-owned enterprise on both urban and rural space along with socio-economic, political and cultural aspects of the town of Divriği.

In this study, the data about executives, workers, families, and important events in the town were collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation. The

⁹ Stephen Caunce. **Oral History and the Local Historian** (London: Longman, 1994), 11.

¹⁰ Paul Thompson, Joanna Bornat, **ibid**, 18.

interviews were recorded in audio or video format and they were all transcribed. This historical study is mainly based on the participation of the employees of the enterprise, especially the ones starting to work after the early 1950s. Data about the first years of the enterprise, origin of the first workers and managers have been handed down from generation to generation and these data shed light on this study along with the photos given by the employees. Furthermore, a book called ‘Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında’ and published by the General Directorate of the Turkish Iron and Steel Enterprise for the celebration of the 50th anniversary of its foundation contributes substantially to this study with a great variety of photos related to visits to the enterprise by politicians and military top brass, and manual labour and mechanisation in mining. Moreover, based on the personal interviews, the archives of the enterprise are believed to have been burnt by the private company. That the trucks, excavators and bulldozers remained inactive and they were sold for scrap indicates how they underestimated the inventory of the state-owned enterprise. At the very beginning of the field study a petition to benefit from both written and visual archives of the enterprise was submitted and they didn’t give a reply to it. They didn’t even allow to take photos of some buildings allocated for common use of the employees prior to the privatisation of the enterprise.

The first field study in Divriği was carried out in August 2019 for a preliminary study for two weeks, but the pandemic breaking out the following year impeded the completion of the interviews for a while. The second one was completed in 2021 following a one-month study in Divriği. Some new data were collected and the relationship with the former interviewees was consolidated. In this way, the line of the field study was extended to various villages by turning to new people through their help. The main questions posed in the interviews are mainly centred on when and how workers decided to work in the enterprise, transition from peasantry to labour, foundation of the enterprise, and its effect on the town in terms of development and transformation of the town. In addition, some employees living in İstanbul, İzmit, Balıkesir, Çanakkale and Aydın were also interviewed. Moreover, only few women with various professions participated in the interview because some women employees except for a civil servant shied away from speaking. Likewise, some people avoided speaking because of the political pressure they had experienced in the past. Besides, only few workers coming to work for enterprise from other cities could be interviewed

because almost everybody went back to their hometown. 70 employees of the state-owned enterprise and residents of the town were interviewed in total. The oldest participant was born in 1929 whereas the youngest one was born in 1972. The date of birth of the participants is as follows in the table 1.

Table 1: Age Range of Interview Participants

Sex	1929-1939	1940-1949	1950-1965	1966- &	TOTAL
Male	14	13	37	2	66
Female	-	1	2	1	4
TOTAL	14	14	39	3	70

The variety of professions of the participants were taken into consideration. However, most of them were retired miners or civil servants in addition to a manager of the enterprise and they don't work anymore except some of them. Other participants were shopkeepers, teachers, businessmen, a historian, a journalist, a writer, a farmer, 3 city councilors (two of them were workers and one of them was a union employee) and the present mayor of the town as well as the previous mayors. The professions of interview participants are as follows in the table 2.

Table 2: Professions of Interview Participants

Profession	Number of People
Retired Worker	43
Former Worker	2
Retired Civil Servant	9
Mayor	3
Businessman	2
Teacher	2
Shopkeeper	4
Union Employee	1
Historian	1
Journalist	1
Writer	1
Farmer	1

While trying to carry out the field study, the origin of the participants was also taken into consideration so as to bring to light how far the place where they lived is from the enterprise while they or their fathers were working in the enterprise. In the 1980s, lots of employees from other cities were hired and according to what participants said, they all returned to their hometowns after their retirement because they didn't have any strong links with both the people of Divriği and the life in the town. Only the ones from neighbouring cities or other districts of Sivas with a cultural commitment to the town preferred living in Divriği. The range of the names of the villages or towns of the interviewees is as shown in the table 3 below.

Table 3: Origin of Interview Participants

Village/Town	Number of People	Village/Town	Number of People
Divriği	9	Ekinbaşı (Kilisecik)	7
Ovacık	10	Kayacık (Murmana)	1
Kaledibi	3	Ürük	2
Güneyevler (Erşun)	1	Demirdağ (Purunsur)	2
Dikmeçay (Eşke)	1	Sincan	1
Yazı	3	Diktaş	2
Karakale	3	Yalnızsöğüt	1
Akmeşe (Ziniski)	3	Çiğdemli (Tuğut)	1
Çamşık	1	Eğrisu (Anzahar)	5
Çakırağa	1	İmirhan	1
Şahin	1	Karakuzulu	1
Bayırlı (Haşke)	1	Kızılcaören	1
Günbahçe (Hazerkek)	2	Malatya	1
Kangal	1	Çakmakdüzü (Palha)	1
Erzincan	1	Eskibeyli (Norşun)	2

It was also aimed at analysing the archives of municipality. However, the municipal officers and mayor of the town stated that they didn't have lots of documents related to the enterprise. The interview carried out with 3 mayors was concerned about how the relationship between the municipal administration and the enterprise has been over the years and if they have contributed to the centre of the town as well as the surrounding countryside. Lastly, academic studies, journals, newspapers, archives of government institutions, employees' personal archives were also examined in detail and they all help make out how the steps taken in the early Republican era affected the town of Divriği.



2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ECONOMIC POLICY AFTER THE FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLICAN STATE

Before the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, the Ottoman Bourgeoisie was portrayed as non-Muslims and minorities took on a considerable role in the economy, especially in trade and craftsmanship, and Muslim merchants were thereby left out of commercial activities. In the aftermath of the foundation of the Republic, the 1923 Economic Congress of Turkey convened in İzmir aimed for the establishment of a national economy based on a nation-state supporting private enterprise and taking action as an economic actor in the market. In accordance with this approach, a national bourgeois class would lead the private enterprise with the support of the state. However, the increase in ports and the Great Depression of 1929, caused the state to intervene in the economy. The state implemented five-year industrialisation plans in the 1930s to manage industrial enterprises set up in many parts of Anatolia and adopted etatism as the main principle of the driving force of the industrialisation of the country. In addition, these industrial breakthroughs made in this period contributed to the modernization of the country. Most of the enterprises were opened up in towns or cities connected to the central areas by railway network playing a considerable role in the development of modern industrial societies in urban space. In this respect, this part lays emphasis on the initiatives carried out by the state to build a modern nation based on both political and economic reasons. The etatist policies implemented till the late 1930s along with different approaches put forward by intellectuals also form the backbone of this part. These policies will thereby help make out how the Divriği Iron Mines Operation inaugurated in 1938 made a great impact on both the country and the town of Divriği.

2.1 Emergence of the National Bourgeoisie After the Nation-State Formation

In the 19th century, the economy of the Ottoman Empire depended on the financial resources of the Western countries, which paved the way for the construction of a new state. As a consequence of capitulations and commercial treaties with them which made the country a semi-colony, the domestic market of the empire came under the domination of the imported high-value industrial products whereas raw low-cost food and raw materials were exported. Given this fact, it was a period when the Ottoman industry was not available. Yet, the year 1908 when the Second Constitutional Monarchy was declared was an important milestone in the development of a new economic system even though the Ottoman Empire went through a series of insurrections and wars till 1922. In economic terms, this period is regarded as an ‘incomplete bourgeois economic revolution’ or ‘first and timid steps taken in the direction of national capitalism’. The main actors of the political power of the period were the Unionists between 1908 and 1918 and the *Kemalist* revolutionaries between 1919 and 1922¹¹. According to Boratav, the political cadres that brought the bourgeois-revolutionary character to the period were mainly the Unionists and *Kemalists* and three periods just before the foundation of the new Republican state were distinctive to clarify both political and economic issues of the era: the years 1908-1913 were the years when the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) influenced the political power, but it couldn’t completely get hold of it. The period of 1913-1918 differs from the previous period as a cross-section in which the Unionists took power completely. From 1919 to 1922, representatives of the bureaucratic aristocracy stood for reconciliation and representation against imperialism in İstanbul whereas *Kemalist* revolutionaries were in power in Anatolia¹².

Apart from the economic policy which was dependent on the Western countries as a semi-colony and outbreak of Turco-Italian War, Balkan War, WWI (*Birinci Dünya Savaşı/ World War I*) as well as insurrections in some parts of the empire such as Bulgaria, Lebanon and Albania for the declaration of independence, lack of Turkish bourgeoisie was an obstacle for the transition into a national economy even if the main feature of the period was dominated by the trend towards national capitalism¹³. In the

¹¹ Korkut Boratav, **Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2015** (Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2018), 23-24.

¹² **Ibid**, 24.

¹³ **Ibid**, 24-26.

meantime, the Ottoman bourgeoisie characterised as non-Muslim and comprador stood out in the trade since there was no industry. As the trade developed, the Christian population established a mutual relationship between the European market and domestic producers. The agencies of European companies set up in port cities employed non-Muslim Ottoman nationalities, some of whom received the passports of foreign countries. Thus, Muslim merchants were left out of commercial activities¹⁴. In this respect, it was clear that a comprador class made up of non-Muslim groups collaborating with foreign countries could not lead a national bourgeois revolution. By contrast, the Turkish and Muslim bourgeoisie with small and medium-sized enterprises in the domestic trade was weak, dispersed and unorganised. In this case, the bourgeois revolution had to be carried out by social groups outside the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois intellectuals would assume this historic mission¹⁵.

Based on the economic policy of bourgeois ideology, the approach of the new state was to establish either national and independent capitalism or free trade as a procurer of raw materials and a dependent open market of the world capitalist system. Sakızlı Ohannes Paşa and Mehmet Cavit Bey were two leading representatives of liberal economic policies and they strongly opposed state intervention and protection in the economy. However, some prominent members of the Committee of Union and Progress and School of National Economics such as Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura, Tekin Alp were in favour of the fact that a national industrial bourgeoisie should be raised through state incentives and interventions within the framework of the approach of national economy¹⁶. In accordance with the first idea, the Ottoman Empire pursued more liberal economic policies and a share of international trade. Because of the fact that the international agreements to which the Ottoman state was bound did not allow unilateral changes in tariffs, it couldn't carry out the intended economic policies until WWI, but as of 1914, the outbreak of the war and breaking off its relations with the leading states such as Britain and France gave the government an opportunity to take action that it could not before owing to the pressure of the European states¹⁷. Accordingly, the Committee of Union and Progress made a series of decisions that would change the quality of the international links of the economy and then inspire the

¹⁴ Çağlar Keyder, **Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 34.

¹⁵ Boratav, 2018, 26.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 27-29.

¹⁷ Şevket Pamuk, **Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi: Büyüme, Kurumlar ve Bölüşüm** (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2018), 163-164.

economic policies of the new Republican state: At the end of 1914, capitulations granting prerogatives to foreigners in law, jurisdiction, trade and other fields were annulled unilaterally. Instead of tariffs applied to all goods at the same rate and intended for financial income, a new tariff was adopted in 1915 along with its levels to be changed over time in accordance with the requirements of the economic policy. All payments made for the foreign debts of the Ottoman Empire were stalled and the activities of the Public Debt Administration (*Düyun-ı Umumiye*) were suspended¹⁸. In this context, it was highly required to support the Muslim entrepreneurs financially so as to prevent the comprador class made up of Christian members of the society cooperating with the imperialist states.

2.1.1 Nationalisation of the Economy and Issues Regarding Minorities

The government policy of the war period was aimed at increasing the profit of the Muslim businessmen and even the smallest prerogative that could be granted due to the famine the war brought about could have made big profits. As the war and mobilisation continued, political control over the distribution of foodstuffs and military supplies increased and political prerogative within the war economy led to even greater differences in trade profits¹⁹. The merchants, who were able to obtain wagon allocation for the transportation of wheat from the railway network which was also blocked by war shipment, had the opportunity to market the foodstuffs they brought to İstanbul with separate profits. While Unionists seemed to stand against the black market, they also led to the development of a primitive accumulation the groups having the same political ideology made use of²⁰. Thus, as the means of transportation were scarce, the political adherents of the Unionists who could use the railway to transport the goods became great businessmen quickly.

The Greek and Armenian minorities were not only regarded as the bearers of the domestic market and bourgeois elements of the capitalist system that would eventually topple the traditional ruling class, but also as the internal support of imperialism which prevented the bureaucracy from reestablishing traditional class balances²¹. In this respect, in the aftermath of the foundation of the Republic, it was aimed at establishing

¹⁸ **Ibid**, 164-165.

¹⁹ Keyder, **ibid**, 83.

²⁰ Boratav, 2018, 31-32.

²¹ Keyder, **ibid**, 86.

a national economy based on a nation-state supporting private enterprise and taking action as an economic actor in the market. In alignment with this approach, the state would intervene in the economy and lead it in each sector and a bourgeois class would be made up through the support of the state in order to initiate the private enterprise. Within this framework, Turkey had a liberal and open economy in the 1920s until the worldwide economic crisis broke out.

Minorities played a substantial role in the Ottoman Economy and they were predominantly superior to the Muslims, especially in trade and craftsmanship as most of them lived in the cities. As of 1912, 85% of 18.063 workplaces and 89% of 6507 workshops belonged to non-Muslims. Also, 86% of freelancers were non-Muslims²². They carried on a business in mining as well. At the beginning of the 20th century, they had more than a share of 10% in general mining production, but they owned a share of almost 30% in coal mining operation²³. On the basis of the industrial reports, non-Muslims owned 75% whereas foreigners had 10% and Muslim Turks 15% of the industrial capital. The labour force of 85% employed in the industrial sector was non-Muslim²⁴. In addition, in 1919, 73% of 3300 workplaces in the manufacturing industry belonged to non-Muslims working in Western Anatolia and 85% of 22000 workers were Greek²⁵.

In accordance with the 1910 census, 2.4 million Greek lived in Turkey²⁶. Their emigration to Greece began in 1912 and went on during the war. After the Greek army had set foot in Western Anatolia to occupy it in 1919, Greeks took part in the hostilities against the Turkish population and were in favour of the Greek army. When the Turkish army moved towards the Aegean coast in 1922, the Greek population thereby pulled up their roots and fled onto the islands and to Greece. From 1912 to 1923,

²² Charles Issawi, **The Economic History of Turkey 1800-1914** (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 14 cited in Murat Koraltürk, **Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 60.

²³ A. Gündüz Ökçün, **İktisat Tarihi Yazıları** (Ankara: Sermaye Piyasası Kurulu, 1997), 187 cited in Murat Koraltürk, **ibid**, 60.

²⁴ Tevfik Çavdar, **Milli Mücadele Başlarken Sayılarla "Vaziyet ve Manzara-i Umumiye"** (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1971), 66 cited in Murat Koraltürk, **ibid**, 60-61.

²⁵ Yahya S. Tezel, **Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin İktisat Tarihi (1923-1950)**, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 115.

²⁶ D. Pentzopoulos, **The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and its Impact upon Greece** (Paris: 1962), 29-31 cited in Çağlar Keyder, **The Definition of a Peripheral Economy: Turkey 1923-1929** (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 21.

almost one million Greek emigrated from Turkey to Greece²⁷. In January 1923, in compliance with the treaty signed between Turkey and Greece, a compulsory exchange of the minorities of both parts came into question, but Greeks living in İstanbul and Turks in Western Thrace were left out of the forced exchange. As a result of this treaty, 1,200,000 Greeks and 400,000 Muslims were enforced to expatriate themselves between 1923 and 1926²⁸. In 1927, 99% of the population was Muslim and in accordance with the statistics, the mother tongue of 89% of the population was Turkish and 9% was Kurdish. About 110.000 Greek and 77.000 Armenian lived mostly in İstanbul²⁹.

Table 4: Urban Population, 1912-1927 (1000 people)

	1912	1927	Rate of Decrease %
İstanbul	1125	691	39
I. Region (West)-15 cities (1)	763	431	44
II.Region (Central)-19 cities	574	514	10
III. Region (East) 17 cities (3)	574	330	43
Total for 52 cities	3036	1967	35

(1) İzmir, Edirne, Bursa, Manisa, Aydın, Turgutlu, İzmit, Adapazarı, Ayvalık, Nazilli, Alaşehir, Tekirdağ, Bergama, Kırkağaç, Balıkesir (4).

(2) Kayseri, Konya, Eskişehir, Adana, Afyon, Ankara, Tokat, Amasya, Antalya, Zile, Isparta, Tarsus, Samsun, Nevşehir, Burdur, Kütahya, Merzifon, Kastamonu, Mersin (4).

(3) Sivas, Urfa, Trabzon, Antep, Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Van, Mardin, Muş, Erzincan, Maraş, Harput, Arapkir, Şebinkarahisar, Kilis (4).

(4) It is ranked based on the number of the population.

C. Issawi, **The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914** (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 34-35 cited in Yahya S. Tezel, **Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin İktisat Tarihi (1923-1950)**, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 117. R. Keleş, **Türkiye'de Şehirleşme Hareketleri** (Ankara: AÜ yayını, mimeo, 1961), table 1 cited in Tezel, *ibid*, 117.

²⁷ Stephen P. Ladas, **The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey** (New York: 1932), 442 cited in Çağlar Keyder, *ibid*, 21-22.

²⁸ *ibid*, 438 cited in Çağlar Keyder, *ibid*, 22.

²⁹ Yahya S. Tezel, *ibid*, 116.

All in all, nobody could fill in for Greeks and the gap arising due to the exchange. The economy deteriorated even though demand for the labour force and especially small craftsmanship throughout the country increased³⁰.

2.1.2 The 1923 Economic Congress of Turkey (*Türkiye İktisat Kongresi*)

The declaration of the new Republican state brought an end to the Ottoman Empire in the political term and severed all ties with it. Yet, the economic policy pursued by the state was the continuation of the one carried out by the Unionists in the aftermath of the establishment of the Second Constitutional Monarchy. Given this, the approach of the School of National Economics which regarded the cultivation of a national bourgeoisie through the support of the state as the basic mechanism of development and modernisation left its mark on the economic policies and atmosphere of the post-1923 period. In this atmosphere, the Economic Congress convened in February 1923 was organised by the Minister of Economy Mahmut Esat in accordance with the principle of occupational representation and chaired by Kazım Karabekir. It was also a type of forum in which all economic policy issues that the new regime would confront were discussed and decisions were taken by the votes of the occupational groups of farmers, merchants, industrialists and workers. Whereas industrialists and workers were mostly made up of superior officials of the bureaucracy and deputies, the union representing the workers from İstanbul was said to be an organisation of the merchants and, the merchants and farmers represented their class by themselves. Essentially, the congress paved the way for the integration of the Turkish-Muslim capital circles of İstanbul and İzmir with political power, which had failed to establish strong ties with Ankara in the period of national struggle³¹. In other words, the objective of the congress was to reach an agreement between the government members and landowners, merchants and industrialists on the economic policy measures to be implemented.

The opening speech was made by Mustafa Kemal stressing that the population of Turkey was not sufficiently high based on its land assets and natural resources, and the lack of labour force had to be resolved by using capital-intensive production techniques. That he mentioned the measures to be taken to reduce the effectiveness of

³⁰ Murat Koraltürk, *Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 66-67.

³¹ Boratav, 2018, 42-48.

the non-Muslims in the trade aroused great satisfaction among Turkish-Muslim merchants from İstanbul and they would cooperate with the foreign capitalists insofar as they could not run counter to the political independence of the newly emerging state³². He also laid emphasis on a break with Ottoman history. According to him, the Ottoman order sacrificed the main element of society for centuries for the sake of invasion and expansion on the fronts and conquests. He didn't put forth this idea with reference to the catastrophes of the collapse of the Empire. By contrast, criticising the three brilliant sultans of the empire such as Fatih, Yavuz Selim and Kanuni he asserted that people perished by fighting on the fronts for the sake of the sultans' ambitions whereas the people of the occupied territories did whatever they wanted through the prerogatives granted to them. In other words, while they dealt with production or economy, Turkish people passed away for nothing³³. Consequently, he told that he would struggle against all elements of the Ottoman order uncompromisingly and he intended to establish the new state on completely new principles.

In general, the congress intended to promote developmental, domestic and foreign capital, and market-oriented farmers. It also helped facilitate the transition of control of economic life to national elements and aimed for moderate protectionism. In other words, after the foundation of a new nation-state, national elements would supplant the minorities keeping the economy under their own control and Muslims would be given prerogatives under the auspices of the state. Furthermore, the trading bourgeoisie led by the merchants from İstanbul and the farmers dominated the congress³⁴. The general philosophy formed in the congress with few exceptions would dominate the economic policy of the Republic until 1931³⁵. As a result of 16 days of work, the decisions taken by the groups of farmers, merchants, industrialists and workers consisted of 281 articles and a report on these decisions would be presented to the Grand National Assembly and the government. Within this framework, the principles identified in the congress pointed to the main development goals for the governments of the post-Republic.

³² Yahya S. Tezel, *ibid*, 175-176.

³³ Korkut Boratav, "İzmir İktisat Kongresi Tarihine Bir Genel Bakış", *Dünden Bugüne İzmir'in Sosyal ve Ekonomik Gelişimi, İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi Yayını* (2007): 16.

³⁴ Boratav, 2018, 48.

³⁵ Boratav, 2006, 43.

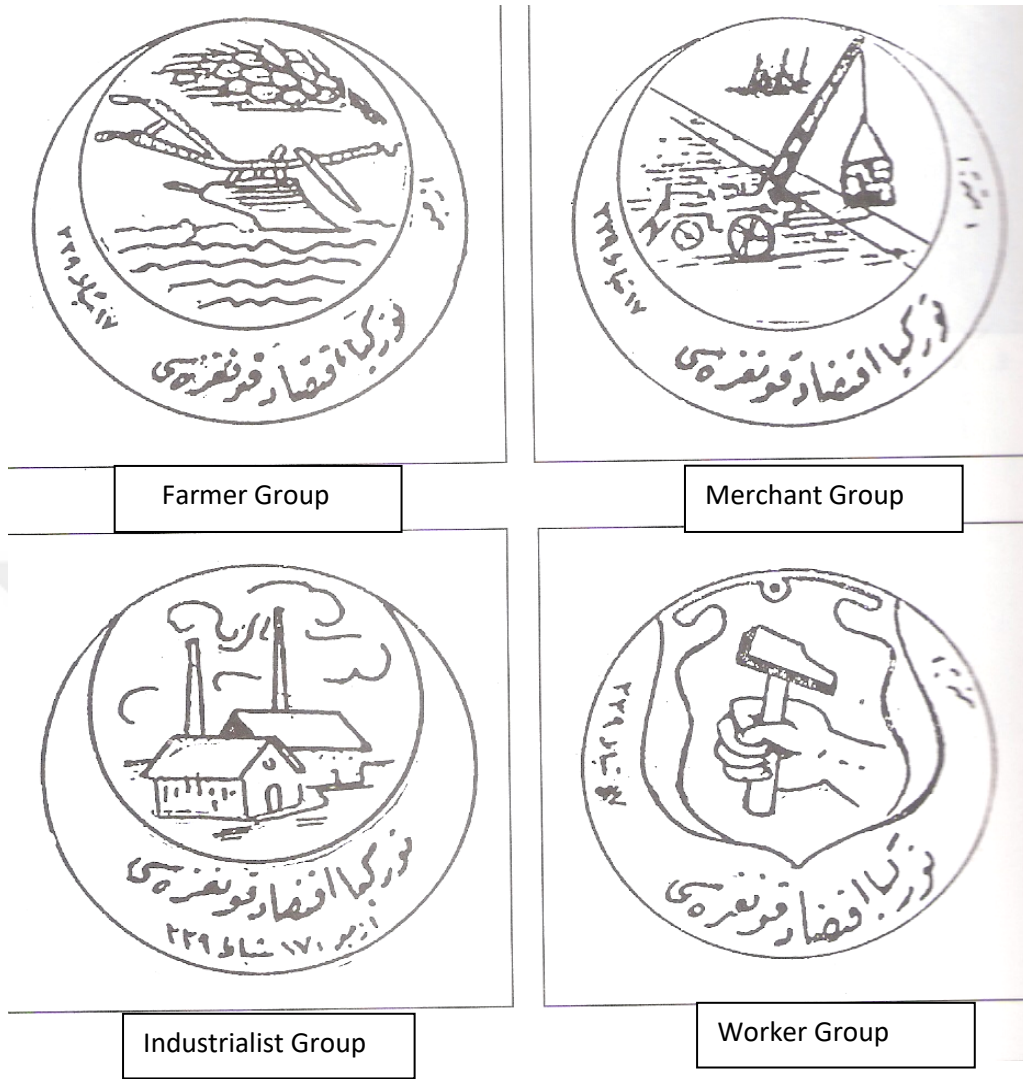


Figure 1: Emblem of Delegate Groups in the Economic Congress of Turkey

Yaşar Aksoy, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Işığında İzmir İktisat Kongresi (17 Şubat 1923)*, (Maya Matbaacılık Yayıncılık, 1991).

The economic principles of the farmer group consisted of 9 subjects such as tobacco regie, agriculture and education, agricultural security, tithe (*aşar*), Agricultural Bank (Ziraat Bankası) and agricultural esteem, roads, forests, animal issue in agriculture, farming and machinery in agriculture:

- a) The abolition of the tobacco regie was so important that the prerogative granted to the foreigners was brought to an end and the longing for the inclusion of economic independence into the targeted political independence was extended to the public. Meanwhile, the tobacco trade was released and the fact that the

tobacco to be exported had to be processed by the farmers would increase their profit share.

- b)** As to agricultural education, the farmer group called for the distribution of books about agriculture to the peasants and farmers, implementation of lessons on agriculture in primary schools, establishment of boarding primary schools in one of the villages close to each other, establishment of farms for common use in some appropriate districts, employment of university graduates or those completing the madrasah education for at least one year in the village primary schools and organisation of agricultural conferences even in the villages.
- c)** In terms of security, they laid emphasis on the support for education and abolition of ignorance. They asked for better organisation of rural police in the villages, establishment of telegraph and telephone links between the villages, and abolition of the tithe to be replaced by another moderate tax compensating for the budget deficit of the state.
- d)** With regard to the Agricultural Bank, it was recommended that the bank's capital should not be invested in any other area by the government and the peasants would be reimbursed for the products, materials and transportation fees that the army received during the war of independence, but they would get paid through stocks of the state companies to be established.
- e)** They aspired to the extension of roads, railways and maritime lines over each part of the country, employment of engineers and conductors for road construction from villages to the towns and from the centre of district to the city centre, provision of special wagons with cold cellars for the transportation of fresh fruit, vegetables, milk, animals and fish, reduction of ferry tariffs.
- f)** As far as forests are concerned, decisions on protection and reproduction of forests, afforestation of lands, and cemeteries, organisation of festival of trees, obliging everybody to plant a tree in this festival were made.
- g)** They aimed for breeding of all kinds of animals, establishment of bacteriology unit and vaccine development against animal diseases, call for a congress on animals, training the peasants and farmers on animal husbandry.
- h)** Drainage of swamps, prevention of river overflowing, benefit from river transportation, implementation of irrigation projects in areas in need of irrigation, incorporation of measurement units and weighing scales,

establishment of sugar factories along with cultivation of beetroot, foundation of sack factories in the regions where hemp was grown, relocation of migrants being familiar with agriculture in backward agricultural areas in order to ensure their contribution to the agriculture, acquisition of property of the treasury lands by the peasants on condition that the property right not be granted to the foreigners were other issues discussed in the congress along with the organisation of an exhibition on agricultural tools and machinery and familiarising farmers and peasants with them, training of machinery mechanics through the priority given to blacksmithing and leveling in the industrial schools due to the lack of qualified mechanics repairing the broken-down machinery in case of a problem, establishment of a factory producing agricultural machinery³⁶.

As to the economic principles of the merchant group, they were made up of 18 issues such as banking, stock and foreign currency exchanges, Friday holiday, mining, forests, shipping trade, trade facilitation matters, abolition of the monopoly system, commercial law reform, credit management, chambers of commerce, international trade institutes, companies, temporary trades on law, economics education, dividend tax, transportation, communication. The main ones were as follows:

- a) A commercial bank would be set up. They asked for the nationalisation of foreign currency exchange centres and especially cash and bond markets and hostile political intrigues against Turks would not be allowed in these institutions.
- b) Mining would be encouraged and the economic growth through the conversion of precious metals into money would bring into the forefront some mines in the country. Taking inventory of all mines, continuous disclosure of mine information and statistics, an immediate increase of non-operating mines, promotion and operation of the emery mine, exemption from debts of the non-operating mines due to the war and occupation, protection of coal and sulphur

³⁶ Yaşar Aksoy, **Kurtuluş Savaşı Işığında İzmir İktisat Kongresi (17 Şubat 1923)**, (Maya Matbaacılık Yayıncılık, 1991), 34-37. A. Gündüz Ökçün, **Türkiye İktisat Kongresi 1923-İzmir Haberler-Belgeler-Yorumlar** (Ankara: AÜSBF Yayınları, 1981), 390-405.

mining against foreign companies, rehabilitation of Zonguldak and Soma coal basins were the decisions related to the mining, which was one of the main issues of the congress.

- c) Establishment of chambers of commerce in the country and in the big commercial centres in foreign countries, opening a branch of Turkish Commercial Bank abroad would be encouraged and in this way, the Turkish economy would stand out in the international area.
- d) It was also emphasised that foreign capital would not be able to monopolise the country's products, trade and industry anymore. Reorganisation of customs procedures with the intention of strengthening national interests and national merchants would be the foundation of the new state³⁷.

The economic principles of the industrialist group included 6 issues such as customs protection, Industrial Incentives Act, special tariffs for roads and transportation, industrial banks, industrial education, chambers of industry:

- a) The main focus of the industrialists would be on the improvement of the Law for the Encouragement of Industry and the works to be carried out in favour of industrialists and they called for the application of tax exemption in the law, exercising rights to tax exemption just for Turkish nationals, allocation of at least seventy percent of the capital of the Turkish industrial companies to those held by the Turks, opening of industrial exhibitions every year and awarding the privileged connoisseur of the industry, obliging all people including women, soldiers and administrators to use domestic goods and clothes,
- b) They asked for special tariffs in transportation, the convenience of ferry administration to the local industrialists,
- c) They aimed to establish industrial banks for loan provision.
- d) The establishment of industrial and apprentice schools as well as mastership courses were encouraged and it was emphasised that it would be necessary to send young graduates of industrial schools to Europe for specialisation.
- e) It was also essential to establish a chamber of industry in every city and town and a large central Union of Chambers of Industry in the capital where all the

³⁷ Aksoy, *ibid*, 37-38. Ökçün, *ibid*, 406-425.

chambers of industry would be registered had to be established. In addition, associations and guilds of craftsmen would be founded³⁸.

Some prominent economic principles of the worker group were as follows:

- a) The Arab word *amele* (worker) would be superseded by the Turkish word *işçi*.
- b) Application of professional representation procedure in parliamentary and municipal elections, recognition of trade union rights, acceptance of 8 hours of work, full payment for overtime workers as a result of 4 hours of work, double payment for the ones working at night, working for 6 hours in mines, preventing women and those under the age of 18 from working in mines, establishment of boarding and free-of-charge institutions to ensure that children who had not completed 12 years of age would not be employed in the workshops or employment for maximum 4 hours of work in easy duties.
- c) Calling the worker ‘fixed-term worker’ working in the workshops for 3 months.
- d) Allowing working women for 8 weeks before and after childbirth and 3 days each month along with the whole month’s salary.
- e) Review of the minimum wage every three months.
- f) Granting workers a day off every week.
- g) Declaration of May 1 as ‘Workers’ day of Turkey’.
- h) Giving sick workers the wages up to 3 months, granting a week off to the ones who would get married, giving a month off to the ones working for a whole year.
- i) Establishment of accident and old-age insurance.
- j) Providing hospitals and free baths in the vicinity of establishments employing 250 workers.
- k) Inspection of workshops and factories by labour inspectors.
- l) Free admission of workers' children in boarding art schools.
- m) The priority of Turkish workers in all establishments to be opened up in the country.
- n) Fair determination and distribution of employee bonuses to be given every year were other decisions taken by all groups of the congress³⁹.

³⁸ Aksoy, *ibid*, 39. Ökçün, *ibid*, 426-429.

³⁹ Aksoy, *ibid*, 40. Ökçün, *ibid*, 430-434.

Before the congress, some of the İstanbul press were doubtful about the programme for economic development arising from the sessions. The publication of the economic pact met a highly unfavorable reception by the press. They criticised the absence of a certain agenda before the congress opened, and the procedure used during the debates. Whereas a few newspapers contended that the congress had not served a purpose, most of them came to an agreement that the economic pact amounted to a restatement of the Turkish thesis on independence and national sovereignty⁴⁰. Given this, each statement of the groups paved the way for the national economy along with national independence and the convention of the congress a few months before the proclamation of the Republic indicated that the foundation of a new state would be based on economic independence rather than political independence. Besides, the decisions taken in the congress highlighted the principles of the economic policies to be carried out by the following governments and most of them were implemented. These economic policies consisted mainly of innovations for foreign capital, industry and agriculture.

In 1922 and 1923, after the attempts for a privileged railway investment agreement with the Chester group representing the American capital failed, a fundamental decision was made to liquidate foreign capital from the railways. In 1924, Haydarpaşa-Ankara, Eskişehir-Konya and Arifiye-Adapazarı, and in 1928 Mersin-Tarsus-Adana Railway Lines were nationalised along with the Haydarpaşa Port and Dock. In 1926, foreign capital investors were banned from transporting goods between Turkish ports, so they were taken away the right to cabotage. In accordance with these developments, railways were the first productive state-owned enterprises of the Republican regime. However, the ports would be operated by national companies granted by the state prerogatives. In addition, the Tobacco Regie was abolished and nationalised in 1925. Although these companies were state-owned, they did not prevent the establishment of domestic-foreign partnerships, as Atatürk stated in the opening speech of the congress. As far as one of the most outstanding innovations for agriculture, the tithe, a semi-feudal medieval tax, was abolished. In addition, restrictions imposed on tariffs policies underlie the policies regarding the industry and economic incentives for private industrial investments were important. Within this framework, the Bank of

⁴⁰ Michael M. Finefrock, "Laissez-Faire, The 1923 İzmir Economic Congress and Early Turkish Developmental Policy in Political Perspective", **Taylor&Francis**, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1981): 381.

Industry and Mining founded in 1925 took over four industrial enterprises belonging to the Ottoman Empire, but this bank was not allowed to establish industrial facilities by itself. It was aimed at transferring the facilities taken over by the bank to the private sector, and supporting private industrial and mining enterprises through loans or subsidiaries. In the same year, a law introducing special incentives and prerogatives for sugar factories entered into force. Alpullu and Uşak sugar factories established on this basis preferred to turn to sugar imports which they deemed more profitable than production. The 1927 Law for the Encouragement of Industry was one of the other important breakthroughs of the period and provided broad prerogatives and incentives for industrial investments and enterprises⁴¹. The most striking feature of this period until the Great Depression of 1929 was the attempt to create entrepreneurs from the bureaucratic part with a political background and to support them with state resources.

2.1.3 Attempts to Nationalise the Economy

2.1.3.1 Railways and Ports

In the wake of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the main purpose of the new state in the field of economy was to build a new economy within new boundaries. Constructing new railways was a noticeable attempt in the early years of the new Republican state. In the 19th century, most of the railways which were built and operated by the European capital linked fertile agricultural areas to ports⁴². The major impulsion behind most of the railways in the Ottoman Empire was to link İstanbul to the rest of the Empire and pave the way for military mobilisation. The oldest railway line which went into operation in 1866 was the İzmir-Aydın Railway which was binding the port of İzmir to Aydın known for its fertile agricultural lands. In those years, a great number of British tradesmen bringing goods from Britain provided Armenian and Greek middlemen with them and took agricultural products with them from İzmir to Britain. Hence, railways stood for an important investment for economic reasons in addition to military ones⁴³. Instead of this foreign trade-oriented model, the governments in the Republican period intended to strengthen the internal links of the country through the railways, especially the links between the central and eastern parts

⁴¹ Boratav, 2018, 49-50.

⁴² Pamuk, *ibid*, 179

⁴³ Sedef Akgüngör et al, “The Effect of Railway Expansion on Population in Turkey, 1856-2000”, *The MIT Press*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2011): 138.

of the country⁴⁴. In this regard, the railway network was owned by foreign capital and it was intended for the requirements of the external markets.

The available lines were renovated from 1920 to 1926 and the railway construction gathered momentum from 1927 to 1932 in spite of the world economic depression crippling economic growth. In accordance with the First Five-Year Plan, the state intended to set up its own industries and accelerated railway construction. It thereby kept on building new lines that multiplied almost twofold in length by long-term internal debts up until 1939. The progress in the railways went on till WWII (*İkinci Dünya Savaşı/ World War II*)⁴⁵.

In 1923, the length of railways in Turkey came to 3,716 km and Germans held 68 percent of them, the French 15.4 percent, the British 11.5 percent, and others 5.1 percent. In 1924, the state owned 1,734 km of the railways whereas the foreign companies acquired 2,352 km of the whole 4,086 km. In 1930, Turkey's share rose to 3,037, and the one which belonged to the foreign capital fell to 2,282 km. Nevertheless, a massive change happened in 1935 and while the state owned 5,824 km, the foreign companies held only 815 km of the entire 6,669 km. The foreign-owned railway lines shrank to 434 km of the entire 7,381 km until 1940, and the last line was nationalised in 1948⁴⁶. In particular, after the completion of the Ankara-Sivas Railway in 1930, Turkey managed to build other railways and began to take protective precautions to struggle against the world financial crisis. At the inauguration of the railway, Prime Minister İsmet İnönü talking about the importance of the railway policy used etatism for the first time. According to him, the achievement of this policy turned out to improve the national economy. Thus, the government took control of the railway network that had been under the auspices of the foreign capital, and depended on its own sources on the way to etatism⁴⁷.

⁴⁴ Pamuk, **ibid**, 179.

⁴⁵ See table 5.

⁴⁶ Nevin Coşar, Sevtap Demirci, "Incorporation into the World Economy: From Railways to Highways (1850-1950)", **Middle Eastern Studies**, Vol. 45, No.1 (2009): 24-25.

⁴⁷ Dilek Barlas, **Etatism and Diplomacy in Turkey: Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929- 1939** (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 90-91.

Table 5: Railway Network Development, 1856-1939

Year	Network	Beginning Station	Ending Station	Length (Km)
1856-1879	Aegean region Railway Network	İzmir	Aydın	130.85
		Alsancak	Alaşehir	198.72
	Eastern (Orient) Railway Network	Sirkeci	Mandıra	229.35
		Edirne	Kapıkule	18.36
		Pehlivan köyü	Kuleliburgaz	27.30
	Anatolian Railway Network	Haydarpaşa	İzmit	91.60
TOTAL				696.18
1880-1899	Aegean Region Railway Network	Goncalı	Dinar	161.17
		Bakır	Kırkağaç	91.42
		Torbalı	Denizli	212.68
		Alaşehir	Uşak	120.17
		Uşak	Şehir	130.28
		Kütahya	Porsuk	55.04
	Anatolian Railway Network	Alanyurt	Gökçekısıık	374.57
		İzmit	Ankara	468.96
	Anatolia-Baghdad Railway Network	Yenice	Tarsus	68.69
TOTAL				1682.98
1900-1919	Aegean Region Railway Network	Afyon	Sandıklı	64.09
		Dinar	Eğirdir	88.57
		Soma	Bandırma	201.86
	Anatolia-Baghdad Railway Network	Adana	Hudut	364.28
		Çobanbey	Mardin	401.57

Table 5-continuing

	Eastern (Orient) Railway Network	Mandıra	Kırklareli	41.77
	Anatolian Railway Network	Konya	Yenice	350.01
	Sivas-Kars/ Arpaçay Railway Network	Erzurum	Hasankale	43.70
		Sarıkamış	Kars	55.20
TOTAL				1611.10
1920- 1929	Aegean Region Railway Network	Kütahya	Emirler	64.20
	Ankara-Sivas- Zonguldak Railway Network	Kırıkkale	Yerköy	120.59
		Ankara	Irmak	73.87
	Samsun- Sivas Railway Network	Samsun	Kızıoğlu	142.79
	Fevzipaşa- Malatya- Diyarbakır- Muş Railway Network	Narlı	Malatya	172.42
TOTAL				573.87
1930- 1939	Aegean Region Railway Network	Sandıklı	Karakuyu	43.48
		Emirler	Nusrat	157.18
		Gümüşgün	Burdur	22.63
		Boğazönü	Isparta	12.80
	Ankara- Sivas- Zonguldak Railway Network	Yerköy	Sivas	417.90
		Irmak	Zonguldak	396.50
		Ulukışla	Boğazköprü	170.83

Table 5-continuing

	Fevzipaşa-Malatya-Diyarbakır- Muş Railway Network	Malatya	Diyarbakır	248.70
		Yolçatı	Elazığ	15.40
	Samsun- Sivas Railway Network	Zile	Kalın	214.75
		Çarşamba	Samsun	38.51
		Azot	Samsun	17.76
	Sivas-Kars /Arpaçay Railway Network	Taşlıdere	Malatya	223.06
		Çetinkaya	Erzurum	424.20
		Hasankale	Sarıkamış	109.40
TOTAL				2518.07

Sedef Akgüngör et al, “The Effect of Railway Expansion on Population in Turkey, 1856-2000”, **The MIT Press**, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2011).

Through the law no. 506 dated April 22, 1924, Haydarpaşa-Ankara, Eskişehir-Konya, Arifiye-Adapazarı railways as well as the Haydarpaşa Port were nationalised⁴⁸. In parallel with the law no. 1375 accepted on January 5, 1928, the state also took charge of the Mersin-Tarsus-Adana Railway and paid 204 million Swiss francs to the foreign companies for all the lines⁴⁹. In accordance with the law no. 1042 dated May 22, 1927, State Railways and Seaports Administration was established. This organisation was responsible for operating and constructing pre-existing and new state railways. Hence, the state owned the ports to which they would be linked⁵⁰. Then, in compliance with the law no. 1483 dated May 20, 1929, it was renamed as General Directorate of State Railways and Seaports which was also designated to construct small ports and jetties⁵¹. Based on Seaports Law no. 618 dated April 14, 1925, the state took on the duty of managing the ports. It was obligatory to get permission from the seaport authority to

⁴⁸ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, vol. 2 (April 22, 1924): 410-411.

⁴⁹ “Anadolu ve Mersin-Tarsus-Adana Demiryolları ve Haydarpaşa Liman İdaresi ile Zürih’te Şark Demiryolları Bankası arasında Münakit Dört Kıta ve Merbutatının Tasdiklarına Dair Kanun (L.N. 1375)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 1090 (January 1929): 6392- 6413.

⁵⁰ “Devlet Demiryolları ve Limanları İdareyi Umumiyesinin Teşkilat ve Vezâifine Dair Kanun (L.N. 1042)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 598 (May 1927).

⁵¹ “Devlet Demiryolları ve Limanları Umumi İdaresinin Teşkilat ve Vazifelerine Dair 23.5.1927 Tarih ve 1042 Numaralı Kanunun Tadili Hakkında Kanun (L.N.1483)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 1207 (June 1929): 7443-7445.

establish facilities such as casinos, beaches, factories, repair shops and boathouses, and to dive in territorial waters. However, the government was entitled to form a Turkish joint stock company at each port. These companies would arrange the distribution of water and coal, and loading-unloading process in the ports⁵². Finally, the Trade Contract followed by the Treaty of Lausanne gave Turkey the right to use the ports and maritime cabotage services. In accordance with law no 815 dated April 19, 1926, sea transportation from one point of the coastline to the other one was possible for the ships carrying Turkish flag and only Turkish citizens would occupy themselves with fishing in the territorial waters⁵³.

2.1.3.2 Abolition of the Tithe

From the foundation of the Republic in 1923 onwards, export-oriented agriculture began to expand. The key factors that led to this growth were a government policy aimed at meeting the demands of all commercial producers, use of advanced techniques in some products, and around 2000 tractors imported in the first four years of the Republic. These tractors were imported by wealthy farmers who received a significant amount of aid from the government. The spread of commercial agriculture, availability of previously vacant land with new machinery, and use of tractors demonstrate that large farmers controlled more areas of land⁵⁴. In this respect, in 1925 with the abolition of the tithe, the large farmers holding the majority of the land under control were the most privileged ones of the peasantry even though the abolition of tax positively affected the middle peasants who could market their products through the incentives. This significant concession made by the government resulted in giving up almost a third of the government revenues. The government's intention was to raise exports by increasing incentives for agricultural producers and to meet their own food requirements which accounted for 20% of all imports in 1925. The tithe was collected based on some share of the farmer's production and due to the misconduct of the tax collectors, it was usually over 10-12% that was supposed to be⁵⁵. These tax collectors coming from prominent families or large landowners in the cities and towns would

⁵² TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Term II, Vol. 3 (April 14, 1925): 184-186.

⁵³ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Term II, Vol. 4 (April 19, 1926): 571-572.

⁵⁴ Çağlar Keyder, *Toplumsal Tarih Çalışmaları* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2013), 309.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 309.

form an influence network in rural areas by giving loans to small farmers in a difficult situation. Hence, they lost their power through the abolition of the tithe⁵⁶.

In the end, the tithe was replaced by some land taxes and indirect taxes on commodities such as sugar, kerosene consumed by the rural population. The revision in the income sources was an indication of decisive steps to build social and economic policy, and to reapportion the fiscal burden on the population⁵⁷.

Table 6: Public Revenue Structure, 1924-1929 (%)

Source of Revenue	1924	1929
Tithe	28.6	-
Customs	20.9	18.7
Consumption Tax	12.7	6.5
Excise on salt	3.9	-
Livestock tax	3.1	6.2
Military service redemption	2.9	1.0
Land property tax	2.6	1.3
Miscellaneous	2.6	4.9
Profit tax	2.5	6.5
Land tax and unbuilt areas	-	13.7
Stamp revenues	-	3.3
Monopolies	-	21.1
Other revenues	20.2	16.8

Akif Erginay, **Le budget Turc** (Geneve: Imprimerie Central, 1948), 173 cited in Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: An Economy in Transition** (The Hague, 1958), 51.

Through this change, the policy of the Ottoman state collecting tax revenues mainly from the agricultural sector or from the rural population came to an end⁵⁸. Thus, it was aimed at increasing agricultural production by reducing the tax burden of the small farmers who made up the majority of the rural population. In this respect, large landowners and the urban population, who accounted for the greater part of the

⁵⁶ Pamuk, **ibid**, 177.

⁵⁷ See table 6.

⁵⁸ **Ibid**, 176-7.

consumers of monopoly products, bore the fiscal burden⁵⁹. Nevertheless, both large and small farmers could market their agricultural products until the Great Depression of 1929. Whereas agricultural prices tailed off by more than 50%, the indirect taxes came to more than the market value of the products. However, they didn't amount to anything while the prices were high⁶⁰. Consequently, the devastating effects of the depression on the trade accelerated with the protective policy initiated immediately after the first effects of the low prices⁶¹. In this regard, regardless of the amount of taxes paid to the government, whether or not the agricultural production was sustained mattered substantially.

2.1.3.3 Abolition of the Tobacco Regie

Following the Crimean War (1853-1856) which gave rise to increasing Ottoman debts, the Public Debt Administration was established in 1881 to collect the revenues of the state from tobacco as well as some other sources. In accordance with the payment of the debts, in 1883, a French organisation, the *Société de la Régie Cointéressée des Tabacs de L'Empire Ottoman* was founded to gain control of the market in the tobacco trade. The Ottoman government granted prerogatives for thirty years and these prerogatives were extended to the Regie for fifteen years by the decree issued by the Sultan in 1913⁶². The tobacco industry appealed to foreign investment a lot for its profitability, but Atatürk's speech in the Economic Congress of Turkey in İzmir posed a threat to the presence of the predominance of foreign monopolies and he wanted to put an end to the subjugation of the state. In this regard, his nationalistic sentiment caused European powers to take precautions against the spread of this belief although he was in favor of managing foreign investment to Turkey's benefit, and eventually the Treaty of Lausanne imposed a ban on the nationalisation of the tobacco monopoly. However, in parallel with the economic principles of the farmer group in the congress and following the foundation of the Republic a law concerning the purchase of tobacco to improve agricultural production was passed. Besides, the abolition of the tithe affected the farmers positively and they wouldn't have to give a certain percentage of

⁵⁹ Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: An Economy in Transition** (The Hague, 1958), 51.

⁶⁰ Çağlar Keyder, "Small Peasant Ownership in Turkey: Historical Formation and Present Structure", **Research Foundation of State University of New York**, Vol. 7, No.1 (1983): 71.

⁶¹ Keyder, 2013, 311.

⁶² Robert Carey Goodman, "The Role of the Tobacco Trade in Turkish- American Relations, 1923-29" (Master's Thesis, University of Richmond, 1988), 2-11.

their harvest to the tobacco monopoly anymore. The number of farmers cultivating tobacco went up by 50.000 from 1923 onwards, amounting to more than 175.000⁶³. In 1925, the Regie Company was abolished and purchased for 4 million TL (Turkish liras). The law no. 558 dated February 26, 1925 on Tobacco Inspection Agency and Cigarette Paper Monopoly came into force. In compliance with this law, purchase, operation, production and sale of tobacco for domestic consumption would be carried out directly by the state. Import and trade of cigarette paper or white copy paper and notebooks that could be used for this purpose were prohibited to private entities⁶⁴. The authority granted to the government for one year by this law was extended to the end of the fiscal year 1930 in accordance with the law no. 734 dated February 8, 1926⁶⁵. In 1930, the Law of Tobacco Monopoly numbered 1701 was enacted and in parallel with this law, the state would monopolise the purchase, processing, packaging, importing and selling of tobacco products for commercial purposes. Private entities were allowed to sell only leaf tobacco for export purposes, but this trade would be kept under the control of the state⁶⁶. The state control of tobacco contradicts the common definition of economic development of the Republican period because the 1920s are regarded as a liberal period superseded by the etatist period after 1929⁶⁷. Consequently, the monopoly of the privately-owned business fell through and the state intervention took precedence over it.

2.1.3.4 Sugar Industry

In the aftermath of the abolition of the tithe in 1925, about 20% of the state revenues were collected from monopolies. The reason why some prominent nationalised and domestic monopolies couldn't be privatised was derived from the revenues of the monopolies. In contrast to this approach, the fact that the right to establish sugar factories was given to private entities caused sugar to occupy an important place in the country's imports and accordingly, the state was deprived of the potential revenues⁶⁸. The outbreak of WWI, which deprived the country of foreign provisions and led to a great deal of increase in sugar prices, prompted the government to seek to improve this

⁶³ **Ibid**, 86-98.

⁶⁴ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 3 (February 26, 1925): 69-71.

⁶⁵ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (February 8, 1926): 107.

⁶⁶ "Tütün İnhisarı Kanunu (L.N. 1701)", **Resmî Gazete**, 1531 (June 1930): 9153-9159.

⁶⁷ Goodman, **ibid**, 100.

⁶⁸ Oktay Yenal, **Cumhuriyet'in İktisat Tarihi** (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 65-66.

industry⁶⁹. Alpullu and Uşak Sugar Factories were the first sugar-producing enterprises established in 1926 after the proclamation of the Republic. Alpullu Sugar Factory was set up by the Turkish Joint Stock Company of İstanbul and Thrace Sugar Factories whose owners were Hayri İpar and Kazım Taşkent. The largest shareholder of the company was the Business Bank (İş Bankası) by 68% of the capital. The Agricultural Bank owned 10% and private entities including some Thracian peasants and five deputies, Faik Kaltakkıran, Hüseyin Rıfkı Arduman, Faik Öztrak, İbrahim Çolak, Mehmet Şakir Kesebir controlled 22% of the entire share. As to Uşak Sugar Factory, the Bank of Industry and Mining owned 30% of the whole share and subsidised the factory with loans and the other leading shareholders were Faik Kaltakkıran, Faik Öztrak and Mehmet Şakir Kesebir who were the deputies standing for the state control over the privately-owned business⁷⁰.

The Law of Granting Privileges and Exemptions to Sugar Factories numbered 601 which was enacted in the course of the establishment of Alpullu and Uşak Factories on April 5, 1925 was one of the first incentive laws of the Republican period. In accordance with this law, factories would benefit from the privileges and exemptions of the 1913 Law for the Encouragement of Industry:

- a) The ones producing sugar beet for the factory would be exempt from land production duty for 10 years.
- b) The mines providing coal, lignite and tiles for the factories would also be exempt from any tax.
- c) Transports related to the needs of the factories would be made with a one-third discount from the transportation tax.
- d) Employees of the factories would be exempt from income tax for ten years.
- e) Provided that the land required for the establishment of the factories measured 10-15 acres, it would be allocated free of charge by the state and when necessary, it would be expropriated.
- f) All sugar to be produced would be exempt from excise duty for 18 years.
- g) New sugar factories would not be opened up for 25 years⁷¹.

⁶⁹Z. Y. Hershlag, *ibid*, 67.

⁷⁰ Boratav, 2006, 119-120. Fatih Damlıbağ, "Development of Beet Sugar Industries in the World and the Example of Alpullu Sugar Factory", *Journal of Modern Turkish History Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 34 (2017): 139-140.

⁷¹ *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Term II, Vol. 3 (April 5, 1925): 129-130. Boratav, *ibid*, 120-121. Yenil, *ibid*, 68.

Although privately-owned factories were granted these privileges, the establishment and operation of sugar factories were subject to government permission. That there were some deputies or political figures owning some of the shares in the factories was an indication of the state's link to the private organisations. The shareholders of the factories thought that imports of sugar would be more lucrative due to the high price in the domestic market⁷². With the law no. 724 which was passed on January 25, 1926, the state gained control of the imports of sugar, but in conformity with the law no. 601, the state was obliged to buy the factories which had already started production and benefited from a high profit through importation⁷³. By contrast, the state monopolised the privately-owned factories to its disadvantage because they went bankrupt or lost their profits⁷⁴.

Table 7: Rise in Sugar Production, 1926-1939 (Tons)

Year	Production	Year	Production
1926	573	1933	65.086
1927	5.162	1934	58.663
1928	4.280	1935	53.828
1929	7.944	1936	65.886
1930	13.073	1937	51.575
1931	22.649	1938	42.529
1932	27.307	1939	95.192

Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: An Economy in Transition** (The Hague, 1958),135.

In 1933, a rapid improvement took place in sugar production as a consequence of the government's new policy intended for increasing production and reducing imports. The four factories built between 1926 and 1935 helped raise their annual production so as to meet the needs of the people of the country⁷⁵.

⁷² Boratav, 2006, 121. Yenal, **ibid**, 68.

⁷³ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (January 25, 1926): 92-93.

⁷⁴ Boratav, 2006, 121. Yenal, **ibid**, 68.

⁷⁵ Z. Y. Hershlag, **ibid**, 135. See table 7.

Sugar imports coming to 63.790 tons in 1926 decreased to 3.728 tons in 1934 and in 1935 they were brought to an end. The industry made a progress by means of three banks, Business Bank, Sümerbank and Agricultural Bank. Through the development of this industry, the government saved a great of foreign currency putting an end to the imports⁷⁶

2.1.3.5 The Business Bank

The Business Bank was established in 1924 as the first private bank so as to contribute to the foundation of industrial enterprises. Its activities increased in the early thirties and went into operation, especially in the railway network, coal production, glass industries, textiles, lumber industry, insurance companies and sugar. In the sugar industry, the bank undertook a mission to represent private enterprises with the state banks⁷⁷.

In the aftermath of the foundation of the Business Bank, the share of national banks in the sector increased. Whereas the share of foreign banks in general deposits was around 78% in 1924, it decreased to 57% between 1924 and 1929. In 1924, the share of private banks in deposits was 12% while the share of state banks was 10%. These figures rose to 20% in private banks and 23% in state banks between 1924 and 1929. As to the loans, the share of foreign banks which was 53% in 1924 dropped to 47% in the period 1924-1929. The share of the private sector increased from 5% to 15%, and the one of the state fell from 42% to 39%⁷⁸.

The bank which made an average of 36% profit per year in line with its own resources from 1925 to 1929 opened up 28 branches in this period and became the second largest bank in the country after the Agricultural Bank in 1930. Moreover, the bank executives helping enrich the bureaucrats through the use of political authority and influence for private interests formed a strong pressure group that tried to affect economic policy for the sake of private enterprise⁷⁹.

In the 1930s, the state granted the bank authorisation to collaborate with Sümerbank in the operations of some factories in Isparta, Bodrum, Malatya and Keçiborlu set up

⁷⁶ **Ibid**,135.

⁷⁷ **Ibid**, 117-118.

⁷⁸ Tezel, **ibid**, 149.

⁷⁹ **Ibid**, 275.

in accordance with the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation. Apart from providing loans for industry and trade, it played a significant role in the export trade⁸⁰.

2.1.3.6 The Bank of Industry and Mining

The Bank of Industry and Mining established in compliance with the law no. 633 in 1925 represents the prevailing mindset of the period between state and private enterprise by contributing to the development of industrial and mining production⁸¹. It was designated to provide medium and long-term loans, and information on technical, financial and economic issues for private industrial enterprises. This bank intended to support private sector in the 1920s by taking private companies into a partnership through the stocks they bought and by extending loans given to private industrial enterprises. The operation of state-owned factories from the Ottoman period was left in the bank's charge and transferred to private enterprises⁸². Even if the bank was set up to give loans to all private companies, only the companies it took into partnership benefited from its sources⁸³. Henceforth, it turned out that the establishment of new enterprises in the industrial and mining sectors by means of state capital became impossible and partnership with privately-owned enterprises was made compulsory. The bank turned the factories it had taken over into joint stock companies⁸⁴. 1925 was the peak year for the number of the joint stock companies and the bank became effective for the increase in the number of these companies for the following years till the Great Depression of 1929⁸⁵.

Table 8: Range of the Joint Stock Companies Established Between 1920 and 1930 Based on Their Foundation Years

Year	Joint Stock Companies with Foreign Capital	Joint Stock Companies with Domestic Capital	Total
1920	4	12	16
1921	2	3	5
1922	1	1	2

⁸⁰ Z. Y. Hershlag, *ibid*, 118.

⁸¹ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 3 (April 19, 1925): 224-225.

⁸² Tezel, *ibid*, 275.

⁸³ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 55-56.

⁸⁴ Boratav, 2006, 124.

⁸⁵ See table 8.

Table 8-continuing

1923	4	3	7
1924	10	17	27
1925	12	28	40
1926	9	28	37
1927	2	12	14
1928	13	14	27
1929	5	11	16
1930	4	6	10
Total	66	135	201

A. Gündüz Ökçün, **1920- 1930 Yılları Arasında Kurulan Türk Anonim Şirketlerinde Yabancı Sermaye** (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1971), 127.

The joint stock companies with which the bank was a partner were as follows: Feshane Fabrics, Uşak Agricultural Advancement, Kayseri Bünyan Yarn Factory, Isparta Yarn Factory, Maraş Rice Mill, Tosya Rice Mill, Yalvaç Industry and Trade, Trabzon Port Monopoly, Malatya Industrial Enterprises, Aksaray Azmi Milli Flour Mill, Ergani Copper Mines, Trabzon Electricity and Kilimli Coal Mines⁸⁶. The Bank of Industry and Mining founded to create resources required for industrial enterprises and manage them was regarded as inadequate. The bank couldn't become active in providing industrial loans for private corporations except for the state enterprises taken over in the course of its foundation and the private companies it had incorporated into its capital due to the fact that it concentrated its activities mostly on its own enterprises⁸⁷. Although the bank had the authority to establish industrial facilities in compliance with the government bill, the budget commission amended the article in a way that would not allow the bank to establish an enterprise⁸⁸. As a solution to this, industrial management was separated from industrial banking. The law drafts were prepared to divide the function of the bank into two parts. The State Industrial Office and the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey were established instead of the Bank of Industry and Mining. The law of State Industrial Office on July 3, 1932 and the law of Industrial

⁸⁶ Zafer Toprak, "Cumhuriyet ve Bankacılık", **Toplumsal Tarih**, Vol. 1, No. 80 (2010): 26.

⁸⁷ Derya Bozoklu, "Atatürk Döneminde Bankacılık Sistemi ve Gelişimine Genel Bir Bakış", **Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi**, Vol. 19, No: 55 (2003): 285.

⁸⁸ Boratav, 2006, 125.

Credit Bank of Turkey were enacted on July 7, 1932. However, after a while, these two organisations were merged under the name of Sümerbank through a law which came into force in 1933⁸⁹.

2.1.3.7 The Passing of the 1927 Law for the Encouragement of Industry

In the first years of the Republic, the development policy of the state was founded upon the private sector. Within the framework of this policy, a number of incentives to develop the private sector led by the entrepreneur class were implemented. The law for the Encouragement of Industry which came into force in 1913 was enacted for a temporary period of 15 years, and so it would be abolished in 1928. The law no. 1055 dated May 28, 1927 which encouraged private industrial and mining enterprises by granting a wide range of exemptions and prerogatives was enacted to remain in force until June 1, 1942⁹⁰. Through the law dated 1913, even small enterprises were included in the scope of the law. The enterprises were split up into four categories in accordance with the law enacted in 1927 because the first law failed to stipulate the growth of the enterprises. The most favoured ones were those exploiting at least 10 horsepower and hiring at least 1500 man/ days of labour every year whereas the privileges of the ones not using converting power and employing fewer workers were limited⁹¹. The exemptions and prerogatives were as follows:

- a) Land was provided free of charge to the entrepreneurs who wanted to set up a business outside the municipal boundaries.
- b) The land within the borders of the municipality would be granted on condition that the enterprises paid for the value of land within 10 years.
- c) Construction of private telegraph and telephone lines between the enterprises and state network would be permitted.
- d) They would be exempt from the payment of tariff if the enterprises didn't have raw materials for production, machinery and building materials required for the erection and installation of the factory sites.
- e) Freight reductions coming to 30% would be applied for the transport of all the materials by ferry and train.

⁸⁹ Perihan Ünlü Soylu, Özlem Yaktı, "Devletçiliğe Yönelmede Bir Köşe Taşı: Birinci Beş Yıllık Sanayi Planı", **History Studies**, Ankara Üniversitesi, Vol 4 (2012): 374.

⁹⁰ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 5 (May 28, 1927): 272-278. Boratav, 2006, 129.

⁹¹ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 65-66.

- f) They had to give priority to the home product even if it is 10% percent more expensive than the imported product.
- g) They could lay a claim to a price reduction and bonuses on the products provided for them by the state institutions.
- h) In the establishments entitled to the prerogatives, all specialists and functionaries except directors had to be Turkish citizens⁹².

The number of private enterprises went up substantially through the positive effects of the incentive measures as of 1923⁹³. Based on the number of enterprises shown in the table, 1132 enterprises were established between 1923 and 1932 and all of them were medium-sized or large enterprises because they were grounded on the second law while the first one was made up of small-sized enterprises.

Table 9: Range of the Enterprises Benefiting from the Law for the Encouragement of Industry Based on Their Foundation Years (Before 1923-1932)

Foundation Year	Number of Enterprises
Before 1923	341
1923	34
1924	63
1925	101
1926	141
1927	140
1928	157
1929	118
1930	106
1931	140
1932	88
Unknown	44
TOTAL	1473

Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, “Türkiye’de Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Gelişmenin 50 Yılı” (Ankara: DİE Yayınları, 1973), 166.

⁹² TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Term II, Vol. 5 (May 28, 1927): 273-274.

⁹³ See table 9.

It seems impossible to account for the number of private enterprises exactly in accordance with these statistics. However, when the number of enterprises is compared with the one of the pre-republican period, the table shows that the number of privately-owned enterprises increased considerably in accordance with the state policy to create nationalist capitalists from privileged private enterprises between 1923 and 1932⁹⁴.

2.1.3.8 Laws Enacted Within the Scope of Nationalisation of the Economy

After the foundation of the new Republican state, Turkish nationalism came to the forefront as a political force and the government enacted several laws to delineate the use of Turkish and the content of the professions in terms of ethno-religious identities forming the policies on Turkey's citizenship. The law numbered 805 and dated April 10, 1926 on the Compulsory Use of Turkish in Economic Enterprises prescribed that all institutions and companies of Turkish nationality were required to keep a record of all kinds of transactions, correspondence, contracts and conventions, and keep their books and ledgers in Turkish. As far as foreign companies and institutions are concerned, this obligation was restricted to their transactions, correspondence and relations with the Turkish institutions and Turkish citizens as well as the registers and documents. They could use another language apart from Turkish. However, Turkish text would be the original and the formal signatures had to be affixed to the text. Despite this clause, Turkish would be valid below the part that other languages had been used in. Moreover, a lawsuit would be filed against those who violated this law⁹⁵. As a consequence, the government enforced this law on the minority groups running a private business.

In compliance with article no. 4 of the law numbered 788 on Civil Servants dated March 18, 1926, all civil servants had to be Turkish and so minority citizens would be barred from civil service positions⁹⁶. There was also another legislative law excluding non-Muslims who were the citizens of the Turkish Republic. In section I of article no. 2 of the Law of Judges numbered 766 and dated March 3, 1926, 'being Turkish' was one of the prerequisites for being a member of the judging class⁹⁷. Employment conditions in other professions became more and more difficult for non-Muslims who

⁹⁴ See table 6.

⁹⁵ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (March 18, 1926): 509-521.

⁹⁶ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (April 10, 1926): 556.

⁹⁷ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (March 3, 1926): 468-475.

were kept away from civil service. Legal regulations preventing this group from performing various professions and being employed dated back to the second half of the 1920s before the law numbered 2007 was enacted⁹⁸. For instance, in accordance with the Attorneyship Law numbered 460 and dated April 3, 1924, to qualify as a lawyer a person was required to have Turkish citizenship⁹⁹. A commission was set up to decide if a lawyer had the required qualifications for carrying out the profession of the attorneyship and some lawyers, especially non-Muslims registered in the bar associations were thereby ostracised from the profession¹⁰⁰. In addition to the relevant law obstructing the profession of non-Muslim lawyers in parallel with the law numbered 708 and dated January 6, 1926, in order for lawyers to be recognised by the bar association, an obligation to work first as a civil servant in a court for two years was imposed¹⁰¹. The fact that only Muslim Turks were employed in the courts prevented non-Muslims from fulfilling this requirement¹⁰².

In pursuance of the law numbered 964 and dated January 24, 1927 on Pharmacists and Pharmacy, only the ones who were Turkish with a pharmacist degree had the right to open up a pharmacy¹⁰³. In line with the law numbered 1219 of April 11, 1928 on Practice of Medicine and Medical Sciences, doctors had to get a degree from the Medical Faculty of İstanbul University and they also had to be Turks. According to another article of the same law, it was also possible for Turkish doctors getting a degree in foreign countries to carry out their profession in Turkey¹⁰⁴. Another law furthering the Turks' privileges was Press Law enacted on July 25, 1931. It stipulated that only the Turks with a degree would be the owners of the journals and magazines and if they had a degree from foreign countries, they had to be fluent in Turkish¹⁰⁵.

In accordance with the law numbered 2007 and dated June 11, 1932 on Trades and Services Reserved for Turkish Citizens, foreigners would be prohibited from working as itinerant salesmen, musicians, photographers, hairdressers, typesetters, middlemen, stock brokers, sellers of state monopoly products, interpreters and tourist guides, clothing, cap and shoe manufacturers, construction, iron and wood workers, workers

⁹⁸ Koraltürk, *ibid*, 280.

⁹⁹ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 2 (April 3, 1924): 306-308.

¹⁰⁰ Koraltürk, *ibid*, 205-206.

¹⁰¹ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 4 (January 6, 1926): 72-73.

¹⁰² Koraltürk, *ibid*, 206

¹⁰³ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term II, Vol. 5 (January 24, 1927): 48-55.

¹⁰⁴ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term III, Vol. 6 (April 11, 1928): 85-94.

¹⁰⁵ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term IV, Vol. 10 (July 25, 1931): 365-378.

in loading and unloading, temporary and permanent workers at water, lighting and heating installations, drivers, day labourers, watchmen, janitors, concierges, waiters, singers, veterinarians, pharmacists¹⁰⁶. However, this law was not only intended for foreigners but also for the minority groups and accordingly, they felt obliged to leave Turkey, which generated new job opportunities for Turkish nationals¹⁰⁷

As a consequence, these laws indicate that through the influence of Turkish nationalism along with Islam, restrictions were imposed on the employment and self-employment of local non-Muslims and foreigners in the economy in the early Republican years of the country.

2.2 The Great Depression of 1929 and a Change in Economic Policy: A Move Towards Etatism

2.2.1 Global Crisis and Its Impact on Turkish Economic Policy

Along with the collapse of the Wall Street Stock Exchange in 1929, the economic crisis spreading from the US to the world affected production to a great extent and gave rise to mass unemployment in addition to the close-down of the workplaces. Accordingly, the crisis was quite shocking for both the US and European countries, and the negative effects of this crisis on the economy brought into question whether the liberal economic policies pursued were effective in development and industrialisation. On the other hand, the fact that this crisis affecting many countries in the world was not gone through in the USSR and that the liberal economic system broke down led to the adoption of Keynesian-based economic policies. Roosevelt was elected as the president of the USA in 1932 and introduced the New Deal policy which was part of the capitalist planning in which the private sector was restructured under the control of the state for a while and consumption outweighed production. Regional planning practices called ‘autonomous’ were implemented within the framework of the state intervention. However, the political powers of the capitalist countries which searched for alternative political and economic approaches to the political liberalism and economic liberal development model mostly turned to fascism in this period of time. Germany and Italy were two major countries ruled by fascist powers and South

¹⁰⁶ “Türkiye’de Türk Vatandaşlarına Tahsis Edilen Sanat ve Hizmetler Hakkında Kanun (L.N. 2007)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 2126 (June 1932): 1564.

¹⁰⁷ Yüksel Akkaya, **Cumhuriyet’in Hamalları: İşçiler** (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap Yayınları, 2010), 118-128 cited in Murat Koraltürk, **Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi** (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011), 278.

American countries except for Costa Rica and Uruguay were under the control of military dictatorship. There was no liberal democracy in Asia, the Far East, Oceania except in Australia and New Zealand, and Greece, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia had fascist tendencies. In this respect, the global crisis and unemployment brought about fascism¹⁰⁸.

Turkey was negatively affected by the Great Depression of 1929 in spite of the great distinction between its retarded economy and the capitalist economy of the Western World. A drop-off in the prices of agricultural production, which was the primary source of income for the Turkish people and made up a substantial part of Turkish exports, played a considerable role in the acceleration of the crisis. Turkey's first reaction to the crisis was to keep the balance of foreign trade and tighten its belt by cutting down the government's expenditure¹⁰⁹. However, Turkey didn't have capital resources and international credit facilities and the situation worsened in addition to the economic policy carried out by the government¹¹⁰.

Table 10: Government Expenditure, 1929-1934
(Thousand TL)

Years	Expenditure
1929-1930	214.5
1930-1931	210.1
1931-1932	181.9
1932-1933	174.0
1933-1934	173.6
1934-1935	202.1

Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: The Challenge of Growth** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 61.

Turkey boosted its optimism before the outbreak of the global crisis. This mood of optimism derived from two main expectations: one of these is that there would be good prospects for agricultural production in 1929. The government aimed at increasing the

¹⁰⁸ Tevfik Çavdar, **Türkiye Ekonomisinin Tarihi 1900- 1960** (Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2003), 227-299.

¹⁰⁹ See table 7.

¹¹⁰ Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: The Challenge of Growth** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 61-62.

exports and reducing the imports of agricultural production. Considerable investment in the industry by increasing tariffs was the second expectation. This would provide a new source of revenue for the government¹¹¹. The first expectation was met to some extent and there was a high increase in the production of some agricultural products such as wheat, barley, tobacco, cotton, fig and fleece compared with some other products although there were some fluctuations in the number of products caused by the economic crisis taking place in the world¹¹².

Table 11: Range of Agricultural Production, 1928-1931

Products	Production/ Tonne			
	1928	1929	1930	1931
Wheat	1641	2718	2586	2992
Barley	900	1699	1536	1804
Tobacco	43035	36503	46211	51111
Cotton	76110	63556	51435	61746
Grapes	634499	719099	493499	422999
Fig	71663	47776	54290	60805
Nut	21549	6253	47625	23297
Olive	413616	188007	313346	144139
Fleece	18119	15266	15747	17643

İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, *Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiye’de Devletçiliğin Oluşumu* (Ankara: ODTÜ, 1982), 11.

The government conceived of the tariffs as a contribution to the increase in the revenues of the state so as to invigorate the industry¹¹³. In spite of the limitations in their exports to Turkey, some foreign companies were expected to make an investment in the country.

¹¹¹ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 75.

¹¹² See table 11.

¹¹³ See table 12.

Table 12: Proportion of Tariffs to All Taxes on Imported Goods, 1926-1931

Years	Tariffs	All Import Taxes
1926	0.15	0.26
1927	0.14	0.28
1928	0.15	0.29
1929	0.16	0.26
1930	0.38	0.38
1931	0.35	0.35

Yahya S. Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin İktisat Tarihi (1923-1950)*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 194.

The effects of the precautions taken in the global crisis on the Turkish economy were as follows:

- a) The value of the Turkish currency was kept stable compared to the foreign currency.
- b) External balance was achieved.
- c) The precautions taken to keep the external balance reduced imports.
- d) In spite of the increase in the number of exports, there was a decrease in the price of the goods.
- e) The prices of agricultural products dropped sharply on a national and global scale.
- f) Whereas the prices of the industrial products went down in the foreign countries, they were kept stable in Turkey.
- g) There were some cuts in the public budget and expenditure to balance the budget¹¹⁴.

2.2.2 Improvements in Foreign Trade

In the first five years of the Republic, the state's right to determine tariffs and regulate foreign trade was very limited due to the circumstances of the Treaty of Lausanne, but it could raise the tariffs to protect industrial protection against international competition shortly before going into the depression. Before the depression, Turkey had already taken the measures that so many countries were taking during the depression. However, it was badly affected by the depression although its effect was

¹¹⁴ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 217.

not as much as it was in the other countries¹¹⁵. The Treaty of Lausanne contained terms preventing Turkey from controlling over its foreign trade for a period of five years until 1929 and imposed the implementation of the Ottoman tariffs of 1916 on Turkey so that it couldn't introduce new ones on foreign trade. It would deprive the state of the revenue of tariffs in the course of the abolition of an important tax like tithe and prevent it from intervening in economics effectively¹¹⁶. There was a speculative increase in imports before 1929 as the restriction on tariffs would come to an end through the Treaty of Lausanne. Redundant purchases were observed as merchants wanted to replenish stocks before taxes were imposed¹¹⁷.

Table 13: Balance of Foreign Trade, 1924-1931

(Thousand TL)

Years	Exports	Imports	Balance of Foreign Trade
1924	158	193.6	-34.7
1925	192.4	241.6	-49.2
1926	186.4	234.7	-48.3
1927	158.4	211.4	-53.0
1928	173.5	223.5	-50.0
1929	155.2	256.3	-101.1
1930	151.4	147.5	+ 3.9
1931	127.2	126.6	+0.6

Gülten Kazgan, **Türkiye Ekonomisi'nde Krizler** (1929-2001), (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2005), 51. İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, **1929 Dünya Buhranında Türkiye'nin İktisadi Politika Arayışları** (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2009), 88.

In the same year, the Ottoman debt deferred with the Treaty of Lausanne began to be paid. The annual amount of the debt payments came to 20 percent of the budget and tax revenues plunged sharply during the world crisis, which put Turkey's economy into

¹¹⁵ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 75. Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, *ibid*, 47.

¹¹⁶ Boratav, 2006, 34.

¹¹⁷ Gülten Kazgan, **Türkiye Ekonomisi'nde Krizler** (1929-2001), (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2005), 57.

trouble¹¹⁸. There was a certain decline in 1929 export values compared with 1928¹¹⁹. Despite the increase in export volumes, this decline was due to the rapid fall in the prices of the export products. Hence, the increase in the export volume compensated for the fall in the export revenue to a certain extent¹²⁰. After the payment difficulties in 1929, the export trade suffered less damage than the import trade as the government attempted to cut down on imports and encourage exports. Thus, as of 1930, foreign trade had a surplus in terms of exports¹²¹. Furthermore, Turkey's term of trade got worse by 15% in 1929 in accordance with the average of both 1927 and 1928. The rapid decline in the exchange rate of the Turkish Lira turned the effects of the imports and the global crisis into a currency crisis for the government¹²².

Table 14: Turkish Lira to Dollar and Pound Exchange Rate Between 1925 and 1931

Years	Turkish Lira to Dollar Exchange Rate	Turkish Lira to Pound Exchange Rate
1925	1.87	8.95
1926	1.93	9.35
1927	1.96	9.51
1928	1.97	9.57
1929	2.08	10.09
1930	2.12	10.32
1931	2.12	9.64

Yahya S. Tezel, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin İktisat Tarihi (1923-1950)*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 203.

In the floating exchange rate system in the market, foreign trade deficits directly affected the value of the lira. Between 1925 and 1928, the lira fell by 6% against the pound and 5% against the dollar due to foreign trade deficits. It dropped by 5% against the pound and dollar, and this decline stemmed from the first instalment of the

¹¹⁸ Yenal, *ibid*, 66.

¹¹⁹ See table 13.

¹²⁰ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 89.

¹²¹ Keyder, 2017, 131.

¹²² See table 14.

Ottoman debts that the government had to pay¹²³. New measures were taken against this decline in the value of the Turkish Lira. First, the National Economy and Savings Society was established, which encouraged the public to save and use domestic goods. Secondly, the government tried to pursue a balanced budget policy and did not engage in foreign exchange expenditure unless necessary. Lastly, the preparations for the establishment of the Central Bank were accelerated. In 1929, the law numbered 1447 on Securities and Foreign Exchange intended to prevent speculation in foreign exchange and cash transactions entered into force. Then, in 1930 the law numbered 1567 on Protection of the Value of Turkish Currency passed. In accordance with this law, it was aimed at increasing government control over foreign exchange demand¹²⁴.

2.2.3 Impacts of the Great Depression on Social Classes

Even though the Great Depression occurred in USA and Europe in 1929, the economic crisis took its effect in 1927 marking the outset of the agricultural depression in Turkey as a result of a decrease in foodstuff prices and withdrawal of credit facilities to underdeveloped countries. Economic crises affected different social classes with varying consequences and the sector which was badly affected by the depression was agriculture due to the nature of the economic policies in Turkey¹²⁵. The Anatolian peasantry suffered from the economic crisis due to the lack of credit, debt and taxation and fell into the clutches of the usurer. Above all, producers for foreign markets were the most influenced due to their degree of market orientation. The crisis in urban areas was closely linked to the issues in rural areas. Trading cities went through the depression through poor working conditions for the working class and a series of merchant bankruptcies¹²⁶. From the very early years of the foundation of the Republican state onwards, the improvement in the agricultural production which made up a majority of the whole production gave rise to vitality in the other sectors along with the increase in national income. However, income growth started declining in agriculture as well as in the rest of the other sectors as the world crisis took effect¹²⁷.

¹²³ Tezel, **ibid**, 102.

¹²⁴ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 81-82.

¹²⁵ **Ibid**, 217.

¹²⁶ Cem Emrence, "Turkey in Economic Crisis (1927-1930): A Panoramic Vision", **Taylor & Francis Group**, Vol. 39, No. 4 (2003): 75-76.

¹²⁷ See table 15.

Table 15: National Income Based on Economic Sectors, 1923-1932

Years	Agriculture	Industry	Trade	Other Services	National Production
1923	379,3	126,1	73,9	373,3	952,6
1924	573,3	118,8	84,9	276,8	1023,8
1925	733,0	147,7	110,0	534,9	1525,6
1926	820,7	166,3	115,5	548,0	1650,5
1927	608,5	191,6	118,3	552,8	1471,2
1928	724,0	188,8	119,8	599,9	1632,5
1929	1075,2	204,5	131,2	662,2	2073,1
1930	723,2	180,2	162,9	574,2	1580,5
1931	632,4	175,8	95,5	487,9	1391,6
1932	470,9	165,2	84,8	470,2	1171,2

Bulutay T. Yahya S. Tezel, N. Yıldırım, **Türkiye Milli Geliri (1923-1948)**, (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1974).

In agriculture, there are three different subclasses affected by the crisis and some groups lost out whereas some of them benefited from the effects of the crisis:

- a) Large farmers mainly producing goods for the foreign market and in some cases integrating with the merchant exporter, having the capacity to make a transition to modern farming,
- b) Medium farmers not switching to modern mechanised agriculture, but producing for the domestic market and partly for the foreign market,
- c) Small farmers mainly producing for their subsistence consumption and local market¹²⁸.

The Great Depression affected large farmers for many reasons: Firstly, decreasing prices of agricultural products in the world and the decline in the domestic market could not be prevented. Reducing domestic prices to world market prices was regarded as the only way to increase exports. Secondly, the prices of agricultural products dropped sharply whereas agricultural input prices, despite some measures taken by the state, were high. However, in parallel with the decline in agricultural product prices, prices of industrial products which constituted agricultural inputs also decreased in the industrialised countries of the Western World. Turkey took measures to reduce imports

¹²⁸ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 217-218.

by raising tariff barriers to enable the foreign trade balance. The prices of agricultural inputs which had to be imported as industrial products in the domestic market did not fall due to these measures and remained high. Finally, the other reason is that the state aid to mechanised farming was cut off from 1930 onwards. As to the medium farmers, their loss was less than the one of the large farmers. These farmers didn't pay much for agricultural inputs because they hadn't started mechanised farming and they had relied more on domestic labour. Medium farmers could find some money for their affairs such as paying taxes by supplying some of their goods to the market even though their price was low. As far as small farmers are concerned, they produced for their own production in the subsistence economy and supplied a very small portion of their production to the local market in order to pay taxes. In this regard, even small farmers had to get into the market which meant being affected by the conditions of the period¹²⁹.

Another factor contributing to the deteriorating situation in rural areas was tax. The two main taxes were the land tax taken from the land owner levied on the land value and the livestock tax imposed on each animal. There were also some other taxes such as transaction tax, road tax and aircraft tax which increased the burden on the peasantry. Faced with rising costs of production and declining incomes, the peasants started to look for sources of credit. The Agricultural Bank, the largest credit institution established in the Ottoman period, was granted the right to act as a private company and give loans to the peasantry in 1924¹³⁰.

Table 16: Loans by the Agricultural Bank, 1922-1929

Year	Turkish Liras
1922	928.000
1923	4.807.000
1924	16.400.000
1925	15.456.000
1926	16.214.000

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 218-220

¹³⁰ See table 16.

Table 16-continuing

1927	17.124.000
1928	29.046.000
1929	25.880.000

Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: The Challenge of Growth** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 49.

Moreover, the peasantry was enforced to borrow excessively to get the money required to compensate for production and consumption costs. There were three basic patterns in the borrowing process:

- a) The peasants borrowed money at interest rates of 3-12% per month. It caused them to be indebted to the usurer and resulted in the sequestration of the lands by the lender.
- b) The lender was the merchant who would buy the product from the peasants and agree to purchase the product in advance, guaranteeing low prices and quantity for several years. Through this type, the peasants received the means of production such as seed, agricultural machinery and animals from the lender to maintain the production. Generally, the debt which was not paid back gave rise to the confiscation of the means of production along with the peasants' lands.
- c) The peasants owed the merchant for consumer goods such as shoes, textiles and petrol. The merchants sold them without taking any money in exchange. The total debt was not known to the peasants until they wanted to pay it back. Thus, the lender was free to raise the total debt by at least three or four times the actual sum of money. The peasants who didn't have any money to purchase such goods had to maintain their relationship with the merchant even though they were heavily charged. In this regard, when they felt the depression by falling prices, they ran into debt¹³¹.

In this respect, the peasants left their land and sold their animals both to pay their taxes and debts and to avoid imminent taxes. They had to agree to be sharecroppers on the large landowners' farms¹³².

¹³¹ Emrence, **ibid**, 68-71.

¹³² Keyder, 2017, 129.

Although farmers had a differentiation in loss of money, they all lost out to the city dwellers. The stable prices of goods and services produced in the city can be said to be more profitable for the ones living in urban areas¹³³. However, the crises in the cities were closely linked to the depression in rural areas as they reached the city centres through the merchant networks playing the role of intermediaries between peasants and foreign companies. When the credit sources were exhausted to finance the producer, many merchants went bankrupt and it became difficult to sell the crop at affordable prices in the foreign markets. The merchants put the blame on high rail fares and monopolies in the port trade for their losses. Many people agreed on the fact that the Aydın Railway Line linking İzmir to its hinterland was not cheap whereas harbour monopolies demanded high fees for low-quality facilities such as loading, unloading and storage. Furthermore, workers suffered a setback from the effects of the working process linking the peasantry to the merchants. Wages went down and working conditions became more difficult owing to rising employment¹³⁴. The most important factor in increasing unemployment was the migration of the farmers who couldn't pay their taxes and debts. Job loss and attempts to reduce wages often led to strikes and protests held by workers¹³⁵.

2.3 Etatism: Economic Policies and Ideology

Etatism is a term used to describe the economic policies and ideology of the country and both of them are closely intertwined. It was portrayed as state intervention in affairs where the common interests of the people were concerned. It is certain that an exchange of ideas embedded in etatist policy came into being from the time of the railway issue which caused the state to become active and constructive¹³⁶. Etatist economic policy cannot be smoothly fitted into the usual tenets of capitalism, mixed economy, directed economy, planned economy, or socialist economy and so, Turkey ought to be evaluated on its own merits as well as other underdeveloped countries¹³⁷. Nevertheless, one of the main features of the etatist period was that 'economic policy' and 'economic development policy' were considered to be very closely connected with each other. That a country owns insufficient economic resources, goes through low

¹³³ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 221.

¹³⁴ Emrence, *ibid*, 72-73.

¹³⁵ Keyder, 2017, 133.

¹³⁶ Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 103.

¹³⁷ Z. Y. Hershlag, 1968, 125.

production and living standards, and relies on autonomous development means making no progress and becoming more and more backward compared with the countries in which economics are stable and dynamic. It also stands for remaining in a semi-colonial status. In this respect, the economic level of the country had to be raised to the one of the developed and industrial countries¹³⁸. The fundamental reason for the adoption of the etatism was related to the failure of the private sector to promote the country and in accordance with the inefficiency of the private sector, Atatürk described etatism as follows even if he highlighted the private enterprise:

“Etatism Turkey has implemented is not a system translated from the principles the socialist theorists put forward since the nineteenth century. In contrast, it is a system that ensues from the specific needs of Turkey, which is peculiar to Turkey. The meaning of etatism for us can be clarified as follows: our purpose is to regard private enterprise and individual activities as the essential principle, taking into consideration the fulfilment of all the needs of this great nation and the fact that almost nothing has been done so far. As a result, the state should handle the economy for economic development of the country. The path we follow is definitely a different one from liberalism”¹³⁹.

The state didn’t leave out the importance of the private sector, yet it turned out that it had difficulty in facing up to the tasks it had got involved in. Therefore, the state took on the responsibility to do away with the pressure caused by the Great Depression in which the private sector was too weak to implement the economic policy of the nation. Henceforth, the economic deterioration prompted the government to make effective decisions to achieve its goals: use of modern methods of production, manufacturing of domestic resources by national industry, improvement of the balance of payments and encouragement of agriculture¹⁴⁰.

The year 1932 went through an initiative taken by the left-wing fraction of the CHP led by Minister of Economy Mustafa Şeref and endorsed by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü to frame etatism as an alternative economic system¹⁴¹. In the light of this fact, İsmet İnönü defined the essential objectives of etatism as follows:

“... a policy of etatism in economics is of necessity primarily for defence purposes. To bring to an end the centuries of neglect, to save the country from lawless destruction and to establish a powerful state to deal with the difficulties of our times, it is surely necessary to protect the order from subversive elements”¹⁴².

¹³⁸ Ibid, 73.

¹³⁹ Afet İnan, **Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin İkinci Sanayi Planı 1936** (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1973), 13-14.

¹⁴⁰ Z. Y. Hershlag, 1968, 73.

¹⁴¹ Sadık Ünay, **Neoliberal Globalization and Institutional Reform: The Political Economy of Development Planning in Turkey** (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2006).

¹⁴² İsmet İnönü, “Fırkamızda Devletçilik Vasfı”, **Kadro**, No. 22 (1933): 4.

In the aftermath of heated debates in the parliament and within the party organisation of CHP apart from escalating protest from the private enterprise, Atatürk interposed and nominated Celal Bayar as the minister of economy. This was an indication of Atatürk's dedication to constructing etatism as a pragmatic form of state capitalism aimed at accelerating the growth of industrialisation, when economic conditions were unstable in many parts of the world, instead of another alternative economic system in which the significance of private enterprise would be overshadowed¹⁴³

Towards the end of the 1930s, some precautions were taken to overhaul etatist policies for a number of reasons: the growing economic strain, improving relations with the West, and also the death of Atatürk, the leading spirit behind the plans for the construction of industrial enterprises, in 1938. The productivity of the state enterprises started to be examined and afforded more assistance to private enterprises in question by virtue of the assurances provided by the leaders of the country¹⁴⁴

2.3.1 The Transition Period Towards Etatism

The Great Depression caused the coalition of large landowners, merchants and bureaucrats established at the beginning of the Republic period to come to an end. The most powerful group in this coalition, large landowners, lost out most to the others and merchants, especially those interested in exports, were at a disadvantage. In order to do away with the effects of the crisis, it was necessary for large landowners to create demand in the domestic market for their products. Although the industry based on the private sector was developing, it was not at a level to prevent the prices of agricultural products from going down. Whereas landowners aspired to faster industrial development, merchants, especially the ones importing goods from the foreign market didn't call for such a development because their loss would increase further in this case. Accordingly, the Great Depression put an end to the coalition between large landowners and merchant exporters. In contrast, the formation of the coalition between the bureaucracy which emerged strongly from the crisis and longed for an intense breakthrough, and the agricultural sector which could create demand for its goods from the foreign market would be easy to settle upon the industrial policy. Nonetheless, the

¹⁴³ Ünay, *ibid*, 2006.

¹⁴⁴ Z. Y. Hershlag, 1968, 131.

absence of a group to undertake this task would make industrialisation possible under the control of the state¹⁴⁵.

The main objective for the formation of a modern capitalist economy set by the *Kemalists* after the 1923 Economic Congress of Turkey was that the state would provide the environment and support to enrich individuals. Thus, the new bourgeoisie to be formed would realise development and industrialisation by entering into cooperation and partnership with foreign investors. A moderate protective regime was favoured to further industrialisation. State support turned out to be an effective way of enriching individuals. Out of the cooperation of political cadres and high-level bureaucracy with the Turkish-Muslim bourgeoisie, a new rich class taking over from the comprador bourgeoisie and benefiting from the monopolistic gains of privileged companies established in cooperation with the foreign investors was formed. This formation served for the development of import-oriented capitalism and intermediary activities retaining control of the opportunities created by the state. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, it turned out to be clear that industrialisation, an element of a bourgeois revolution and a national capitalist development would not make a progress through this system¹⁴⁶. As a result, the global crisis in the world accelerated the need for the transition to state control over the economic policies in the country. Hence, domestic production had to be given priority to process non-exportable products in domestic industrial establishments under state management and ensure cheap and easy import of industrial semi-processed products which were difficult to import¹⁴⁷.

From 1932 onwards, the economic policy of the state changed considerably and the state intervention in the economy increased. Hence, the rising involvement in the economy from 1932 to 1939 was coined as ‘etatism’. The etatist economic policy was carried out especially in accordance with the state management of the economy. In this regard, the passive attitude of the period between 1923 and 1931 was relinquished. Meanwhile, the state involvement in the private enterprise and the intention to turn over the state enterprises to the private sector were brought to an end. In compliance with state management, new facilities were set up by the state¹⁴⁸. In addition, the state did not interfere with individual development and got involved in the duties that

¹⁴⁵ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 223.

¹⁴⁶ Boratav, 2018, 65-66.

¹⁴⁷ Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, *ibid*, 61.

¹⁴⁸ Boratav, 2006, 137-140.

individuals could not fulfil. For instance, the operation of mines, forests, canals, railways, and sea transport, which were in danger of falling into the clutches of the private monopoly, and large public works, local government works such as the supply of water, gas and electricity were some of the works the state took on and it would not interfere with the affairs of the private sector¹⁴⁹.

Moreover, as of 1929 when the Great Depression broke out, the protective policies put forward by governments gave underdeveloped countries the possibility to establish their own national industries. The government regarded the construction of the railway as a factor affecting the development and growth of the country. In this regard, state intervention in economic life took its effect through railway construction¹⁵⁰. Railways were believed to be the main transport network of the country's economy and this had to be supported by highways and bridges as well as ports. The method which had been adopted till that time was an obligation according to which most of the men had to work in road construction or they would make a payment if they didn't work. In accordance with the law on Macadam and Bridge enacted in 1929, road construction was a direct obligation assigned to individuals and it would be carried out by them instead of local units. In this respect, this would be a large-scale public service, which was an indication of how a nation-state would be founded on this ground¹⁵¹.

In the aftermath of the global crisis in the world, the etatism adopted by the ruling party of the state was put into practise in three ways:

1. **State Intervention:** State intervention in economic life had been implemented since the early years of the Republic, but the application area was extended after the world economic crisis. The foreign trade volume contracted markedly as prices of agricultural products fell and prices of imported goods increased. In this respect, state intervention was carried out in accordance with foreign trade arrangements and price control. Furthermore, two laws on foreign trade were enacted in these years. The first one was the law holding tea, sugar and coffee imports under the auspices of the government. The second law was based on an export licensing system extending for three years which would be

¹⁴⁹ Afet İnan, **Medeni Bilgiler ve M. Kemal Atatürk'ün El Yazıları** (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayını, 2018), 60.

¹⁵⁰ Nevin Coşar, Sevtap Demirci, *ibid*, 24.

¹⁵¹ Bilsay Kuruç, **Belgelerle Türkiye İktisat Politikası (1929-1932)**, Vol. 1 (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1988), 30.

granted by the Ministry of Economy. Moreover, in compliance with a law enacted in 1936, the Ministry of Economy was authorised to determine and control the cost and sales prices of industrial goods. These practices caused the power to confront the big bourgeoisie and landowners, their previous ardent partners.

2. **State Capitalism: State Management and Monopoly:** As industrialisation through privately-owned enterprises fell through between 1923 and 1930, state capitalism came across a broader field of action and when the etatist economic system reached its peak in 1932, the state management assumed a more monopolistic identity. The State Industrial Office and the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey supplanting the Bank of Industry and Mining were the main organisations established in 1932 to fulfil the obligations of the predecessor.
3. **Nationalisation:** In accordance with a trade convention signed in Lausanne, foreign companies got a seven-year warranty on their concessions and it expired in 1930. In the aftermath of the Great Depression and the intensification of nationalism in Turkey, all relevant companies were nationalised. The major ones subject to nationalisation were as follows:
 - a) In 1931 Mudanya- Bursa Railway Joint Stock Company,
 - b) In 1933 İstanbul Water Incorporation,
 - c) In 1933 İzmir Port Company,
 - d) In 1934 İzmir-Afyon and Manisa-Bandırma Railway Lines,
 - e) In 1934 Turkish Pier, Wharf and Warehousing Company of İstanbul,
 - f) In 1935 Aydın Railway Company,
 - g) In 1936 İstanbul Telephone Company,
 - h) In 1937 Ereğli Company (Ereğli Port, Zonguldak-Çatalağzı Railway Line, Mining Operations),
 - i) In 1937 İzmir Telephone Company,
 - j) In 1938 Üsküdar and Kadıköy Joint Stock Company,
 - k) In 1938 Turkish Electricity Joint Stock Company of İstanbul,
 - l) In 1939 İstanbul Tram Company,
 - m) In 1939 İstanbul Tunnel Company,
 - n) In 1939 Ankara Electricity and Gas Factory, Turkish Electricity Joint Stock Company of Adana,

- o) In 1939 Turkish Construction Joint Stock Company of Bursa and Turkish Electricity Joint Stock Company of Mersin¹⁵².

2.3.2 Ideology of the State

The newly developing bourgeoisie of the 1920s gave up on political power through the onset of the global crisis, which resulted in the emergence of a new economic policy adopted by the government under the auspices of the bureaucracy. The economic measures taken after the outbreak of the Great Depression were aimed at minimising the dependence of the economy on the foreign market. Traders speculating against the Turkish lira and foreign banks holding their reserves in foreign currency were believed to be responsible for the crisis. National Economy and Savings Society established to promote saving, reduce the consumption of imported goods by promoting the production and consumption of domestic goods, and spread the ideology of self-sufficiency was the extension of the state with its members from the parliamentary organising a private society. In addition, Turkish entrepreneurs were organised based on their business sectors and convened in the Congress of Industry in 1930 like the corporations of the fascist period of Mussolini. All these initiatives working out like ideological apparatuses were aimed at keeping social organisations under their control¹⁵³.

In the 1931 CHP Congress, political order was defined as a regime made up of one political party which had the right to form the government under its guiding principles. In addition to republicanism, nationalism, populism and secularism adopted in the previous programmes, etatism and reformism were added to the list of guiding doctrines as the last two main tenets of the party. Etatism which was supposed to define class relations would be used to account for one-party system embedded in the government. However, populism ensured the national inter-class cohesion based on the division of labour by not discriminating between classes of citizens¹⁵⁴. This cohesion was achieved through the coalition between bureaucrats and industrial bourgeoisie. In this regard, the economic policies of the etatism were implemented to increase industrial production under the leadership of these two classes. In this regard, the state carried out some policies to do away with every autonomous zone so as to

¹⁵² Taner Timur, **Türk Devrimi ve Sonrası** (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1994), 125-132.

¹⁵³ Keyder, 2017, 124-126.

¹⁵⁴ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 212-213.

ensure the unity of ideology and economic planning. Within this framework, some prohibitions were adopted. The Turkish Hearts which was a legacy of the Young Turks was abolished in 1931. Although the members of this organisation were nationalist in parallel with the ideology of the state, it was conceived to be very independent and it was closed down. Besides, through the new press law which came into force in 1931, the government was entitled to shut down newspapers and journals printing articles which were inconsistent with the policy of the country. Furthermore, two-thirds of the professors were dismissed from İstanbul University in compliance with the University Reform of 1933 with the aim of restricting free speech. Masonic lodges and the Turkish Women's Union were closed in 1935¹⁵⁵. On the other hand, when the attempts to make the country economically independent fell through and ran counter to the principles of the 1923 Economic Congress of Turkey, Atatürk aimed for a fast-growing industry through the Free Republican Party which he took the initiative to establish in 1930 in order to eliminate the negative atmosphere that occurred. Yet, three months after the formation of the new party, it was closed because of the success that it had gained in the municipal elections¹⁵⁶. This authoritarian tendency to close the party indicated that the state was not in favor of the creation of a multiparty system, but it wanted to exert pressure on the opposition so that they couldn't react to the policy of the regime.

2.3.2.1 The Cadre Movement

The Cadre Movement derived its name from the journal *Kadro* which was published between 1932 and 1934 and it was aimed at carrying out two main tasks such as fostering an ideological framework of the Republican regime founded by Atatürk and suggesting some economic policies in compliance with the ideological framework of the state. Even though the movement identified itself with the *Kemalist* regime, it wouldn't reflect the official ideology and programme of the ruling Republican People's Party¹⁵⁷. The party tended to fulfil the industrialisation policy known as etatism through the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation in 1933 and adopted etatism as one of the principles forming the Six Arrows of the party in addition to the

¹⁵⁵ Keyder, 2017, 126-136.

¹⁵⁶ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 2009, 154-181.

¹⁵⁷ Mustafa Türkeş, "A Patriotic Leftist Development-Strategy Proposal In Turkey in the 1930s: The Case of The Kadro (Cadre) Movement", **International Journal of Middle East Studies**, Vol. 33, No.1 (2001): 91.

other principles such as republicanism, nationalism, populism, secularism and revolutionism which were never in question. However, as far as etatism is concerned, it led to a lot of discussion among intellectuals and the regime could put up with it¹⁵⁸. A group of intellectuals like the legal licensee Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Vedam Nedim Tör, İsmail Hüsrev Tökin, Burhan Asaf Belge and Şevket Yazman putting the issue of etatism at the centre of debates were the ones writing in the journal *Kadro*. The outline of the views set up in the journal was put forward in the conference entitled ‘The ideology of the Revolution’ which was organised by Şevket Süreyya Aydemir in January 1931, and his theory was disseminated in ‘Revolution and Cadre’ which was published in 1932¹⁵⁹. The reason why the *Kadro* was founded by this group was stated in the first issue of the journal as follows:

“Turkey is in the process of a revolution. This revolution has all theoretical and intellectual elements which constitute the basis of the principles raising awareness of the people who will sustain the revolution. However, these theoretical and intellectual elements are not constituted and codified within an ideological system to become an IDEOLOGY for the revolution. Our revolution is one of the most meaningful movements of history in terms of both its national attributes and international contents and effects. The clarification of these advanced ideas and principles which are already inherent in the nature of the revolution is one of the most immediate and glorious tasks for the Turkish revolutionary intellectuals ... This is the reason for the publication of the journal *Kadro*”¹⁶⁰.

In accordance with the cause of its publication, the *Kadro* writers acknowledged that the principles of the Turkish revolution had not been set out yet even though Turkey lived through a revolution. However, it needed a theory along with the principles put forward by the intellectuals. Hence, the writers of the journal seemed to step into the breach and undertake a mission to create the ideology of the revolution.

The promoters of the Cadre Movement both proposed an alternative to socialism and opposed the class struggle laying the foundation of Marxism. According to them, the Turkish Revolution was an unprecedented revolution in the history of the world whereas classic ones were all bourgeois and proletarian revolutions with class character¹⁶¹. They also stated that there were two different contradictions, one of which was between two classes in the capitalist countries or in the countries where the technology was advanced. As to the second one, it referred to the contradiction

¹⁵⁸ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 80.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 81-82.

¹⁶⁰ *Kadro*, no. 1 (1932): 3.

¹⁶¹ Boratav, 2006, 208.

between advanced capitalist countries and poor countries in colonial or semi-colonial status. That the industry was concentrated in certain parts of the world brought about this contradiction between the countries maintaining control of the means of production and the ones which were deprived of the national industry. The Turkish national liberation movement was not the core of the class conflict which represented the first contradiction whereas the contradiction between the bourgeois class possessing the means of production and the proletariat who were devoid of them in the capitalist countries getting hold of the industrial concentration was the main reason for the class conflicts. Moreover, the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries reduced the intensity of the conflict between the classes by sharing the resources of the colonies with the proletariat in their own country. However, when the countries lost control of their colonies, class conflicts broke out again. Accordingly, in order to put an end to this contradiction, it was essential to do away with the economic dependency of the non-industrialised countries on industrialised countries and appeal to national liberation movements. Thus, the economic division of labour had to be replaced and a more rational distribution of the means of production around the world had to be implemented. In order for all social contradictions to be solved through class conflict or changing the mode of property on the means of production, class conflicts had to spread equally over the whole world¹⁶². As the contradiction giving rise to the revolution was different, the system resulting from that quality would be different. Accordingly, the state would not turn to neither socialism nor capitalism and but it would attempt to elaborate a 'third way' between socialism and capitalism. It would have national characteristics without the presence of class conflicts and the status of the classes thereby would remain steady, which means that the economic policy of this system would be made of the principles of etatism¹⁶³.

According to Aydemir, Turkey was an open market for the imperialist countries and this open customs system through the capitulations was an obstacle to the state's economic development. In this respect, political independence would bring about economic independence and development. Hence, the achievement of the national liberation movement would pit Turkey against other countries and the state would take part in the world economy with both equally political and economic rights. In the

¹⁶² Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, **İnkılap ve Kadro** (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1968), 44-50.

¹⁶³ Boratav, 2006, 209.

national movement for the establishment of a new state, the country adopting a new understanding of the state administration called social nationalism rather than socialist and liberal class dictatorships thinks highly of the unity of the whole nation in terms of economic interest. This type of nationalism is centred on national construction and organisation of a centrally planned economy under the auspices of the state¹⁶⁴. Vedat Nedim also states that etatist economic policy will lead to the economic development of the country and in this way, they will prevent class conflicts from coming to existence so as to possess an advanced industry with a high technology¹⁶⁵. In this regard, this etatist system differs from the capitalist system centred on the class conflicts and it thereby coheres with the objectives of the national liberation movements split up into four categories by Aydemir in order to establish a politically and economically independent nation-state: 1) Industrialisation of underdeveloped countries, 2) Prevention of a dominant class from exerting authority upon the industry, 3) Refusal of colonial exploitation and accumulation of profits to be enabled by the state for the nation's benefit, 4) Disintegration of the class struggle and construction of a unique, classless, independent and advanced nation¹⁶⁶.

Achievement of the national independence was one of the phases of the national liberation movement. However, the economic development of the country was also important insofar as it was politically free. Thus, the exponents of the journal tried to find a theoretical framework for the etatist policies of the government. According to İsmail Hüsrev, movements such as state socialism or interventionism aiming at increasing the intervention of the state in the West cannot be a guide for Turkish etatism. This policy having its roots in Adolf Wagner's tenets in Germany played a conciliatory role between two opposing classes. Hence, state socialism was a current cohering with the capitalist system and coming up with an interventionist solution to all problems deriving from liberalism. However, etatism in Turkey didn't result from class conflict. In spite of this fact, what etatism referred to in Turkey consisted of the same interventionist approach of the state on the control of the individual initiatives¹⁶⁷.

¹⁶⁴ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, "Sosyal Milliyetçiliğin Zaferi", **Kadro**, No. 35-36 (1934-1935): 9-15.

¹⁶⁵ Vedat Nedim, "Sınıflaşmak ve İktisat Siyaseti", **Kadro**, No. 11 (1932b): 20-21.

¹⁶⁶ Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, "Beynelmilel Fikir Hareketleri Arasında Türk Nasyonalizmi", **Kadro**, No.21 (1933): 8.

¹⁶⁷ İsmail Hüsrev, "Milli Kurtuluş Devletçiliği", **Kadro**, No. 19 (1933): 25.

2.3.2.2 The People's Houses

The People's Houses were established as a cultural and political centre of the party under the power of a one-party regime in 1932 so as to educate the people in compliance with the principles such as secularism, nationalism and populism of the Republican state. Specifically, they intended to set up a national culture centred on Turkish folklore, teach the people the Republican principles, ameliorate their living conditions, and wipe out illiteracy. The objective of the People's Houses is thereby divided into two categories, political and cultural. The political purpose was to bring around as many people as possible in the villages to the fact that Turkish nationalism was their new religion whereas republicanism was their modern political identity and so the survival of the newly-established state as a nation hinged on the widespread acknowledgement of the principles conceived of as synonymous with modernisation itself. As to cultural purpose, the formation of a national culture which was contingent upon the Turkish lifestyle and folklore required far-reaching sociological and folkloristic research to be conducted in the villages along with the tribal groups where the national culture had been retained purportedly unspoiled¹⁶⁸. In other words, the People's Houses worked out both as a means of political communication between society and party and as a cultural tool between the intelligentsia and ordinary citizens in the absence of intermediary social organisations such as Teachers' Union, Turkish Hearths, Journalists' Association, Reserve Officers' Society, Turkish Women's Union¹⁶⁹.

They introduced new artistic forms contributing to the formation of national cultural consciousness by means of elements of both folklore and Western art. They also worked out as the centre of lots of social activities such as theatrical performances, ballroom dancing, and political ceremonies like the reception of bureaucrats and celebration of national days. While trying to keep a balance between an interest in the culture of the peasantry and the urge to transform it, the People's Houses assumed local control over cultural and social activities. Hence, they transmitted information from the central authority to the local units, and from these units to the central authority under the control of the bureaucrats. In this way, the People's Houses took on the role

¹⁶⁸ Kemal H. Karpat, "The Impact of the People's Houses on the Development of Communication in Turkey: 1931-1951", *Die Welt Des Islam*, Vol. 15, No. 1/4 (1974): 69.

¹⁶⁹ Sefa Şimşek, "People's Houses as a Nationwide Project for Ideological Mobilization in Early Republican Turkey", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2005): 75.

to establish “the form and content of a national art repertoire that still prevails”¹⁷⁰. Accordingly, they helped merge two different themes into one by combining Turkish culture with Western art forms.

The CHP decided to found the People’s Houses in the 3rd Congress (May 10-18, 1931). In the regulations of the People’s Houses, its relation with the party along with the goal of the People’s Houses and how the party would increase the level of national culture was clarified as follows:

“Our party is determined to reconstruct the homeland, which it has saved through its programme of guidance, on deep and solid foundations that are political, social and economic... For this reason, articles and provisions in the new programme of our party intended for mobilising all organisational components that can work outside the state organisations to increase the level of national culture are extremely important... Compared with other countries we have more duties and obligations to remove the roots of the old institutions to the deepest layers of the social structure and to clinch the principles of the Republic and the revolution into the sacred conditions that dominate all souls and ideas... The goal of the People’s Houses is to work out as gathering and integrative centres for idealist people who want to work for this purpose”¹⁷¹.

In light of these facts, the party took on the responsibility to inculcate national consciousness into the Turkish people and the People’s Houses were organised to make all people adopt party principles. İsmet İnönü also said that they worked out as headquarters of the party to propagate the party’s principles: “The People’s Houses are the centres telling our people every day what CHP’s own principles are and how these principles are practiced in the country”¹⁷². However, the Secretary-General of the party Recep Peker stated that the People’s Houses were separate from the political structure of the party, but they were administratively dependent on the party¹⁷³. Moreover, following the Third Congress of the party, 14 branches were opened up in different parts of Turkey in 1932. By 1937, the People’s Houses had terminated their phase of experimentation and had started to move into larger buildings so as to meet the needs of their increasing activities and members. In the meantime, smaller towns, villages and districts called for the inauguration of the People’s Houses and the CHP thereby opened the People’s Rooms in 1940. The number of People’s Rooms increased much

¹⁷⁰ Arzu Öztürkmen, “The Role of People’s Houses in the Making of National Culture in Turkey”, **New Perspectives on Turkey**, Vol. 11 (1994): 160-1.

¹⁷¹ **CHP Halkevleri Öğreneği** (Ankara: Recep Ulusoğlu Basımevi, 1938), 3-4 cited in Hamit Pehlivanlı, Kırıkkale Halkevi (1942-1951), **Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi**, vol. 24, no.70 (2008): 129-130.

¹⁷² Anıl Çeçen, **Halkevleri** (Ankara: Gündoğan Yayınları, 1990) cited in Neşe Gurallar Yeşilkaya, **Halkevleri: İdeoloji ve Mimarlık** (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003), 63.

¹⁷³ “Recep (Peker) Bey’in Nutku”, **Hakimiyet-i Milliye (Ulus)**, February 20, 1932, 6 cited in Neşe Gurallar Yeşilkaya, **ibid**, 64.

faster than the one of People's Houses, reaching a number of 2718 by the end of 1945¹⁷⁴.

Table 17: Number of People's Houses and Rooms, 1932-1945

Year	People's House	People's Room
1932	14	-
1933	41	-
1934	25	-
1935	23	-
1936	33	-
1937	31	-
1938	43	-
1939	163	-
1940	6	141
1941	4	59
1942	5	22
1943	5	15
1944	12	143
1945	32	2338
TOTAL	437	2718

Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, **Halkevleri ve Halkodalarının Yurd İçinde Dağılımları** (Ankara: Doğu Matbaası, 1945) cited in Neşe Gurallar Yeşilkaya, **Halkevleri: İdeoloji ve Mimarlık** (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003), 79-80.

With the transition to a multi-party system, the DP (*Demokrat Parti/Democrat Party*) entered the parliament following the elections held in 1946 and the People's Houses'

¹⁷⁴ Öztürkmen, *ibid*, 163. See table 17.

link to the CHP caused political controversy. That they didn't agree on how to keep the organisations of the People's Houses apart from the party itself exacerbated this issue and after the DP came to power, the People's Houses regarded as 'remnants of the single-party epoch' were disbanded¹⁷⁵.

2.3.2.3 CHP (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/ Republican People's Party*) and Etatism

The newly founded country was a one-party state and it was ruled by the Republican People's Party for about 30 years. It was the fundamental instrument which served to penetrate into all parts of the country through central administration. Even though it was a diverse organisation, in practical terms, it coordinated closely with the state, providing an opportunity for the bureaucracy to keep in contact with the notables of the region as well as the masses¹⁷⁶.

The party also acted as a custodian of access to bureaucratic and some other important positions in society. In accordance with a decision made in the party congress held in 1927, "the candidates for positions in all political, administrative, social, economic, external and other similar organisations, even the candidates for village headmen, should be approved by the party"¹⁷⁷. In addition, there were two different initiatives to establish rival parties in 1924 and 1930. However, whereas the first one was dismantled by the government, the second one dissolved itself¹⁷⁸. Hence, in practice, the party didn't aspire to the presence of political organisations which did not go along with its ideas.

In the Third Congress of the CHP, etatism was adopted as one of the six principles of the party and written in the party programme as follows:

"Although considering private work and activity a basic idea, it is one of our main principles to interest the state actively in matters where the general and vital interests of the nation are in question, especially, in the economic field, in order to lead the nation and the country to prosperity in as short a time as possible"¹⁷⁹.

¹⁷⁵ Neşe Gurallar Yeşilkaya, **Halkevleri: İdeoloji ve Mimarlık** (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003): 80-81.

¹⁷⁶ İlter Turan, "Continuity and Change in Turkish Bureaucracy: The Kemalist Period and After", **Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey**, Ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): 110.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 110-111

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 111.

¹⁷⁹ **Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkası Programı** (İstanbul Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 11. Donald Webster, **The Turkey of Atatürk** (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939), 309 cited in Dilek Barlas, **Etatism and Diplomacy in Turkey: Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929- 1939** (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 103.

Atatürk characterised etatism as a party principle:

“The programme of our party... from the economic point of view, is etatist ... Our people are certainly etatist because they naturally demand that their needs be satisfied by the state. Considering that point, there is complete conformity between the programme of our party and the nature of the people.”¹⁸⁰.

His speech included “official acceptance of etatism” and Turkish people were deemed to be etatist by nature. As they were etatist, the CHP did not embody “the interests of one social class, but those of all classes”¹⁸¹. He took sides with the administration of the authoritarian state under the auspices of a party in power. Even though he laid emphasis on individual freedom, state authority had to be prioritised¹⁸². On the other hand, the economic policy of the state implemented from 1932 onwards was believed to be to the disadvantage of the people to a certain extent especially, in terms of tax policy financing state enterprises and monopolies. As there were no classes clashing with each other in populism, etatism was regarded as the economic policy of populism¹⁸³.

At the 4th Congress of the CHP convened between May 9 and May 16, 1935, the role of the state as portrayed in 1931 was broadened as follows:

“The interest of the state in economic matters is to be an actual builder, as well as to encourage the private enterprises, and also to regulate and control the work that is being done. The determination of the economic matters to be undertaken by the state depends upon the requirements of the greatest public interest of the nation. If the enterprise, which the state itself decides to undertake actively as a result of this necessity, is in the hands of private entrepreneurs, its appropriation shall, each time, depend upon the enactment of a law, which will indicate the way in which the state shall indemnify the loss sustained by the private enterprise as a result of this appropriation. In the estimation of the loss, the possibility of future earnings shall not be taken into consideration”¹⁸⁴.

In the light of this statement, the state seems to have taken two functions such as being the fundamental policy maker of the economy and controlling the private sector. In this congress, the party made a declaration that *Kemalism* was the source of all the party principles¹⁸⁵. Their objective was to lay bare the fact that the party programme

¹⁸⁰ **Atatürk’ün Söylev ve Demeçleri I-III** (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1989), 295 cited in Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 62.

¹⁸¹ Barlas, **ibid**, 62.

¹⁸² Hasan Rıza Soyak, **Atatürk’ten Hatıralar** (İstanbul: Yapı ve Kredi Bankası A.Ş., 1973), 463.

¹⁸³ Timur, **ibid**, 154.

¹⁸⁴ **C.H.P Büyük Kurultayının Tetkikine Sunulan Program Taslağı** (Ankara, 1935), 8. Webster, **ibid**, 309 cited in Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 105.

¹⁸⁵ Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, **CHP 1923-1948, 25 Yıl** (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1948), 25.

was equivalent to a national programme and it did not draw inspiration from other ideologies¹⁸⁶.

In February 1937, İsmet İnönü along with 153 supporters proposed etatism's incorporation into the constitution and they stated that the second article of the constitution characterising the state as republican portrayed just the form of the state. They pretended that the constitution should comprise a definition of the foundation of the Turkish state and the development of the founding principles. They thought that the fundamental essentials accounting for an integral whole which could not be divided and had to be absorbed into the constitution were as follows: "avoidance of international currents which could destroy the national unity, elimination of class differences, taking into consideration existing needs without being dependent on old traditions, and state control of enterprises dictated by the interests of the country"¹⁸⁷. All in all, etatism was integrated into the constitution and so, the state was described as populist, nationalist, republican, revolutionary, secular and etatist. Etatism became one of the essential principles of the state as well as the one of the party adopted in 1931. Therefore, it stands to reason that etatism was regarded as the ideology of all Turkish people¹⁸⁸.

2.3.2.4 CHP and Populism

Populism looks like an equivocal term applied to diverse movements prompting intellectuals to help the masses with their economic, cultural and social development from the second half of the nineteenth century. It is also believed to be the synonym for democracy, invoking the formula of "government by the people and for the people"¹⁸⁹. Hence, it attributed a commitment to "the idea of democracy and militant intellectual activity" intended to guide the people on the way to progress¹⁹⁰.

Populism served as a justification for the one-party rule. As Turkish society was classless, there was no point in having parties defending the interests of different groups. The Republican People's Party worked out as the spokesman for all groups,

¹⁸⁶ Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 105.

¹⁸⁷ **Ibid**, 106

¹⁸⁸ **Ibid**, 107.

¹⁸⁹ Tekin Alp, *Le Kémalisme* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1937), 15 cited in Paul Dumont, "The Origins of Kemalist Ideology", **Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey**, Ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): 31.

¹⁹⁰ Paul Dumont, "The Origins of Kemalist Ideology", **Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey**, Ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): 31.

standing for the whole nation. The government associated with the party got involved in intense propaganda to disseminate the idea of solidarity through the People's Houses. Populist ideas are regarded as universally adopted by everybody. Turkish bourgeoisie conceived of populism as a sufficient remedy to the country's problems and the lower classes seemed to be happy about being the centre of attraction¹⁹¹.

Populism was included in the 1935 programme at the Fourth Congress as follows: "We consider the individuals who accept an absolute quality before the law, and who recognise no privileges for an individual, family, class or community, to be of the people and for the people (populist)"¹⁹². In the same year, Recep Peker made this statement: "We do not believe in regional interests nor in the privilege of feudalism, *ağalık*, of families and of groups"¹⁹³. As a result, a vision of the Turkish nation comprised not of all classes but of a community split into occupational groups in compliance with the demands of the division of labour which were in solidarity with each other. Class distinctions were underestimated whereas social order and co-ordination of interest were highlighted. These groups were workers, peasants, merchants, industrialists, craftsmen, professional people and public service employees. The profits they gained would be apportioned in accordance with capacity and extent of work"¹⁹⁴. However, populism, in theory infused with egalitarian values, did not in practice try to build up the economy. *Kemalist* reform policies represented the interests of the urbanised intellectuals, not the ambitions of the peasantry. Even though Atatürk regarded the peasants as 'the real owners and masters of Turkey' and stated that one of the government's main goal was to implement the economic policies on agriculture, the peasants gained no economic benefits in the Republican period. Primitive agricultural techniques, lack of means of transport, insufficient demand for agricultural products, and agricultural taxation all served the purpose of urban consumers¹⁹⁵.

In the light of these statements, populism corresponded to an ideological tool used against class distinctions. The Law of Associations which banned associations based

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 33.

¹⁹² Suna Kili, **Kemalism** (İstanbul: School of Business Administration and Economics, Robert College, 1969), 78 cited in Sabri M. Akural, "Kemalist views on Social Change", **Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey**, Ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), 136.

¹⁹³ Suna Kili, *ibid*, 74 cited in Sabri M. Akural, *ibid*, 136.

¹⁹⁴ The Republican Party of the People, **Programme** (Ankara, 1935) cited in Z. Y. Hershlag, 1958, 289.

¹⁹⁵ Sabri M. Akural, "Kemalist views on Social Change", **Atatürk and the Modernization of Turkey**, Ed. Jacob M. Landau (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984): 137.

on class was adopted in 1938 even though the issue of this law came to the agenda of the assembly in 1930. In addition, the Labour Law ended up as the means of smothering the workers.

2.3.2.5 The Rise of the SCF (*Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası/ Free Republican Party*)

The authoritarian one-party state was in accord with etatism. However, a short experience of the multi-party system in August 1930 preceded the etatist policies. The appearance of the SCF which vehemently went along with liberal economic policies taking a stand against the Republicans' interventionist attitude exacerbated the political conflict and struggle¹⁹⁶. Even though the SCF was an opposition party, it was not allowed to defy the entrenched principles of the Republican regime and it would work out in the economic, not the political space. The first principle of the programme of the party was written as follows: "The Free Republican Party is attached to the essentials of republicanism, nationalism, and secularism. It will eternalise these essentials at the national level"¹⁹⁷. However, in economic terms, the fifth principle highlighted the private initiatives: "The party does not accept any government interventions which will prevent citizens' initiatives in the financial and economic domains. It supports any private initiative in the development of the country's economy"¹⁹⁸. The SCF stood for the abolition of monopolies, intense competition in the economy and slackening of taxes through a slower railway construction policy. Yet, the Republicans argued that liberalism was inappropriate for Turkey¹⁹⁹.

At the inauguration of the Ankara-Sivas Railway in 1930, İsmet İnönü laid emphasis on the importance of the railway construction and regarded Turkish economic policy as etatist. He also stated that Turkish people were naturally etatist and couldn't appreciate liberalism as they expected the state to take part in all fields to meet their needs²⁰⁰. However, the SCF thought that the state was allocating a greater part of its budget for railway construction and that this was the main reason why the state went through financial problems²⁰¹. In addition, Ali Fethi Okyar, the chairman of the party,

¹⁹⁶ Ali H. Bayar, "The Developmental State and Economic Policy in Turkey", **Third World Quarterly**, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1996): 775. Osman Okyar, "Development Background of the Turkish Economy, 1923-1973", **International Journal of Middle East Studies**, Vol.10, No. 3 (1979): 327.

¹⁹⁷ Ali Fethi Okyar, *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası Nasıl Doğdu, Nasıl Fesh Edildi?* (İstanbul,1987), 57 cited in Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 100.

¹⁹⁸ Ali Fethi Okyar, **ibid**, 56-57 cited in Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 100.

¹⁹⁹ Ali H. Bayar, **ibid**, 775. Osman Okyar, **ibid**, 327.

²⁰⁰ Bilsay Kuruç, **ibid**, 101.

²⁰¹ Dilek Barlas, **ibid**, 100-101.

stood out against the government's policy to get tradesmen, merchants and farmers to pay taxes for the railway construction. He also criticised İnönü's viewpoint that the people expect the state to participate in each field to satisfy their needs: "The liberal system requires that the state fulfils the duties which belong to its domain and that individuals carry out the responsibilities which belong to the nation's domain. Hence, the liberal system would never hinder the development of the private enterprise"²⁰² Another issue was that Turkey had to stabilise the Turkish lira and balance the budget so as to compete with other countries. Okyar claimed that Turkey would be granted foreign capital easily if it had a steady monetary system²⁰³.

The last time the SCF took part in the parliamentary session was in November 1930. In this session, the opposition party blamed the government for rigging the municipal elections. Its leaders asserted that administrative manipulations resulted in the loss of elections in big cities like İzmir. In this respect, the opposition party turned out to be more popular than the government had expected and posed a threat to the CHP in power²⁰⁴.

The SCF was banned five months after its foundation. The conclusion drawn by the Republicans was that the country would pull through the depression by means of autarchy and rapid industrial growth and that political debate would be left out of this goal²⁰⁵.

2.3.2.6 Ahmet Hamdi Başar's View on Economic Etatism

Ahmet Hamdi Başar was among the influential intellectuals who proposed ideas on etatism in Turkey. He centred his opinion of 'Economic Etatism' on the global economic crisis. He stated that the fundamental cause of the crisis was the decline of the political and economic systems that the Western World had created and enforced on other countries. He thought that these countries managed to industrialise through the invention of the steam engine and technological advancement. Accordingly, the world was split up into two groups: metropolis and colonies. The metropolis formed the empires of capital and enforced their laws, exchange systems and capital rights on the colonies, which yielded profits to the central territory of the colonised countries.

²⁰² Bilsay Kuraç, *ibid*, 105.

²⁰³ Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 101.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 102.

²⁰⁵ Ali H. Bayar, *ibid*, 775. Osman Okyar, *ibid*, 327.

Yet, this relationship between colonies and metropolis led to the decline of the system. The colonisers were always raising their capital, production and consumption through the profits they gained whereas the colonies were always losing out to metropolis in the exchange system with the decrease in both production and consumption. In the aftermath of WWI, this system came to a close. In this respect, the global financial crisis happened due to this increasing inequality between the metropolis and colonies as the colonies reacted to the liberal system standing for the interests of the metropolis. Thus, industrialised countries had problems in creating new markets. In the meantime, they had to cope with the reactions of the colonies against the maintenance of the old system²⁰⁶. The Western civilisation represented liberalism consisting of political freedom and democracy. That this civilisation spread to the western part of the world caused an unfilled gap between the colonising and colonised nations. The civilisation based on the exchange system was bound to collapse²⁰⁷. According to Başar, the collapse of this system did not pave the way for a crisis in non-industrialised countries, yet it gave rise to revolutionary movements, which generated two types of people such as dogmatists and realists. Dogmatists were associated with liberals and socialists. Liberals stated that the conditions caused by the global financial crisis would not take a long time whereas socialists asserted that new conditions would supplant the old ones in the aftermath of the revolution. Başar believed that realists would better adapt to the revolutionary atmosphere and the ideology of the revolution would enable realists to determine the direction of the revolutionary movement and substitute the old conditions for the new ones. Consequently, the Turkish Revolution was realised by the realists²⁰⁸.

While talking about the revolution, he thought that Turkey declared its political independence in 1923 but became independent in the economic domain through the abolition of capitulations and the control of its customs tariffs. Henceforth, he argued that the crisis in Turkey was not related to the effects of the global financial crisis even if the country went through economic difficulties concerning the crisis. He thereby believed that the government had to determine a policy relying on domestic needs

²⁰⁶ Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 53-54.

²⁰⁷ Halit Ziya Ülken, *Türkiye’de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi*, Vol. 2 (Konya: Selçuk Yayınları, 1966), 786-792 cited in İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, *Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiye’de Devletçiliğin Oluşumu* (Ankara: ODTÜ, 1982), 90.

²⁰⁸ “Ahmet Hamdi Beyin Mühim bir Yazısı”, *Kadro*, no. 28 (1934), 42-43 cited in Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 54.

regardless of external factors. Also, he went along with the measures such as the nationalisation of harbours, customs policy and construction of railways. As far as the country's future options for enhancing the situation are concerned, he claimed that Turkey could not keep up with the liberal exchange system in the international arena as the Turkish Revolution started when liberalism was about to come to a close in the global crisis. The reason why the country couldn't compete with other countries is that they yielded better agricultural products and Turkey was not a developed country in terms of technology. Besides, Başar asserted that Turkey couldn't put into practice a liberal economic system in the domestic market either because it could carry out a more 'individualistic system' through the customs tariffs determined by the country. This policy which benefited the ones controlling commerce led to class discrimination and they raised their profits by means of the protection of the state. In this way, he wanted the government to pay heed to the interests of all classes. Finally, according to Başar, the state had to be in charge of all advancements in the country and for the construction of a national economy not only the capital but also "an authentic regime, a scientific approach and a policy of liberation" would take effect²⁰⁹.

2.3.2.7 Ahmet Ağaoğlu's Interpretation on Liberal Etatism

Ahmet Ağaoğlu was another eminent intellectual propounding ideas on etatism. For one thing, he couldn't associate the global financial crisis with the Turkish Revolution unlike Başar and the Cadre Movement. He asserted that when the revolution happened, the country had broken off its ties with the world and when the crisis started, the tenets of the revolution had already been fixed. According to him, the *Kadro* writers focused on just economic side as the main cause of the revolution by overlooking the fact that its religious and judicial points such as the Treaty of Lausanne, abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate, and the declaration of the Republic affected the course of events²¹⁰.

Secondly, he stated that the *Kadro* writers centred their ideas on etatism in terms of the division of the world into two parts and subjugation of the East by the West. He also pointed out that they attributed a different interpretation to the word 'nation' by ignoring individualism and they didn't examine the origin of the division. According

²⁰⁹ Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 56.

²¹⁰ Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *Devlet ve Fert* (İstanbul, 1933), 14 cited in Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 58.

to him, the reason why the Ottoman Empire fell behind the other countries and India was exploited by Britain was that individual freedom was enhanced in the West in the aftermath of the Renaissance, Reformation and French Revolution whereas it was restricted in the East. The objective of the Turkish Revolution was thereby to change the conditions of the individuals²¹¹.

Finally, with reference to the status of the individuals, he touched upon the state's role in society. He thought that two factors could exist together and go with each other. In other words, the individual is in constant progress and the state increases its powers²¹². He also argued that the state could intervene in every case in developed countries where individual rights were appreciated and class conflicts existed. Accordingly, this intervention would not damage Western societies. Unlike the intervention of the state in the West, the state's role would be detrimental in the case of Turkey because there were no contradictions between capitalists and the working class²¹³. Within this framework, Ağaoğlu stated that the scope of etatism was expanded during WWI and some countries adopting etatism as a regime emerged. Then, he tried to identify the type of etatist that the *Kadro* writers belonged to. He criticised them for going along with both socialism and fascism in accounting for the role of the state in Turkey. Like fascists, they wanted the state to regulate the relationship between classes and keep individual activities under strict control. Like communists, they called for the intervention of the state to solve the contradiction between classes²¹⁴. For these reasons, he believed that one should turn to the state when required and the state should deal with things which the individuals were incompetent in doing on their own²¹⁵.

2.4 From Etatism to Industrial Planning

In the first years of the newly-established state, the least successful field of economic policy carried out by the state was in industrial production. The profits made in some fields such as commerce and banking or agricultural surplus couldn't be turned into industrial production²¹⁶. Therefore, the state attempted to take responsibility for both industrial and agricultural development in the aftermath of the failure the private

²¹¹ Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *ibid*, 25-29 cited in cited in İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 99.

²¹² Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *ibid*, 33 cited in cited in İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 99.

²¹³ Dilek Barlas, *ibid*, 59.

²¹⁴ Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *ibid*, 46-62 cited in İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 100-102.

²¹⁵ Ahmet Ağaoğlu, *ibid*, 76 cited in İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 102.

²¹⁶ Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, *ibid*, 61.

enterprise had lived through before the 1930s. This idea for economic development had its roots in the spread of the global crisis causing Turkey to withdraw from the liberal economic policy which enabled the private enterprise to import industrial products rather than export them. Within this framework, the period between 1930 and 1939 would be overwhelmed by the state taking over the management of the economy. The years 1930 and 1931 came to the period when the government implemented protectionist policies through some measures to be taken whereas the year 1932 stood for transition to etatist practice and, etatism was embedded in the economic policy between 1933 and 1939²¹⁷. Apart from the global crisis, initiatives of the capitalist countries to implement state interventionism and protectionism in a planned manner, corporations of the Italian regime, and the developmental success of the economic planning in the Soviet case also enabled Turkey to achieve a significant breakthrough in the economic success of the country.

2.4.1 Impact of the Soviet Union on Economic Planning

During the Great Depression weakening the capitalist system, the Soviet Union surmounting the difficulties concerning revolution and civil war stayed out of the effects of the economic crisis owing to the self-enclosed economic system it implemented, and from 1929 onwards it was in the process of fast planned development. In this regard, the economic success of the Soviet Union seems to have caused Turkish statesmen to go along with the idea to achieve a planned and partly closed economy to be conducted by the state. Thus, the Soviet Union contributed substantially to the Turkish economic policy. Although Turkish etatism drew inspiration from Soviet methods related to a planned economy, it does not mean that it emulated the socialist experiences of the Soviets²¹⁸.

The Turkish-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1925 signed in Paris first formed the basis for the mutual relationship in the political arena. This interaction was maintained through a series of visits by the authorities of both countries and the Soviet Journal, *Izvestiya* wrote an article on Turkish-Soviet Relationship when İsmet İnönü visited the Soviet Union²¹⁹. Then, that Tevfik Rüşti Aras as the Minister of Foreign Affairs went

²¹⁷ Boratav, 2018, 71.

²¹⁸ Boratav, 2006, 143-144.

²¹⁹ “İsmet Paşa Rusya’da”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, April 27, 1932, 4.

to the Soviet Union in 1930 attracted a great deal of attention²²⁰. However, Falih Rıfki Atay as a deputy played a leading role in examining closely the Soviet economic planning. Although he took this official trip, he stayed there for a while to go on with his examinations after Tevfik Rüştü Aras had returned to Turkey. Atay observed every detail of economic, social and cultural life in the Soviet Union. When he came back, he examined in depth the First-Five Year Plan implemented by Stalin in 1928 with his party organisation, and in light of his visit he set some goals as follows:

- a) Making economic planning of the country,
- b) Carrying out reforms by modelling the principles on countries experiencing the transformation from one system to another regardless of communist or fascist regimes,
- c) Adopting revolutionary methods instead of bureaucracy,
- d) Educating the masses without losing any time²²¹.

The visit made by Prime Minister İsmet İnönü on April 25-May 10, 1932 strengthened friendly relations between the two countries and enabled them to enter into economic negotiations. He went there in company with the minister of foreign affairs, deputies, journalists and some experts. Secretary-General for Industry Ahmet Şerif Önay, Minister Counsellor for Economic Affairs Kâmil İbrahi, Manager of the Uşak Sugar Factory Remzi Güres and Manager of Feshane Fabrics Şevket Turgut were some of the leading industrialist experts²²².

During this visit, they went to some factories and institutions in Odessa, Moscow and Leningrad²²³, apart from meeting some eminent leaders of the Soviet Unions such as Stalin, Litvinof, Voroşilof, Molotof, Kalenin²²⁴. In addition, a group from this committee visiting ‘Economic Planning Commission’ got some information about the principles of the Soviet economy and planning process. By 1932, the Soviet Union achieved most of the goals it set so as to complete the first process of economic planning and this success the country took pride in called the committee’s attention²²⁵. As a consequence of the visit, the Soviet Union gave Turkey an interest-free loan of 8

²²⁰ “T. Rüştü Bey Cumartesi Günü Rusya’ya Gidiyor”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 18, 1930, 1.

²²¹ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 138.

²²² **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, April 23-May 10, 1932.

²²³ **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, April 28, 29, 30-May 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 1932

²²⁴ Yunus Nadi, “Yeni Rusya’nın Zimamdarile Yakından Temas”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, May 15, 1932, 1-3.

²²⁵ Yunus Nadi, “Beş Senelik Plan”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, May 18, 1932, 1-2.

million dollars which amounted to the cost of factory machinery products they would provide Turkey with and that would be paid back in exchange for the products the Soviets imported within 20 years. They also gave away 10 tractors, 2 lorries and a bus in addition to 6 tanks supplied by the Red Arm²²⁶. The law on Loan Agreement was brought in and passed on May 17, 1934²²⁷.

In compliance with the agreement both sides reached, a group of Soviet experts came to Turkey in 1932 to examine the available resources of the country and help with the preparation for economic development planning and submitted their report relating to the projects within the scope of state investment planning and factories the country intended to set up²²⁸. At the very beginning of the visit Soviet experts led by Professor Orlof specialising in cotton fabrics arrived on August 12, 1932. During these trips lasting for more than two months, they went to İzmir and Adana for cotton cultivation, Sarayköy, Denizli and Burdur where home-made weaving was advanced, and Eskişehir, Konya, Malatya, Kayseri, Nazilli, Ereğli, Afyonkarahisar, Tire and Ödemiş where new factories were thought to be set up. They received a great deal of attention from the local people whose cities they visited. The committee did some research on linen, hemp and jute fabric in İzmir and whereabouts of İzmir, and the chemical and iron industry in Zonguldak, Filyos, Safranbolu, Çankırı and whereabouts of Irmak. On September 22, 1932, the head of the committee, Orlof, filed his report and departed from Turkey but the rest of the committee would stay until November 1, 1932 to complete the report²²⁹. This report consisted of a feasibility study examining production possibilities of the relevant goods by running counter to the import policy. The largest part of the report was devoted to the cotton industry because 70% of the need for cotton fabrics was met through imports. The following part of the report concerned 3 textile factories with the latest technology which had to be set up and touched on the best locations of each plant. The second part was dedicated to different types of vegetal fibres except for cotton whereas the last part examined the possibilities to open up factories for both iron and chemical industries²³⁰.

²²⁶ **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, May 8-9, 1932.

²²⁷ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term IV, Session 2, Vol. 22 (May 1934): 149-151.

²²⁸ Tezel, **ibid**, 352. Perihan Ünlü Soylu, Özlem Yaktı, **ibid**, 371.

²²⁹ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 158-164.

²³⁰ **Ibid**, 165-168.

2.4.2 Institutions Established During the Etatist Period

That the state intended to pursue an interventionist policy bound up with etatism also brought into question the issue of the organisation of all state enterprises under the auspices of only one institution. In this regard, the Bank of Industry and Mining established to support the private sector in the 1920s was believed to be incompetent. In the aftermath of steps taken in accordance with economic planning, how the newly-established state enterprises would be managed, in what aspects the investments of the private sector would be supported, what types of control would be imposed on them and in what ways the investments of the foreign capital would be tackled became the current issues of the early 1930s²³¹. Consequently, in order to come up with solutions to these issues both the State Industrial Office and the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey supplanting the Bank of Industry and Mining were opened up in collaboration with Ahmet Şerif Önay going along with the separation of industrial management from industrial banking²³². Within this framework, the government bills aimed at establishing the State Industrial Office and the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey were brought forward in the assembly²³³.

2.4.2.1 State Industrial Office

In parallel with the economic planning intended for the industrialisation of the country under the auspices of the state, the law numbered 2058 on State Industrial Office entered into force on July 3, 1932²³⁴.

The tasks that the State Industrial Office was supposed to carry out were as follows:

- a) Laying out projects for the establishment of new factories and helping put those projects into practice,
- b) Managing all the factories established and to be established through state funds,
- c) Coming up with some initiatives to increase the production and distribution of raw materials,
- d) Drawing up the programme and budget of the enterprises,

²³¹ Tefik Çavdar, 2003, 261.

²³² İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 149.

²³³ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, vol. 9, no. 77 (July 3, 1932): 466.

²³⁴ Resmi Gazete, 2146 (July 1932): 1703-1705.

- e) Carrying out examinations and giving opinions at the request of the Ministry of Economy²³⁵.

Powers which were conferred upon it by this law were as follows:

- a) The State Industrial Office appoints the managers, engineers, chief of production, civil works chief and experts of the industrial institutions in the state enterprises. It also appoints a person like the manager of the board and managing member entitled to sign if the share of the state surpasses 50% of the establishment capital.
- b) In accordance with its participation rate, the state has representatives on the board of directors. Only one member representing the state has the right to vote.
- c) Renewal, replacement and extension of plants of state-owned enterprises are subject to the approval of the State Industrial Office. If it is not approved, the justification for the decision is given to the company. In addition, if it places a financial burden on the state, it is also subject to the approval of the Ministry of Economy. However, if the company decides to renew, replant or extend the plant, the state reclaims its share²³⁶.

Within the framework of the relevant articles of this law, compared with the Bank of Industry and Mining turning the state enterprises over to the private sector and subsidising the private enterprises, the State Industrial Office had a more advanced statist approach by helping establish plants under the auspices of the state²³⁷. The establishment of the enterprises was subject to the proposal of the Ministry of Economy and the approval of the Council of Ministers²³⁸. Hence, the initiative to establish new plants for the private sector was restricted.

2.4.2.2 Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey

In accordance with the economic planning intended for the industrialisation of the country under the control of the state, the law numbered 2064 on Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey went through the assembly on July 7, 1932. Within the context of this

²³⁵ *Ibid*, 1704.

²³⁶ *Ibid*, 1704.

²³⁷ Boratav, 2006, 257-258.

²³⁸ “Devlet Sanayi Ofisi Teşkili Hakkında Kanun (L.N. 2058)”, *Resmî Gazete*, 2146 (July 1932): 1704.

law, the Bank of Industry and Mining was turned into the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey²³⁹.

In compliance with the constituting law, due to the inefficiency of the plants and lack of operational capital, the enterprises the Bank of Industry and Mining took over during its foundation led to important and permanent costs to the bank and it thereby allocated a great deal of money to the enterprises in question. In this regard, it neglected to provide loans for the benefit of the state-owned enterprises in the industrial sector and carry out mining activities²⁴⁰. Accordingly, it would not provide loans for the private enterprises and the budget commission also took into consideration by agreeing that helping the private enterprises with loans would be to the detriment of the country²⁴¹.

The tasks that the bank was supposed to carry out were as follows:

- a) Providing loans on machinery and industrial construction materials which are not equivalent to the ones in the country and engaging in the machinery market,
- b) Providing working capital loans,
- c) Making pledge agreements on installed machinery with Emlak Bank for transfer business over industrial real estates,
- d) Issuing bonds equivalent to a certain amount of income tax of the enterprise in proportion to the accrual to be assessed,
- e) Helping national industry supply raw material,
- f) Mediating in industrial incentive bonus,
- g) Providing loans for small-scale industrial enterprises,
- h) Mediating in all transactions concerning letters of credit between national enterprises and their customers²⁴².

Within the framework of this law, exemptions for the importation of machinery granted through the Law for the Encouragement of Industry were abolished, which put the private enterprises in a very tight spot due to an increase in the prices of the machinery along with new tariffs on imports. Instead, they would be given loans²⁴³.

²³⁹ “Türkiye Sanayi Kredi Bankası Teşkilî Hakkında Kanun (L.N. 2064)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 2150 (July 1932): 1717-1720

²⁴⁰ **TBMM Komisyon Raporu**, no. 270 (March 21, 1932): 1.

²⁴¹ **Ibid**, 7.

²⁴² **Resmî Gazete**, 2150 (July 1932): 1717-1718.

²⁴³ **Ibid**, 1718-1719.

The articles of both laws were intended to prevent monopolisation and possession of scarce goods. Nevertheless, they sparked outrage in the private sector. In addition to the relevant laws, a number of laws which strengthened further commercial legislation of the state were accepted and they only served to raise the tension. That Şerif Önay prevented the Business Bank from setting up a paper mill caused Atatürk to intervene in this situation and he lashed out his approach by telling Minister of Economy Mustafa Şeref Bey that Şerif Önay was a malevolent person. Consequently, Mustafa Şeref Bey was forced to resign his post and General Manager of the Business Bank Celal Bayar who was in favor of the private enterprise system took over from him²⁴⁴. Atatürk also took sides with him on many occasions and appointed him later to the Prime Ministry. Celal Bayar who was believed to moderate in interpretation of the economic planning regarded etatism as a transitional stage intended to supplement and strengthen the industry through private sector²⁴⁵.

2.4.2.3 Sümerbank

As the Great Depression weakened the position of the large landowners and bourgeoisie profiting especially by imports, bureaucrats keeping the power under their control strengthened their position. Also, efforts to create a bourgeois class fell through from 1923 to 1929 and the psychological foundations of the state intervention in economic life were thereby laid. However, since bureaucrats as a class were incompetent to lead industrial and agricultural production, they had to depend on the contributions of the large landowners and bourgeoisie even if they were negatively affected by the economic crisis. In this regard, the new economic policy of the state facing the opposition of the private enterprises in 1932 slowed down, and Sümerbank established in 1933 superseded both the State Industrial Office and the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey, which demonstrates that the state would encourage moderation in the attitude towards the private sector²⁴⁶. The state-owned bank, Sümerbank was set up to provide state enterprises with finance through the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation. It was stated in the preamble to the Sümerbank Law that in 1932 the abolition of exemptions for the importation of machinery raised the prices of machinery by the transaction tax on tariffs and it thereby prevented the establishment

²⁴⁴ Çavdar, 2003, 262. İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 155-58.

²⁴⁵ Bayar, *ibid*, 776.

²⁴⁶ Timur, *ibid*, 129-30.

of new industrial enterprises. Another justification for the foundation of Sümerbank was that the State Industrial Office by taking over the factories in the hands of the Bank of Industry and Mining made the industrialists worried and had a negative organisational effect on the development of the national industry rather than being amenable to it in accordance with the provisions contained in the constituting law²⁴⁷. As a result, the new law brought back tax exemption for the importation of machinery.

The goals that Sümerbank was supposed to fulfil were as follows:

- a) To operate the factories taken over from the State Industrial Office and manage the state participation stocks in the private industrial establishments in accordance with the provisions of the commercial law.
- b) To do research and prepare projects for all industrial establishments embedded in the state capital, then to build and operate these establishments except for the ones to be built in accordance with the prerogatives granted by special laws.
- c) To participate in or contribute to the industrial enterprises whose foundations or expansions were economically efficient for the country to the extent that the capital of the state sufficed²⁴⁸.

In the light of these goals, Sümerbank didn't differ from the Bank of Industry and Mining which the private sector liked a lot and it combined investing activities and loan business like the Bank of Industry and Mining²⁴⁹.

**Table 18: The Share of Sümerbank
in the Volume of Industrial Output (in 1939)**

Industry	Share of Sümerbank in the volume of output (in %)
Cotton	35
Wool	60
Artificial Silk	100
Leather	62
Shoes	90
Paper and Cardboard	100

²⁴⁷ TBMM Komisyon Raporu, no. 257 (April 20, 1933): 1.

²⁴⁸ "Sümerbank Kanunu (L.N. 2262.)", **Resmî Gazete**, 2424 (June 1933): 2676-2678.

²⁴⁹ See table 18.

Table 18-continuing

Cement	55
Coke	70
Iron	100
Superphosphates	100
Steel	80
Lubricating Oils	80

Z. Y. Hershlag, Turkey: **The Challenge of Growth** (Laden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 92.

Although it was supposed to support the state enterprises, it was held liable for providing loans for the private sector whereas national banks, especially the Business Bank were entitled to provide loans for state enterprises and they got a share of the capital accumulation of the state. Providing loans for privately-owned enterprises indicates that the state transferred a certain amount of accumulation to the private sector, which likened the function of Sümerbank to the one of the Bank of Industry and Mining. However, that national banks provided loans for the state enterprises was similar to the function of the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey which couldn't take action along with the establishment of Sümerbank²⁵⁰.

2.4.3 Invitation to a Committee of American Economists

After Celal Bayar had been appointed to the Ministry of Economy, in spite of İsmet İnönü's strong reactions, he kept in contact with some companies such as Hines, Rearick, Dorr and Hammond located in New York so that they could come to the country to examine Turkish economy²⁵¹. The Engineer Brehon Sommervell as the vice head of the committee and Agriculturalist O. F. Gardner first came to Turkey on June 18, 1933²⁵². The committee would examine the economic conditions of the country and help the government draw up an economic programme based on the report they would hand in²⁵³. Then, the Head of the Committee, Hines, came to Turkey on June 25, 1933. When he showed up, he stated that he would stay in Turkey for 2 weeks to

²⁵⁰ Bilsay Kuruç, **Mustafa Kemal Döneminde Ekonomi** (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1987), 149.

²⁵¹ "Ecnebi İktisatçıları Getirtiliyor", **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, January 1, 1933, 4. İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 172-173.

²⁵² "Ziraat Mühassısı", **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 18, 1933, 1. "İktisadi ve Zirai Tetkikat", **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 19, 1933, 1&6.

²⁵³ "İktisadi ve Zirai Tetkikat", **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 19, 1933, 1&6.

hold a superficial examination and after talking to Celal Bayar at the World Economy Congress in London, he would be back in Turkey to make an in-depth examination in order that he could submit his decisive report to the government²⁵⁴. However, Hines died and he was succeeded by H. Dorr to complete the report in company with some other experts, one of whom was E. Walter Kemmerer, one of the most famous American economists of the period²⁵⁵. When American experts gave a report with its outlines to the Ministry of Economy, some principles of the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation in question had been determined²⁵⁶. In May 1934, the experts completed their studies and proffered the Ministry of Economy a comprehensive four-volume study on the country's economic conditions, natural resources, capital accumulation, industry, transport infrastructure, foreign and domestic trade, finance, monetary and banking system, foundations, employment problems, health and education services and public administration²⁵⁷. However, the decisive report was handed in after the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation had been completed, so it didn't contribute a lot to the industrial plan²⁵⁸.

2.5 The First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation

The etatist ideas were embedded in Turkey's first five-year plan laid out in 1934. Even though it seems that the Five-Year Plan was closely associated with the Soviet Union, the idea of an industrial plan originated with entirely practical reasoning. Despite the fact that the characteristics of the Soviet plan worked out as a model, with adaptations to the Turkish case, this on no account demonstrates that the Turkish Government adhered to communist principles and put them into practice in Turkey.

What inspired the idea is that Turkey was exporting raw materials, but it was importing manufactured products. In other words, in addition to the disadvantage concerning its currency exchange rate because it had to pay for imported goods in foreign currencies, Turkey's general economic condition relied heavily on external sources of finance and foreign markets. Hence, it struggled to maintain equilibrium by manufacturing itself the essentials with its own materials and it would not rely on foreign markets

²⁵⁴ “İktisat Mütchassısı Geldi”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 26, 1933, 1.

²⁵⁵ “Amerikalı Mütchassısların Tavsiyeleri”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, January 28, 1934, 3. “Amerikalı İktisat Profesörünün Yapacağı Tetkikat”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 20, 1934, 4.

²⁵⁶ “Sanayi Programımız”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, December 28, 1933, 1.

²⁵⁷ Tezel, **ibid**, 353.

²⁵⁸ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 174.

anymore²⁵⁹. Celal Bayar stated that adapting to world conditions resulted in the national industrialisation movement as most of the countries closed their borders to the others for five or six years in terms of the exchange of goods. Hence, Turkey would retain absolute control over its national industrial policies which would not be under the auspices of foreign countries. He thereby claimed that the industrial plan would positively affect the foreign trade and monetary system²⁶⁰.

In the light of this fact, the decision was taken to make a breakthrough in Turkish industry and the industrial plan would be implemented by the state through the foundation of new state-owned enterprises. Nevertheless, the private sector would be encouraged to set up privately-owned enterprises which were to be exposed to tight control of the state as long as they stayed away from overproduction and adjust affordable prices²⁶¹.

2.5.1 Preparations for the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation

The ongoing foreign trade deficit in the 1920s started to pose a serious problem in 1929 when the global economic crisis occurred and the exchange rate depreciation of the Turkish Lira accelerated. Accordingly, it turned out that the causality relationship between the depreciation of the lira and the economic crisis prompted the government to embark on a quest for a new economic policy. In this regard, in June 1929, the Supreme Assembly of Economics was asked to prepare an economic programme to investigate the import substitution possibilities for meeting the balance of payments deficit, and to make new suggestions for the acceleration of industrialisation. In December, the Ministry of Economy took on the task of laying out the economic programme of Turkey. A detailed product-based report investigating both export growth and import substitution possibilities was submitted to the prime minister in March 1930 and another following programme was brought to the agenda of the assembly²⁶². Nevertheless, after Soviet experts had come to Turkey to examine the economic conditions of the country and submitted their reports, the programme took its final shape by means of Celal Bayar as the minister of economy taking into consideration the ideas of the American experts he had invited to the country. In

²⁵⁹ S. C. Wyatt, "The Economic Situation and The Five-Years Plan", **The Royal Institute of International Affairs**, Vol.13, no.6 (1934): 836-837.

²⁶⁰ Barlas, **ibid**, 98.

²⁶¹ Wyatt, **ibid**, 837.

²⁶² Tezel, **ibid**, 283-285

January 1934, the Prime Ministry issued a statement concerning the end of all examination and research conducted as follows: “The report of the Ministry of Economy on the new factories to be established was examined in the Council of Ministers being held until January 6, 1934”²⁶³. Then, in January 1934, Celal Bayar announced the plan to the public in detail²⁶⁴. In the aftermath of budget discussions, the decision to implement the plan was reported to Sümerbank in accordance with the decree of the Council of Ministers on April 17, 1934²⁶⁵.

2.5.2 Implementation of the Plan

The main institution responsible for implementing the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation was Sümerbank that had been set up in 1933 to supplant the Industrial Credit Bank of Turkey and the State Industrial Office. The plan underlay the establishment of a series of state-owned enterprises in consumer goods such as iron and steel, textiles, paper, ceramics, glass, and chemical products²⁶⁶. Also, it was carried out to a great extent and most of the enterprises being established in line with the plan and producing consumer goods came into operation by 1938²⁶⁷.

Most of the investments envisaged in the plan were allocated to the weaving (36%) and iron-steel (23%) sectors. The first estimates showed that 45 million liras was required for the realisation of these initiatives during the plan period. However, in the following years, this amount was increased to 65 and then 100 million liras²⁶⁸.

The main goals of the plan were as follows:

- a) Establishment of industrial manufacturing units based on local or regional agricultural production and natural resources,
- b) Prioritisation of domestic production over basic consumption goods that were imported into the country,
- c) Proximity of the industrial enterprises to the labour force and raw material sources²⁶⁹.

²⁶³ “Başvekaletin Tebliği”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, January 8, 1934, 3.

²⁶⁴ “İktisat Vekili İktisadi Program Esaslarını İzah Etti”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, January 9, 1934, 5.

²⁶⁵ Tezel, *ibid*, 355-356.

²⁶⁶ Bayar, *ibid*, 775.

²⁶⁷ Barlas, *ibid*, 98.

²⁶⁸ Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, *ibid*, 68

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 68

The industries were influenced mostly by sound economic criteria like the availability of active markets and raw materials, and substitution for fundamental imports. Apart from economic factors, social, cultural and strategic factors also played a great deal of role in the choice and the location of the new establishments. Strategic influences could be determined in the decision to build an iron and steel factory providing railways and the arms industry under the Ministry of Defence regardless of its economically adverse location. The precedence of sociocultural factors over economic ones was also obvious in the general location policy. In accordance with this policy, most of the fourteen new factories set up under the first five-year plan were located in different parts of the country, especially in Western and Central Anatolia whereas only two new factories were situated in İstanbul. Henceforth, the regional spread and distribution of industry could disseminate the advantages of the industry throughout the country²⁷⁰.

This plan was funded without being exposed to much foreign indebtment, and without making any economic and political compromises to aid-giving nations. However, though several foreign loans were received during the period 1933-1939, Turkey managed to decrease its total foreign debt: Short-term external liabilities rose by 17 million liras, but long-term foreign debt went down by 36 million liras²⁷¹. Apart from the sum of 8 million dollars Turkey received from the Soviet Union, it received two other loans of 3 million and 16 million pounds consecutively that were contracted for the iron and steel factory in Karabük which would be constructed by a British firm called 'Ha A. Brassert/ Ltd. Co.'²⁷².

2.5.2.1 Industry

Industrial plants established through the plan consisted of factories that can be classified under main five groups:

1. Textile Industry (cotton, hemp, wool),
2. Mining Industry (iron, coal, copper, sulphur),
3. Cellulose Industry (cellulose, paper, cardboard, artificial silk),
4. Ceramic Industry (bottle, glass and porcelain),

²⁷⁰ Okyar, **ibid**, 329

²⁷¹ E. Günçe, "Early Planning Experiences in Turkey", **Planning in Turkey**, Ed. S. İlkin, E. İnanc (Ankara: Faculty of Administrative Sciences, 1967), 16.

²⁷² İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, 200.

5. Chemical Industry (sulphuric acid, chlorine, sodium hydroxide)²⁷³.

The First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation did not cover all of the state's initiatives in the industrial sector. In accordance with the plan, priority was given to the production of consumer goods. Among the reports of the Soviet experts, the most comprehensive was about cotton yarn and weaving. Then, experts were asked by the Turkish government to do some research on the conditions of the replacement of cotton imports for domestic production²⁷⁴. Accordingly, progress in the domestic textile industry was made especially in the First Five-Year Plan through Soviet aids. In 1929, imports of cotton products came to TL 6.7 million for cotton yarn and TL 53.2 million for cotton fabrics²⁷⁵.

Table 19: Turkish Imports of Cotton Textile Fabrics and Yarn During the Years 1927-1932 (TL)

Year	Value of Textile Cotton Fabrics	Value of Yarn Imports
1927	45.368.000	5.641.100
1929	53.201.000	6.664.000
1932	16.686.000	3.835.000

Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: An Economy in Transition** (The Hague, 1958),133.

By the end of the 1930s, domestic production was catering for 80% of the cotton demand, “primarily by production of cheaper goods from the local low-grade fibres”²⁷⁶. Two large cotton yarn plants were constructed in Kayseri and Nazilli through Soviet aid in the form of loans for machinery and equipment. Then, textile mills were set up in Ereğli, Malatya and Bakırköy by means of machinery and experts from Germany²⁷⁷.

Another sector in which the government took action in the 1930s was the sugar industry. In addition to the first sugar factories opened up at Uşak and Alpullu in 1926, two other factories in Eskişehir and Turhal were set up in the early 1930s. As of 1934,

²⁷³ T.C. Ekonomi Bakanlığı, “Sınai Tesisat ve İşletme ve Vekalet Teşkilatına İlaveler Hakkında Raporlar” (Ankara, 1935), 10-11.

²⁷⁴ Tezel, **ibid**, 352.

²⁷⁵ See table 19.

²⁷⁶ Hershlag, 1968, 101-102.

²⁷⁷ **Ibid**, 102.

the government gained control over the industry and in accordance with a special law which was enacted in 1934, the sugar industry was exempted from consumption tax for eight years. In 1935, the state created a monopoly over the industry by uniting four sugar factories under its control. Consequently, domestic sugar production went up from 573 tons in 1926 to 95.192 tons in 1939²⁷⁸.

The paper, cellulose and earthenware industries also made progress during the implementation of the plan. A paper factory was established in İzmit and a glass factory in Paşabahçe, İstanbul. The production of paper amounted to 9788 tons per year in 1937. As to that of glass and bottles, it came to 5338 tons per year in 1938²⁷⁹.

The plan also aimed to set up the iron and steel industry. On March 29, 1926, the Grand National Assembly enacted a law regarding the establishment of iron industry, but due to the lack of capital, the law never came into effect and so, it was brought forward during the preparation of this plan when this issue was centred on the facts that Professor Granigg from Austria, who had been assigned to figure out if Turkey had the minerals required for this industry and if the Turkish coal could be exploited to produce coke in the casting process, determined. The investigations were sustained by the Luxemburg expert, Lucius and then in 1934, by the Soviet experts. Also, the general manager of the mines was sent to Belgium and France to do some research on the industrial problems of both countries. Based on these investigations, concentrations of iron ore were detected in Çağlayık (in Central Anatolia), Torbalı (İzmir) and Faraşa (Kayseri) in addition to the coal of Zonguldak-Ereğli to be used in the iron industry. The location of the industry would be near the coal fields apart from strategic facts. Consequently, Karabük was regarded as the centre of the new industry²⁸⁰.

Before the Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation in 1936 and 1937 was laid out, most of the projects had already been implemented: The factories destined for Kayseri, Bakırköy, Zonguldak, İzmit (Paper and Cellulose), Keçiözümlü, Beykoz, Isparta and Bodrum had come into operation; the factories in Ereğli, Gemlik, Bursa and Nazilli had been built; and final studies had been brought to completion for the projects of the

²⁷⁸Barlas, **ibid**, 98-99.

²⁷⁹ **Ibid**, 99.

²⁸⁰ Hershlag, 1968, 103-104.

relevant factories in Malatya, Karabük (Iron-Steel, Sulphuric Acid, Phosphate), Ergani, İzmit (2. Paper factory, Kaolin, Chlorine Alkali), Filyos and Taşköprü²⁸¹.

**Table 20: Condition of Implementation in the Factories
in the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation**

Sector	Sub-sector	Groundbreaking Date	Inauguration Date	Institutional Investor
Weaving Industry	Cotton Weaving			
	Bakırköy	5/1934	13/8/1934	Sümerbank
	Kayseri	20/5/1934	16/9/1935	Sümerbank
	Ereğli	20/11/1934	4/4/1937	Sümerbank
	Nazilli	24/8/1935	9/10/1937	Sümerbank
	Malatya	25/5/1937	1940	Sümerbank Business Bank Agricultural Bank
	Hemp			
	Taşköprü	2/6/1945	7/11/1946	Sümerbank
	Woolen Weaving			
	Bursa Merinos Factory	18/10/1935	2/2/1938	Sümerbank
Mining Industry	Karabük Iron and Steel Works	3/4/1937	9/9/1938	Sümerbank
	Zonguldak Semicoke Fac.	15/8/1934	10/12/1935	Business Bank
	Ergani Copper Smelting Fac.	5/1937	5/1939	Transferred to Eti Bank
	Keçiborlu Sulpur Fac.	1/10/1934	25/8/1935	Sümerbank Business Bank Eti Bank-1936
Cellulose Industry	İzmit 1. Paper factory	14/8/1934	6/11/1935	Sümerbank
	İzmit Kaolin Factory	-	3/1941	Sümerbank
	İzmit Cellulose Fac.	6/11/1934	17/8/1935	Sümerbank
	İzmit 2. Paper Factory	6/11/1936	24/7/ 1944	Sümerbank
	Gemlik Artificial Silk Factory	28/11/1935	1/1/1938	Sümerbank

²⁸¹ İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, 1982, table 46. See table 20.

Table 20-continuing

Ceramic Industry	Beykoz Glass-Bottle Factory	14/8/1934	29/11/1935	Business Bank
	Filyos Firebrick Factory	1946	1948	Sümerbank
Chemical Industry	Karabük Sulphuric Acid Factory	3/7/1943	15/5/1944	Sümerbank
	Karabük Phosphate Fac.	3/7/1943	15/5/1944	Sümerbank
	İzmit Chlorine Alkali Fac.	10/7/1938	17/8/1945	Sümerbank
Sponge Industry	Bodrum	29/8/1934	29/8/1934	Business Bank Sümerbank
Rose Oil Industry	Isparta	1/10/1934	5/1935	Business Bank Sümerbank Agricultural Bank

İlhan Tekeli, Selim İlkin, **Uygulamaya Geçerken Türkiye’de Devletçiliğin Oluşumu** (Ankara: ODTÜ, 1982), table 46.

In 1932, 1473 enterprises benefited from the Law for the Encouragement of Industry. Henceforth, this number decreased steadily and dropped to 1144 in 1939²⁸². However, the number of state enterprises exploiting this law increased continually: It rose to 31 in 1922, 56 in 1935 and 86 in 1936²⁸³.

Table 21: Range of the Enterprises Benefiting from the Law for the Encouragement of Industry Based on Their Foundation Years, 1932-1939

Year	Number of Enterprises
1932	1473
1933	1397
1934	1310
1935	1161
1936	1101

²⁸² Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, *ibid*, 74. See table 21.

²⁸³ Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, “Türkiye’de Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Gelişmenin 50 yılı” (Ankara, 1973), 166-167. Bulutay T. Yahya S. Tezel, N. Yıldırım, **Türkiye Milli Geliri (1923-1948)** (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1974), Ek Tablo 53.

Table 21-continuing

1937	1116
1938	1103
1939	1144
TOTAL	9805

Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü. “Türkiye’de Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Gelişmenin 50 Yılı” (Ankara: DİE Yayınları, 1973), 166.

The policy of industrialisation stimulating private industrial growth under the auspices of the state continued from 1932 onwards. Along with the Great Depression taking place in 1929, it didn’t meet the expectations of the state and resulted in the adoption of the First Five Year Plan of Industrialisation between 1933 and 1938. Therefore, the state became the main entity of industrial development. However, there was no distinction between the public and private sector in terms of the implementation of the Law for the Encouragement of Industry and both sectors drew an advantage from it.

2.5.2.2 Agriculture

Agriculture was not prioritised compared with industry in the 1930s. Even though the statist regime was conscious of the significance of agriculture in the country’s economy, it didn’t bring about a change in its traditional structure and great stress laid on industrial progress hindered rural development. Moreover, when Minister of Economy Celal Bayar enlightened the public as to the ongoing industrial plan, he expostulated with the ones who were in favor of the importance of agricultural production, regarding them as old-fashioned. The unfair distribution of land was for the benefit of large landowners. He also stated that if Turkey remained agricultural, it would automatically adopt the old division of labour and would not be able to shield its national strength without the construction of an industrial society. A non-industrialised country would always take sides with the losing party compared with the industrialised countries²⁸⁴. Accordingly, in the eastern part of Turkey, the feudal system didn’t disintegrate and rural areas didn’t live through the expected transformation in the Republican period²⁸⁵.

²⁸⁴ Barlas, *ibid*, 97-98.

²⁸⁵ Çavdar, 2003, 264.

On the other hand, in a period when the state intervention in the economic policy increased, the government introduced a new policy along with the Agricultural Bank so as to encourage the cooperative movement. From the early 1930 and October 1932, 572 credit cooperatives went into operation under the control of the Agricultural Bank. The essential goal of the credit cooperatives was to free the peasantry from the clutches of usurers and intermediaries²⁸⁶. The function of the cooperatives was very straightforward. They provided their members with short- and medium-term loans which were supposed to be used just for intentions related to agriculture and its improvement such as fertilisation, wage, seeds and agricultural equipment²⁸⁷. Furthermore, in 1932, the Agricultural Bank was given the right to purchase wheat directly from the farmer. In accordance with the preamble to the relevant law, the objective was “to stop the price dropping when the crops rush to the markets and ... to prevent the price from rising to the detriment of producers or for the benefit of the intermediaries in some seasons”²⁸⁸. The Protection Law on Wheat in 1934 aimed to keep the wheat price at a higher and more stable level and to balance it with tax revenue from wheat consumption²⁸⁹. In 1935, the law on Agricultural Credit Cooperatives envisaged to work in cooperation with the Agricultural Bank was enacted in order that they could reduce the usurers’ pressure on small and medium farmers²⁹⁰.

Moreover, as of 1937, some precautions were taken to improve agriculture and farmers’ or peasants’ condition in terms of afforestation, technical improvements, consolidation of agricultural exports (in collaboration with the Second Five-Year Plan) and implementation of an irrigation system:

- a) Supporting policies for agricultural products through government purchases,
- b) Creation of a central irrigation system by dividing Anatolia into 12 water regions,
- c) Proliferation of Agricultural Sales Cooperatives,
- d) Proliferation of Agricultural Credit Cooperatives,
- e) Establishment of Agricultural Combines,
- f) Foundation of Village Institutes,

²⁸⁶ Hershlag, 1968, 110.

²⁸⁷ Hershlag, 1958, 146-147.

²⁸⁸ **TBMM Komisyon Raporu**, no. 262 (June 27, 1932): 2-3.

²⁸⁹ Bilsay Kuruç, **Belgelerle Türkiye İktisat Politikası (1929-1932)**. Vol. 2 (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1988), 193.

²⁹⁰ Boratav, 2018, 74.

g) Establishment of agricultural production farms²⁹¹.

The foundation of state-controlled entities intended for agriculture accelerated in the late 30s: TEKEL (Tobacco and Alcohol Monopoly of Turkey), Agricultural Sales Cooperatives Union, Turkey Sugar Factories Inc. (1935), Agricultural Combines (1937), Turkish Grain Board (1938). In addition, due to the worldwide improvement in terms of trade from 1935 onwards, production of agricultural products averted the negative effect of the global crisis²⁹².

The cultivation area of the country that dropped off as a consequence of the war and economic fluctuations, and comprised in 1927 just 4.86% of the complete area went up to 10.20% in 1934, and to 12.25% in 1940. The total amount of crops rose considerably due to the increase in the area. However, yields per unit were nearly stable, excluding the ones of the industrial crops. The relative rise in both area and crops was alike. The rise in cultivable and cropped lands resulted from some investments in irrigation works, land rehabilitation activities and drainage²⁹³. However, the slow pace of development derived from especially ignorance of the peasantry. They launched to the market the seeds they got from the government for their own farm, or exploited loans to pay off other debts rather than invest the money in irrigation, fertilisers and equipment. In addition, the government's contribution to agriculture was not sufficient and its proportion amounted to one-third of the investment in transport and industry²⁹⁴.

2.5.2.3 Foreign Trade

The agreements made before the global crisis broke out regulated international trade relations. As long as the principle of 'the most favoured nation clause' was in force, a country didn't have any rights to make private trade agreements through mutual commitment. In the aftermath of the crisis, 'international free trade' was supplanted by 'international counter trade' when countries started taking protective measures for their economies²⁹⁵.

²⁹¹ Çavdar, *ibid*, 265; Hershlag, 1958, 148.

²⁹² Gülten Kazgan, **Tanzimattan 21. Yüzyıla Türkiye Ekonomisi: Birinci Küreselleşmeden İkinci Küreselleşmeye** (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2002), 68.

²⁹³ Hershlag, 1958, 149.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 149-150.

²⁹⁵ Vedat Nedim, "Serbest Ticaretten Bağlı Ticarete", **Kadro**, No. 12 (1932a): 12.

In the etatist period, the main goal set by the government was to stay away from the trade deficit, so some arrangements in the foreign trade were made²⁹⁶. Supply of goods from the countries purchasing goods within the country, limitation of imports on goods produced in Turkey and release of imported goods pursuant to bilateral agreements were the fundamental components. Within this period, clearing agreements were made with several countries and in particular Germany and Turkey would import goods from the countries in exchange for exports. In accordance with a more liberal foreign trade policy which was adopted from January 1, 1937 onwards, the government made some attempts to enable liberty of trade by putting an end to clearing agreements. However, in 1938, the foreign trade had a deficit especially due to the weakness of its commercial shipping and foreign debts that had a negative impact on the balance of payments, and limitations on the foreign trade were imposed again²⁹⁷.

Table 22: Balance of Foreign Trade, 1932-1939
(Million TL)

Years	Exports	Imports	Balance of Foreign Trade
1932	101	86	+15
1933	96	74	+18
1934	92	86	+6
1935	95	88	+7
1936	117	92	+25
1937	138	114	+24
1938	145	150	-5
1939	127	118	+9

Feridun Erin, **Atatürk Zamanında Türk Ekonomisi** (Yaşam Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı Yayınları, 1977), 62. Z. Y. Hershlag, **Turkey: The Challenge of Growth** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 369.

One of the leading reasons why the export volume increased in the 1930s was that consecutive years of good yields expanded stocks. Another reason was that Germany carrying out a policy for economic expansion in the Balkans and the Middle East demanded agricultural and mining products from Turkey when the Nazis came to

²⁹⁶ See table 22.

²⁹⁷ Yakup Kepenek, Nurhan Yentürk, **ibid**, 76; Hershlag, 1968, 116.

power. Germany accounted for almost half of the gains from trade when the Turkish exported goods went through a decrease in demand in many liberal cities. The government highlighted export increases through bilateral trade agreements to accumulate foreign exchange and golden reserves for the Central Bank and run counter to the new import policy the industrialisation development brought about. Besides, that the government turned to a method of redemption through exports in foreign indebtment caused by the loans received from the Soviet Union and England was another reason²⁹⁸. Turkish exports contained mostly raw materials and food such as tobacco, fruit, vegetables, cereals, hides, wool, angora wool, cotton, coal, copper and chromium. Substantial changes happened in imports in the course of the late 1930s in relation to the beginning of the decade. Imports of textiles dropped off from 44% of total imports to 27.5%, those of foodstuffs from 17% to 4.3% whereas a rise was conspicuous in imports of capital goods and some raw materials such as automobiles, machinery, iron and steel, from 14.5% to 37.2% of total imports at the turn of the period²⁹⁹.

2.6 The Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation

The preparations for the Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation were initiated after many factories based on the first plan had been constructed and had started production. In compliance with the second plan, the mining and energy sectors would be prioritised. Within this framework, three essential institutions were founded: Electrical Power Resources Survey and Development Administration to assess electrical energy designs, Institute of Mineral Research and Exploration to locate the country's underground resources, and Eti Bank to finance mining and energy investments as Sümerbank had been doing³⁰⁰. The plan also comprised the completion of the goals set by the First Five-Year Plan. The sum of money estimated for this scheme was 111.845.000 liras. In addition, Celal Bayar stated in his introductory note that the execution of this great plan seemed incongruous with the techniques of the liberal regime³⁰¹. The plan stressed the fundamental tasks as follows: "As in the first Plan, in this Plan, too, an account has been taken of the industry which is compatible with the

²⁹⁸ Tezel, **ibid**, 135

²⁹⁹ Hershlag, 1968, 116.

³⁰⁰ Yenal, **ibid**, 86-87.

³⁰¹ Hershlag, 1958, 67.

economic structure and conditions (of the country). It calls for large capital outlay and techniques, and is based on local raw materials”³⁰².

2.6.1 Preparations for The Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation

In the aftermath of the implementation of the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation, initiatives were taken in January 1936 to lay out a Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation. The Congress of Industry convened in Ankara between January 20 and January 24, and gathered experts to work out projects and sector studies on the following topics:

1. Mining,
2. Coal mining,
3. Regional electricity plants,
4. Home fuels industry and trade,
5. Earthenware industry,
6. Foodstuffs industry,
7. Chemical industry,
8. Engineering industry,
9. Sea port³⁰³.

The studies were completed in a substantially short period of time and handed to the Ministry of Economy. Then, they were scrutinised by a group of experts in the Ministry and conflated. In the end, they were published in the same year under the title ‘The Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation’. However, this text was a preliminary draft and further two years elapsed before the final draft was ratified by the government in September 1938³⁰⁴. The leading objectives of the plan can be summed up as follows:

- a) As in the first plan, in the second one, the industry which was suitable for the economic structure and conditions, and which required a large amount of capital and technical force with its raw material existing in the country was taken into consideration.
- b) The construction of heavy industry on the basis of local raw materials and, especially the enhancement of an industrial zone in the vicinity of Zonguldak-

³⁰² T.C. İktisat Vekaleti, “Sanayi Tetkik Heyeti”, 2inci 5 yıllık Sanayi Planı (Başvekalet Matbaası, 1936), XXI- XXII cited in Z. Y. Hershlag, 1958, 107.

³⁰³ E. Günçe, *ibid*, 18. İnan, 1973, 5.

³⁰⁴ E. Günçe, *ibid*, 18.

Karabük area based on the advancements in the railway system and transportation, and the construction of a port for steel and coal exports. Most importantly, factories to process the semi-finished goods of KARDEMİR (*Karabük Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ Karabük Iron and Steel Works*) established in accordance with the first plan were proposed.

- c) The utmost use of the mines and natural resources in both land and sea including lakes and rivers was aimed. The mines would be made ready for exports as both raw and semi-finished so that these export goods would be valued and new ones would be created.
- d) A great deal of stress was laid on the improvement in fuel and power. The increase in coal production was envisioned and much importance would be attributed to the organisation of distribution in terms of national defence and household consumption. In order to meet the energy needs of the country to a large extent, two electric power stations in Zonguldak and Kütahya would be established and they would supply the industrial zones in the western part of the country as well as the ones in the nearby stations with electricity. Electricity would be supplied for home consumption purposes as well. Moreover, this would enable the growth of the industrial centres in the hinterlands of the country in compliance with the needs of civilian demand and national defence.
- e) Considerable revenues could be generated through livestock breeding and fruits grown throughout the country.
- f) The enhancement of the industrialisation of Eastern Turkey by setting up a yarn factory in Erzurum, a cement factory in Sivas and two sugar factories, a meat packing and canning industry and improved port facilities at Trabzon.
- g) The establishment of jute works in Anatolia, an agricultural equipment factory in Ankara, a sugar refinery and an aluminium factory.
- h) The enhancement of the Merchant Marine through further 28 ships of various tonnages.
- i) The increasing of the exports of agricultural production³⁰⁵.

³⁰⁵ E. Günçe, *ibid*, 18-19. İnan, 1973, 7-8. Hershlag, 1958, 107-108.

**Table 23: Characteristics of the Second Five-Year
Plan of Industrialisation**

Sector	Sub-Sector (Site of Establishment and Raw Material)	Number of Enterprises
Mining Industry	Eastern Chrome Operations A) Guleman Chrome Plant B) Chrome Ore Reserves in the Vicinity of Guleman (chromite)	1 3
	Ferrochrome Industry (in Kütahya; chromite)	1
	Ergani Copper Plant (copper ore)	1
	Kuvarshan and Murgul Copper Mining Operations A) Kuvarshan Copper Mines B) Murgul-Cansul Copper Mines	1 1
	Other Mining Operations A) Silvery lead and zinc complex ores B) Secondary ores (antimony, mercury, molybdenum, magnesite) C) Iron ores	Some
Coal Mining Operation	Ereğli Coal Mines (mineral coal)	1
	Kütahya Lignite Plant (Seyitömer; lignite)	1
Electric Power Stations	Zonguldak Electric Power Station (Çatalağzı; coal slags)	1
	Kütahya Electric Power Station (Kütahya; lignite)	1
Housing Fuel Industry	Housing Fuel Industry (various large cities of the country and coalfields, pit coal)	1
Earthen Industry	Slag Cement Industry (Karabük; slag)	1

Table 23-continuing

	Fireclay Industry (Karabük and Kütahya; plastic clay, kaolin, corundum, dolomite and graphite)	1
Foodstuff Industry	Bread and flour Industry (Ankara, İstanbul and İzmir; wheat and flour)	6
	Olive oil refinery (Ayvalık; lampante virgin olive oil)	1
	Fresh and dried fruit industry (various places of the country; fruit)	30
	Meat industry (Trabzon; sheep and cattle)	1
Chemical Industry	Soda industry (İstanbul or Van; coal, salt limestone)	1
	Resin industry (Mudanya; raw resin)	1
	Opium industry (Ankara; opium)	1
	Rose oil industry (Isparta, Burdur, Atabey; rose leaves)	3
	Giresun oleic acid and soap industry (Kayseri; tallow and soda)	1
	Oil refinery (Marmara and Central Anatolia; crude oil)	2
	Synthetic fuel industry (Zonguldak or Kütahya; pit coal)	1
	Nitrogen industry (Kütahya or İzmit; electricity, air, coal and limestone)	1
Mechanical Industry	Machinery and metalware industries (Ereğli; raw iron, bar and plate)	1
	Measurement industry and trade (İstanbul; metallic and wooden materials)	1
	Galvanised plate industry (Karabük; platin, tin)	1

Table 23-continuing

	Pipe industry (Karabük, raw cast iron, metallurgical coke)	1
Maritime	Maritime industry and trade (port, lighthouse, radio beacon, foghorn, mooring buoy, port monitoring facility, renovation of maritime factories, establishment of a new factory (İstanbul, İzmir, Bosphorus and coasts)	2
	Seafood industry and trade (İstanbul, Trabzon, İzmir, Samsun, Ankara, coasts, estuaries, lakes; fish)	16

Afet İnan, **Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin İkinci Sanayi Planı 1936** (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1973), table 11.

As far as the differences between the two plans are concerned, the major one concerns the aid received from foreign countries. Whereas the Soviet Union had played a leading role in technical assistance, financial support, and equipment in the course of the implementation of the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation, especially in the textile sector, Turkey appealed to British advisors and companies for the implementation of considerable projects during the period of the Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation in which the Soviet Union's role was still substantial, especially in the electrification of the country. Sir Alexander Gibb worked as an advisor on port development. British engineers contributed to the development of copper mines, British companies provided ships and locomotives, and helped establish the iron and steel factory in Karabük. Another distinction between the two plans was that in the second plan much more importance was placed on the most backward regions of Turkey like Eastern Anatolia. Plants intended for this region were centred around Malatya and Erzurum, and the proposed plants were especially in the field of light industries using local raw materials³⁰⁶. Besides, the second plan aimed for over 100 factories to be set up whereas the first plan fixed a target of 20 factories³⁰⁷.

³⁰⁶ Günçe, *ibid*, 20.

³⁰⁷ Hershlag, 1958, 107.

2.6.2 Implementation of the Plan

The Second Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation fastened especially on the advancement in producer and capital goods unlike the first plan that was bound up with the production of consumer goods. Mining, machinery, electricity and ports were the essential points the plan was centred on³⁰⁸. In 1935, a law granting the government the right to nationalise all mines, which were insufficiently run by their possessors, was accepted in order that the development of mines could be facilitated³⁰⁹. On December 10, 1937, a three-year development plan related to mines was adopted and it was integrated into the Second Five-Year Plan³¹⁰. In December 1937, the government implemented the section related to the mining of the Second Five-Year Plan under the name ‘The Three-Year Mining Project’. A year later, in September 1938, it adopted a new ‘Four-Year Plan’ including ‘The Three-Year Mining Project’, which was put into effect in 1937³¹¹.

Furthermore, the cost of the projects within the framework of the Four-Year Industrial Plan which was put into effect through the decree in September 1938 was around 200 million TL. The government was very optimistic about finding funds to cover the expenses of the projects. However, after Celal Bayar had resigned as prime minister, Refik Saydam formed the government and the new government was assigned to research the feasibility of the implementation of the 1938 Plan and the financial burden it would necessitate. Following the report given to the Prime Ministry on March 1, 1939, the government decided to suspend most of the projects in compliance with a decree on March 13, 1939³¹².

In addition to the decision taken by the government, WWII breaking out in 1939 brought to a standstill the implementation of some of the projects as well and war production became the focal point. The country had scant labour and capital resources, and got into difficulty stabilising its expenditure for security concerns and economic progress³¹³.

³⁰⁸ **Ibid**, 108.

³⁰⁹ British Consular Report, “Near East and India” (London, 1935) cited in Z. Y. Hershlag, 1958, 108.

³¹⁰ Gotthard Jäschke, **Die Türkei in den Jahren 1935-41** (Leipzig, Otto Harrasowitz, 1943) cited in Hershlag, 1958, 108.

³¹¹ Tezel, **ibid**, 366-367.

³¹² **Ibid**, 371-372

³¹³ Hershlag, 1968, 109.

The most important role that this plan played was especially in mining. The state first envisioned imports of iron ore and raw materials from the closest ore beds in North-Western Anatolia and realised that the richest concentration of raw materials would be discovered in Divriği, in Eastern Anatolia. The detection of new ores with raw materials gave rise to the establishment of a plant at a distance from Zonguldak which met the demands of coal in a shipment area on the Black Sea. Hence, there was a distance of 100 km between Zonguldak and Karabük, and 1000 km between Divriği and Karabük on a single-track line³¹⁴. Apart from Divriği Iron Mines Operation, Guleman Chrome Plant, Ergani Copper Plant, Kuvayirhan and Murgul Copper Mining Operations, Cast-Iron Pipe Factory in Karabük, Trabzon and Zonguldak Ports were some of the projects carried out till 1950³¹⁵.

2.7 Improvements in Mining: Establishment of Eti Bank

The mining sector didn't make any progress in the 1920s. The private sector and foreign capital were not concerned with transforming Turkey's minerals into a source of income for the development of the country. The mining reached a turning point when the state intended to take on active responsibility in economic life³¹⁶. In accordance with the investigations carried out, the essential minerals believed to be profitable were copper, coal, chromium and iron. The government made efforts to improve the facilities of these minerals by incorporating them into the First Five-Year Plan and investing capital in new plants, improvement of the available ones and methods of transportation as well as training experts. Unlike the first one, the second plan was intended for heavy industry and consumer goods. Considerable importance was thereby attached to the local raw materials which would pave the way for the development of the heavy industry. As far as mining production data is concerned, production varied significantly over the years and decreased especially during the war years. As a result, the execution of the Second Five-Year Plan was thwarted by the beginning of WWII. Nevertheless, substantial steps were taken till the end of the 1930s³¹⁷.

³¹⁴ *Ibid*, 105.

³¹⁵ Tezel, *ibid*, 375.

³¹⁶ See table 24.

³¹⁷ Z. Y. Hershlag, 1958, 125-127.

Table 24: Increase in Output of Minerals, 1930-1940 (Tons)

Mineral	1930	1935	1940
Bituminous coal	1.595.000	2.340.000	3.019.000
Lignite	9.000	73.000	229.000
Iron	-	-	130.000
Chromium	28.000	150.000	170.000
Copper	-	-	8.764
Lead	15.508	4.401	17.906
Manganese	900	9.200	460
Sulphur	-	2.576	3.651
Emery	3.267	11.991	8.556
Tin	9.645	14.645	-
Kaolin (cases)	380	694	255

Barlas, *ibid*, 62.

In the 1930s, mineral exploration privileges granted to foreign companies were taken away. In addition, their plants and shares in domestic companies were nationalised and confiscated by the state³¹⁸. For instance, in compliance with the law numbered 3034 and dated June 11, 1936, a contract between the government and Deutsche Bank *und Disconto-Gesellschaft* was signed for the purchase of shares of Ergani copper Turkish Joint Stock Company up to 850.000 liras out of 1.5 million liras the Germans held³¹⁹. To set another example, in accordance with the law numbered 3146 and dated March 31, 1937, the Ereğli Company belonging to the French capital was nationalised. Within the scope of the contract, Ereğli Port, Zonguldak-Çatalağzı Railway Line and coal mining operations were nationalised in the consolidation of the sum of 3.500.000 liras³²⁰.

Mines required a considerable capital investment. However, Turkish private capital was not sufficient to make an investment to a great extent. Turkey with small

³¹⁸ Boratav, 2006, 280.

³¹⁹ “Doyçe Bank Elinde Bulunan Ergani Bakır Türk Anonim Şirketi Hisse Senedlerinin Satın Alınmasına Dair Kanun (L.N. 3334)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 3335 (June 1936): 6679.

³²⁰ “Hükümetle Ereğli Şirketi Arasında Akdedilen 28 Teşrinisani 1936 Tarihli Satın Alma Mukavelesinin Tasdikına Dair Kanun (L.N. 3146)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 3593 (April 1937): 8001-8804.

entrepreneurs didn't have required experts with professional and technical knowledge. Instead of benefiting from foreign capital, the state was burdened with the responsibility of coping with the mining problem and exploiting the country's mineral resources³²¹. First, in accordance with the law no. 2189 which was passed on May 20, 1933, Gold and Oil Exploration and Operation Management was established³²². However, the first plan instead offered the foundation of the Institute of Geology and through the law no. 2804 dated June 14, 1935, the Institute of Mineral Research and Exploration was instead founded. It was pointed out in the preamble to the law that unused mining areas remained in the hands of the speculators as mineral research could not be conducted in the country, and so the state should take the matter into its own hands³²³. The tasks of this institute were as follows: carrying out geological, scientific and mineralogical surveys to discover mining and quarrying sites for operation in the country; conducting chemical analysis; drawing up projects and scientific reports; calculating profitability ratio; training technicians, engineers, foremen and qualified workers³²⁴.

Another significant breakthrough made in terms of mining was that in parallel with the law no. 2805, Eti Bank designed to finance mining and energy investments was established on June 14, 1935³²⁵. This financial institute and the Institute of Mineral Research and Exploration would work together coordinately and Eti Bank would be in charge of financing the enterprises processing the minerals in the mines discovered by the other institute. It would also search for the opportunities of providing substantial capital that they needed in the most appropriate way for the national development of the country. The capital of Eti Bank was 20 million liras. This amount could be increased up to twice as much by the government and the bank's management committee³²⁶. The tasks of Etibank were as follows:

- a) Purchasing and selling mineral ores, quarry materials, mineral raw materials, and coordinating the trade of purchase and sale,
- b) Issuing research and production licenses for various mines and oil,

³²¹ Hershlag, 1958, 126.

³²² "Altın ve Petrol Arama ve İşletme İdareleri Teşkiline Dair Kanun (L.N 2189)", **Resmi Gazete**, 2411 (May 1933): 2508.

³²³ Korkut Boratav, 2006, 281.

³²⁴ Maden Tetkik ve Arama Enstitüsü Kanunu (L.N. 2804)", **Resmi Gazete**, 3035 (June 1935): 5378-5380.

³²⁵ "Eti Bank Kanunu (L.N. 2805)", **Resmi Gazete**, 3035 (June 1935): 5380-5381.

³²⁶ **TBMM Komisyon Raporu**, no. 212 (June 7, 1935): 1-2.

- c) Establishing power plants and generating electricity, setting up facilities to manufacture electrical materials, tools and machinery,
- d) Establishing commercial entities which would cope with the above-mentioned statements and participating in such organisations,
- e) Performing all kinds of banking transactions,
- f) Managing the mines and quarries that the Institute of Mineral Research and Exploration deemed suitable for operation as a result of the examination performed by the Institute on mineral ores or quarry materials³²⁷.

Eti Bank would transfer the mining and electricity procurement, transportation and distribution privileges, mining and quarry licenses to the institutions having a legal entity. These institutions would be turned into companies upon the decision of the government's proposal and the bank's management committee. In this way, the shareholders had to be Turkish and the stocks had to be registered to the name³²⁸. Turning state enterprises into companies and assigning them to private individuals was conspicuous, which demonstrates that etatism comprised contradictory elements in 1935 when etatist economic policy was put into practice³²⁹.

Whereas Eti Bank Law included articles with a possibility to turn its organisations over to the private sector, the law no. 2818 dated June 14, 1935 imposed new and strict restrictions against private miners. In this regard, some articles of Mining Regulations enacted through the law no. 608 dated 1925 for the development of mineral production by the private sector were amended³³⁰. As a matter of fact, this law imposing some limitations on the private mining companies made people think that it would give rise to communism and reduced the duration of a mining research licence to two year's time. Therefore, giving the licence to another person would be subject to official permission by the new law³³¹.

Instead of opening up new plants, Eti Bank initiated its investment activities in mining by taking over available plants and enhanced the ones that had already started production. Besides, other plants would also be constructed by the bank over time in

³²⁷ "Eti Bank Kanunu (2805 S.K.)", **Resmi Gazete**, 3035 (June 1935): 5380.

³²⁸ **Ibid**, 5380.

³²⁹ Boratav, 2006, 283.

³³⁰ Boratav, 2006, 283-284.

³³¹ Timur, **ibid**, 131.

the mining sector³³². Some of the enterprises which went into operation are as follows: Keçiborlu Sulphur Plant, Ergani Copper Plant, Eastern Chrome Plant, Murgul Copper Plant, Divriği Iron Mines Operation, Ereğli Coal Enterprise, Kuvarshan Copper Plant, Çatalağzı Thermal Power Plant, Keban Silver-Lead Enterprise, Küre Copper Plant, Bandırma Borax Plant, Emet Cholemanite Plant, Çayeli Copper Plant, Üçköprü Chrome Plant, Harmancık Chrome Plant, Pınarbaşı Chrome Plant, Antalya Ferrochrome Plant, Elazığ Ferrochrome Plant, Balya Lead-Zinc Plant, Bulgardağ Gold-Silver Enterprise, Halıköy Mercury Plant, Seydişehir Aluminium Factory, Bigadiç Boron Enterprise, Kestelek Boron Enterprise, Beyşehir Barite Enterprise, Uludağ Tungsten Concentrate Enterprise, Gümüşköy Silver Mining Enterprise, Yayladağ Phosphate Enterprise³³³.

All enterprises set up in the early Republican Period made a major impact on the country and cities where they had been inaugurated. These enterprises as a space of production were a reflection of the etatist economic policies put into effect after the very beginning of the 1930s. Thus, it was highly important to mention the ideology of the early Republican period and the economic policies of the state before going on with the Divriği Iron Mines Operation meeting the needs of iron ore of KARDEMİR opened up in accordance with the First Five-Year Plan of Industrialisation.

³³² Özkan Demir, “Cumhuriyet Dönemi Madencilik Politikaları ve Etibank’ın Rolü” (Phd Thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2017), 98.

³³³ Burhan Ulutan, **Etibank 1935-1985** (Ankara, 1988) cited in Özkan Demir, “Cumhuriyet Dönemi Madencilik Politikaları ve Etibank’ın Rolü” (Phd Thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2017), 98.

3. TRASFORMATION OF URBAN SPACE IN DİVRİĞİ

In this part, after a short introduction to the history of the town, population statistics which are an indicator for socio-economic development based on the new employment opportunities created in the Divriği Iron Mines Operation will be examined. Data about education in both urban and rural areas, administrative units and expansion of the town through new settlements, political atmosphere and socio-economic activities will also be analysed. These data set criteria for the evaluation of the positive effects of the state-owned enterprise and also the period of the privatisation process.

3.1 History of Divriği

Divriği has an ancient history and the first settlement in the town dates back to Hittite Civilisation. The site which was referred to as Apbrike in ancient Greek sources, Tepbrike in the Byzantine era and Apbrik in Arabic sources served as a bridge between Byzantium and Iran³³⁴. The first place where the city was established is the castle and its surroundings located on a hill that descends into Çaltı Valley with steep slopes in the northeast. Divriği liberated from the expansion of the Sasanian Empire by the emperor Heraclius later encountered the Arab attacks and the castle built on the summit of the hill played a strategic role in those attacks³³⁵.

There is not much information on the history of the town before the 8th century AD. It is also claimed that it was founded by the Paulicians adopting a heretical sect, a mixture of Eastern Christianity and paganism. Building temples and castles, they made Divriği their capital and religious centre³³⁶. Their leader Sergius had the walls and waterways repaired in Tephrike (Divriği) Castle on the rocks of the site. The Tephrike

³³⁴ Sivas Valiliği, *Sivas İl Yıllığı 1973* (Ankara,1973), 52.

³³⁵ *Ibid*, 52

³³⁶ Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Divriği Tarihinden Çizgiler”, *Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında, Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü* (Ankara: TDÇİ, 1988): 17.

monarchy ruled by Sergius' son, Karbeas, extended its border to the eastern part of the Byzantine lands. Considered heretical by the Byzantines, they became an ally of the neighbouring Arabs and they waged war on the Byzantium with them. They advanced as far as Ankyra (Ankara), Malegena (around Eskişehir) and Ephesus during their raids in the second half of the 9th century³³⁷. Byzantine emperors, Michael III, Basil I and Leo VI launched expeditions, and many people were driven into exile following the bloody attacks³³⁸. Through this defeat, the period of the Paulicians passed away. Most of them were subjected to the genocide and whoever survived was either converted to Orthodox Christianity or exiled to the Thrace³³⁹.

After the battle of Manzikert in 1071, Divriği was conquered by the Turks under the leadership of Emir Mengüjek Gazi, ruling the region of Erzincan, at the end of the 11th century. It was regarded as the third most important centre preceded by Erzincan and Kemah respectively in the Mengüjekid Principality³⁴⁰. Following the death of Emir İshak, Mengüjek Gazi's son, the principality was broken up into Erzincan and Divriği branches and the Divriği branch was founded by Süleyman Bey. Meanwhile, the Great Mosque built by Ahmet Shah and the Hospital of Divriği founded by Ahmet Shah's wife, Turan Melek, are two famous monuments bearing the traces of the Mengüjekids. Mengüjekid sovereignty over the Divriği branch came to an end when the Mongol leader of the Ilkhanate Abaqa Khan stopped off in Divriği in 1277 on her way to Elbistan against the Mamluk Sultan Baibars³⁴¹. Henceforth, Divriği remained under Mongol occupation until 1340. After that, under the family of Suhri it was incorporated into the Eretnids and Kadi Burhan al-Din taking over the Eretnid lands ruled the city till 1398 when the leader of the Aq Qoyunlu, Uthman Beg, defeated him. In 1399, Bayezid I seized Divriği and in 1401, he gave it back to İbrahim Surhi so that Timur whom he was feuding with couldn't take control of the city. However, in 1440, it became part of the Mamluk Sultanate³⁴². Finally, in the Ottoman-Mamluk War (1516-1517) Selim I incorporated Divriği along with other places such as Aintab, Malatya, Darend, Behisni, Kal'a tü'r-Rum into the Ottoman sovereignty³⁴³. Since then, it

³³⁷ Divriği Belediyesi, "Divriği'nin Tarihçesi", <https://www.divrigi.bel.tr/kisacaDivrigi.aspx>.

³³⁸ Sakaoğlu, *ibid*, 17.

³³⁹ Divriği Belediyesi, "Divriği'nin Tarihçesi", <https://www.divrigi.bel.tr/kisacaDivrigi.aspx>.

³⁴⁰ Sakaoğlu, *ibid*, 17.

³⁴¹ Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 53.

³⁴² Necdet Sakaoğlu, *ibid*, 17

³⁴³ Zeki Arıkan, "Divriği Kazasının İlk Sayımı (925-1519)", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, No.9 (1991): 49.

remained under Ottoman control till the end of the emergence of the new republican regime.

3.2 Social-Spatial Traces of Non-Muslims in the Pre-Republican Period

Based on the data obtained towards the end of the 19th century, Divriği situated in the east of Sivas central sanjak, at a 165-km distance to Sivas via Zara, on the route to Ordu and Harput was a town on the bank of the Çaltı River, which is a branch of the Euphrates River³⁴⁴. In this period, the administrative division of the provincial organisation of the Ottoman Empire was first subdivided into sanjak and followed by district, sub-district, village and hamlet respectively³⁴⁵. Divriği was composed of 9 sub-districts and 125 villages. Along with the town centre, its population was 48.907 and 8081 Armenians lived. 1100 of the population of the city centre reaching 5600 were Armenians³⁴⁶.

Table 25: Population of Divriği Along with the Villages in the late 19th Century

Religion	Population
Muslim Sunni	24.520
Muslim Alevi	12.261
Armenian Gregorian	5.385
Armenian Protestant	1.796
Armenian Catholic	900
Greek Orthodox	4.045
Total	48.907

Vital Cuinet, **La Turquie d'Asie: Géographie Administrative, Statistique, Descriptive et Raisonnée de Chaque Province de L'Asie-Mineure** (Paris, 1892), 685.

³⁴⁴ Vital Cuinet, **La Turquie d'Asie: Géographie Administrative, Statistique, Descriptive et Raisonnée de Chaque Province de L'Asie-Mineure** (Paris, 1892), 685-686.

³⁴⁵ İlber Ortaylı, **Türkiye Teşkilat ve İdare Tarihi** (Ankara, 2007), 433.

³⁴⁶ Cuinet, **ibid**, 685. See tables 25 and 26.

Table 26: Population of the Town Centre in the Late 19th Century

Religion	Population
Muslim Sunni	3.000
MuslimAlevi	1.500
Armenian Gregorian	800
Armenian Protestant	200
Armenian Catholic	100
Total	5.600

Vital Cuinet, **La Turquie d'Asie: Géographie Administrative, Statistique, Descriptive et Raisonnée de Chaque Province de L'Asie-Mineure** (Paris, 1892), 685.

There are also those who bore witness to the non-Muslim history of Divriği from older generations. They cast light on what they did and said that the Armenians were extremely active in commercial life and most of them were merchants. There were also merchants in Divriği who occupied themselves with their lands and they would cultivate them. At the same time they were saddle makers and shoemakers. In other words, they would buy and sell goods (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982). There were also lots of shops run by the Armenians in the bazaar located in the centre of Divriği.

“There was a period when the Armenians lived together with the Turks. Since the Armenians were craftsmen in that period, they had an important place among all of the craftsmen in the bazaar along with their crafts such as copper working and shoemaking. Apart from craftsmanship, they also worked as farmers in the villages. Those who improved their financial conditions migrated to cities to do business. Some of them went to Europe and America and some others went to İstanbul” (Necdet Sakaoğlu, Historian).

That there were a great number of shops and inns, particularly in Divriği and Gürün towns, including the sanjak of Sivas, where the Armenian population was densely populated is a sign that these urban centres were commercially important centres:

“Sivas located on the most important trade routes became a centre of transit trade rather than the trade of its own product. In Sivas, inns, baths and bazaars which were the main meeting centres and hang-out were regarded as the essential components of the infrastructure so that the transit trade could work out and the merchants could meet their own needs”³⁴⁷.

³⁴⁷ Muhiddin Tuş, “19. Asır Ortalarına Dogru Sivas’ın İktisadi Yapısı”, **Revak** (1995): 41.

In 1907, there were 94 inns, 3485 shops and 24 baths in the sanjak of Sivas. These figures included 15 inns, 561 shops and 3 baths in Divriği³⁴⁸. In this respect, it can be inferred that Divriği had a large trade capacity along with the number of shops and inns compared with the other towns which were a part of the sanjak and it was one of the regions where the transit trade developed: Gürün and Divriği were the most developed parts of the central sanjak in terms of commercial activities. When the population of these towns is taken into account, it can be inferred that they were the places which were the most densely populated by the Armenians and the urban Armenians engaged in commercial activities³⁴⁹. In the light of these facts, Yeni Han, Kangal and Bünyan Hamid were backward towns in terms of commerce. Whereas Aziziye and Darende were less populated by the Armenians, it can be concluded that the Muslim population was more active in tandem with the high number of shops they had, and in the case of Hafik and Tonus, in spite of the high number of Armenian population, an agriculture-based economy flourished due to the lack of transportation and trade routes.

Table 27: Number of Inns, Shops and Baths in the Sanjak of Sivas in 1907

District	Inn	Shop	Bath
Centre of Sivas	32	1810	15
Gürün	4	391	1
Yeni Han (Yıldızeli)	8	68	1
Hafik	7	11	-
Aziziye	1	181	2
Divriği	15	561	3
Darende	3	231	1
Kangal	11	32	-
Bünyan Hamid	2	71	-
Koçgiri (Zara)	4	45	1
Tonus (Şarkışla)	7	84	-
TOTAL	94	3485	24

Ebubekir S. Yücel, **Salname-i Vilayet-i Sivas, 1325** (Sivas: Buruciye Yayınları, 2007), 192-193.

³⁴⁸ Ebubekir S. Yücel, **Salname-i Vilayet-i Sivas, 1325** (Sivas: Buruciye Yayınları, 2007), 192. See table 27.

³⁴⁹ Deniz Dölek, "Change and Continuity in the Sivas Province, 1908-1918" (Master's Thesis, Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2007), 124. See table 28.

Table 28: Armenian Population in the Sanjak of Sivas in 1907

District/ Sanjak	Population
Sivas	23.167
Gürün	7581
Yeni Han	1300
Hafik	11.308
Aziziye	1074
Divriği	7725
Darende	2762
Kangal	2488
Bünyan Hamid	2951
Koçgiri	5273
Tonus	13.078
TOTAL	78.707

Ebubekir S. Yücel, **Salname-i Vilayet-i Sivas, 1325** (Sivas: Buruciye Yayınları, 2007), 190.

The presence of non-Muslims living in Divriği still bears the traces they left in the place, and churches, schools and cemeteries constitute the most concrete embodiment of spatial traces even if no Armenians live in Divriği.

“There were also non-Muslims in Divriği. The Armenians were predominantly in Divriği whereas the Greeks were especially in Kayseri. The Armenians in Divriği passed away over time. When we grew up, there were two Armenian households in Divriği. They had already got old and died later. Currently, there are neither Armenians nor Greeks... We did not see the ruined church in the town centre. However, there was a somewhat ruined church with walls standing on the way to the mill road below the castle outside the city and we could see it. In addition, there was another church in the town on the upper part of the Taşbaşı Settlement and there was an Armenian school in the vicinity, but both of them had been demolished before we were born” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 2: Surp Asdvadzadzin Church Below the Castle of Divriği

Anonymous



Figure 3: Schools and Churches of Non-Muslim Community

Hrant Dink Foundation, <https://turkiyekulturvarliklari.hrantdink.org/>

There were 28 Turkish and 3 Armenian neighbourhoods in Divriği. The Turks and Armenians lived together in the neighbourhoods in the northwestern part of the town. Only the Armenians lived in Cırışan, which is called Taşbaşı today, in Güllübağ below the castle walls and in Horavenk³⁵⁰. In the last census which was undertaken in 1914 in the Ottoman Empire, the population of Divriği was 38,984, of whom 8354 were Armenian³⁵¹.

Table 29: Non-Muslim Population in Divriği in 1914

District/ Sanjak	Armenian	Greek	Total pop.	Non-Muslim
Sivas	23.182	728	81.623	24.540
Gürün	7.788	-	24.545	7.788
Divriği	8.354	-	38.984	8354

Memalik-i Osmaniyye'nin 1330 Senesi Nüfus İstatistigi (Dersaadet: Hilal Matbaası, 1920), 20 cited in Deniz Dölek, "Change and Continuity in the Sivas Province, 1908-1918" (Master's Thesis, Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2007), 124.

³⁵⁰ Röportaj: Necdet Sakaoğlu, **Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi**, February 15, 2012, 4.

³⁵¹ **Memalik-i Osmaniyye'nin 1330 Senesi Nüfus İstatistigi** (Dersaadet: Hilal Matbaası, 1920), 20 cited in Dölek, *ibid*, 124. See table 29.

In another source, the population of the town centre, which was 12.000 before the 1915 Armenian events, consisted of 4000 Armenians and the Armenian population living in the town including villages is estimated to be 10,605: Hurnavil (Maltepe) where episcopal centre is located; Kesme/Gasma situated in the northeast of Divriği where 580 Armenians lived and its community operated the nearby iron mines; Pakradun, almost completely abandoned at the beginning of the 20th century; Zımara (Altıntaş) located to the east of Pakradun and inhabited by 1250 people; on the right side of the Euphrates, Pingan (Adatepe) with 1300 people, all of whom are Armenians; Arşuşan/Arşin (Güneyevler) with a population of 310; Güresin/Küresin populated by 240 inhabitants; Odur (Kayaburun) with 215 Armenians; Parzam/Parğam (Uzunkaya) with a population of 510; the village of Surp Hagop Monastery inhabited by 290 Armenians and colloquially called Venk even today; Armutağ/Armutak (Kavaklısu) with 1605 Armenians; Palanga (Ölçekli) with a population of 480; Sincan/Sancan populated by 395 Armenians; Mırvana (Kayacık) and Şigim³⁵².



Figure 4: A Funeral in Odur Village

Anonymous

After the 1915 events, it is very clear that the population of Divriği was falling into a significant decline in the following census in the aftermath of the forced displacement of the Armenian population. Besides, the fact that WWI took place in this period and

³⁵² H. Raymond Kevorkian, Paul B. Paboudjian. **1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler**. 2. Ed. (İstanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2013), 250-251.

the male population went to the battlefield was another factor in the decrease in the population: “On each day of the year 1915 lots of misfortunes making people long for the previous days were gone through ... Divriği extending over a large field of area had taken on an almost deserted view in the second and third years of the war. In the streets, there were few disabled and old men apart from the veiled women”³⁵³.

3.3 Population Movement in the Republican Period

According to the first census conducted in 1927 after the foundation of the Republic, the population of Divriği was 25,172 with its villages. While the population of the villages was 20.383, the population of the town centre was 4789. The Armenian population dropped to 192 people. As of the decline of the Armenian population, in alignment with the statistics presented in 1907 and the occupational distribution of the population in 1927, Divriği began to lose its commercial importance and an agricultural-based economy became more common³⁵⁴.

Table 30: Occupational Distribution of the Population in the 1927 Census

Occupational Fields	Male	Female
Agriculture	4.895	7.015
Industry	400	17
Commerce	226	4
Freelance	30	2
Civil service	75	1
Judge	3	-
Army	20	-
PTT	11	-
Unknown	99	3
TOTAL	5.759	7.042
Unemployment	5.279	7.205

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, “28 Teşrinievel 1927 Umumi Nüfus Tahriri” (Ankara, 1929), 30.

³⁵³ Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Anadolu Derebeyi Ocaklarından Köse Paşa Hanedanı*, 2. Ed. (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998), 286.

³⁵⁴ See table 30.

In the next census carried out in 1935, Divriği was composed of 5 sub-districts and 78 villages. There was an increase of 1121 people in the town centre and in compliance with this statistical information, the annual population growth rate between 1927 and 1935 was approximately 3.4%³⁵⁵.

Table 31: 1935 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	Num. of Villages
Town	3038	2872	5910	-
Central District	3026+3435	3712+25	6738+3460	19+ Road workers
Danişment	1642	2093	3735	14
Hamo	2629	3228	5857	18
Sincan	2271	2538	4809	17
Vazıldan	1738	2227	3965	10
Total	17.719	16.695	34.474	78

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Direktörlüğü, “20 İlkteşrin 1935 Genel Nüfus Sayımı Kati ve Mufassal Neticeler Sivas Vilayeti” (Ankara, 1937), 9-11.

In alignment with the census conducted in 1940, there were 5 sub-districts and 84 villages in Divriği. Although there was no rapid population growth in the sub-districts and villages, there was a fast-paced growth in the town centre by 2191 people. However, when the general population was examined, the annual population growth rate between 1935 and 1940 increased by 1566, and it was approximately 0.9%³⁵⁶. The rise in the population of the town centre may be caused by the relocation of some of the road workers identified in the central district of the previous census. In the meantime, the lack of a water supply network is also one of the important factors affecting the population of Divriği. Previously, people would put the river water, which the animals drank and wandered in, into the wells and would get sick. Eventually, Senior Engineer Naci Bey brought water from a distance of 40 km and distributed the water called *Nacibey Suyu* through fountains to the different parts of the town³⁵⁷. In addition to this, the construction of the Sivas-Erzurum Railway Line

³⁵⁵ See table 31.

³⁵⁶ See table 32.

³⁵⁷ Hasip Uras, *Yaşam Bir Tecrübedir* (İstanbul: Su Yayınları, 2011), 75-76.

between 1933 and 1939 is another element that played an important role in the development of Divriği and the population growth. Meanwhile, the detection of iron ore in 1937 and the opening of mining enterprise in 1938 laid the foundation of the new economic life of the town. In fact, the engineers who undertook the construction of the railway intended to transport the railway line from Sivas-Hafik-Zara to Erzurum, but Fevzi Çakmak intervened and diverted the direction to Çetinkaya-Divriği-Erzincan. After the Sivas-Divriği Railway Line had been put into operation on November 20, 1937, the Divriği Iron Mines Operation was also set up³⁵⁸. That the town had a rich mineral reserve created new employment for the people of the region who adopted a settled life by dealing with agriculture and animal husbandry in the villages. The prominent mines such as *A-Kafa*, *B-Kafa* and *C Placer* which were put into operation and located near the town centre caused the population to be concentrated in the villages, especially in the vicinity of the mines.

There was a significant increase in the male population in Kilisecik (Ekinbaşı) Village where the mining enterprise was first located. In the 1935 census, the population of the village was 258 while it rose to 695 in the 1940 census. The male population increased from 133 to 541 whereas the female population increased from 125 to 154. In the light of these data, it turns out that the residents of other villages either left their wives in their villages with their children or came to Kilisecik Village as single.

Table 32: 1940 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	4758	3343	8101	-
Central District	3934	3922	7856	23
Danişment	1865	2266	4131	15
Hamo	2831	3351	6182	17
Sincan	2620	2756	5376	18
Vazıldan	1996	2398	4394	11
Total	18.004	18.036	36.040	84

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, “21 İlkteşrin 1940 Genel Nüfus Sayımı” (Ankara, 1941), 579-581.

³⁵⁸ Fatih M. Dervişoğlu, *Türkiye’nin Havacılık Efsanesi: Nuri Demirağ* (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat A.Ş., 2007), 84-85.

During the years 1939-1945 when WWII took place, the population growth in the 1945 census decreased by 0.9% to 34,456 as a result of the recruitment of the male population to the war and there had been a decline in the population for the first time since the Republic was founded³⁵⁹. In the town centre and sub-districts, there was a decline only in the population of Sincan and Hamo Sub-districts. The fact that the villages of Dartal, Nordun, Zinekar and Zımara located in Hamo were not included in the sub-district in the 1945 census, and the number of villages went down despite the inclusion of Merenli and Pingan villages, is one of the factors that led to a decrease in the population.

Table 33: 1945 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	3520	3284	6804	-
Central District	3836	4180	8016	23
Danişment	1950	2273	4223	15
Hamo	2606	2940	5546	15
Sincan	2579	2666	5245	18
Vazıldan	2195	2427	4622	11
Total	16.686	17.770	34.456	82

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, “21 Ekim 1945 Genel Nüfus Sayımı” (Ankara, 1946), 550-551.

After WWII, along with the transition to multi-party life, the DP entered the political arena and soon came to power. In this period, incentives were granted to the industrial sector and mechanisation was initiated in the agricultural area. Immigration was promoted to provide a labour force for large cities where the industrial sector was active³⁶⁰. In this respect, whereas there was a rise in the rate of urbanisation on a

³⁵⁹ See table 33.

³⁶⁰ Tahir Baysal, **İl Ölçeğinde Diğer Sosyo-Ekonomik Verilerle Göç Oranları Arasındaki İlişkinin Belirlenmesi** (TÜİK Uzmanlık Tezi. T.C Başbakanlık Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, 2010), 26-27.

national scale, the population of the town centre of Divriği increased by a lower growth rate in the five-year census and even with its population, it resembles a sub-district or a village rather than a town.

In the meantime, as of the 1950 census, the male population returned to Divriği, and the overall population increased by 1.6 percent to 37.399 compared with the 1945 census. There were no changes in the administrative divisions or number of villages (82) in 1945 and 1950³⁶¹.

Table 34: 1950 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Total	Number of Villages
Town	6254	-
Central District	9171	23
Danişment	4699	15
Hamo	5943	15
Sincan	5734	18
Vazıldan	5578	11
TOTAL	37.399	82

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, “22 Ekim 1950 Umumi Nüfus Sayımı: Vilayet, Kaza, Nahiye ve Köyler İtibariyle Nüfus”, No. 359 (Ankara, 1951), 342-343.

Between 1950 and 1955, the growth rate was 3.4 and it was one of the periods when the rate was the fastest after the foundation of the Republican state. In particular, there was a significant increase in the villages connected to the central district close to the mine: In accordance with the 1950 census, the population of the central district along with the villages was 9171 and in 1955 it was 13,100³⁶².

³⁶¹ See table 34.

³⁶² See table 35.

Table 35: 1955 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	3644	3339	6983	-
Central District	6197	6903	13.100	34
Danişment	2329	2515	4844	15
Hamo	2796	3268	6064	14
Sincan	3975	4690	8665	26
Vazıldan	2565	2818	5383	12
Total	21.506	23.533	45.039	101

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, “23-Ekim-1955 Genel Nüfus Sayımı” (Ankara, 1961), 479-480.

The increase in the number of villages from 23 to 34 played a role in the rise of the population. 8 villages (Aşudutekke, Avşarcık, Bizeyi, Höbek, Kuluncak, Kürtbeyaz, Ömeranlı, Yalnızsöğüt) which joined Divriği were previously within the borders of Kangal. The average distance from these villages to Yellice Sub-district which they were part of was about 2-20 km, and they were 54-72 km far from Kangal whereas their distance from the town centre of Divriği was 39-55 km through Güneş Railway Station. While the villages of Murmana, Güresin and Gezey were probably neighbourhood units before, they were included in the census as villages for the first time in the Republican period. Likewise, Başveran, Çamoğa, Ağın, Eşke, Meli, Çakırağa and Şahin which were part of Kangal District were incorporated into Divriği. They were located 10-25 km far from Killik Sub-district they were part of whereas they were 40-65 km away from Kangal. Nevertheless, the distance to Sincan Sub-district was about 11-36 km and they were 37-48 km away from Divriği. All in all, the reason why all the villages mentioned were incorporated into Divriği was that locals used to meet their needs in the centre of Divriği and they would go to Kangal just to deal with administrative affairs³⁶³.

³⁶³ [Kangal İlçesinden Divriği İlçesine Bağlanan 15 Köy], December 26, 1951, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 228-45-9. See figure 5.

KARAR
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T.C.
BAŞBAKANLIK
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

Birinci Madde - Sivas ili Kangal ilçesinin Yellice bucagına bağlı HŞbek, Ömeranlı, Bizevi (Mahıdırılık), Ağurutekke, Kulucak, Kürtbeyak, Avsarık, Yalnızsüğü köyleri Divriği ilçesinin Merkez bucagına ve yine Kangal ilçesinin Killik bucagına bağlı Başveran, Çamuşa, Ağan, Eşke, Meli, Çakırğa, Şahin köyleri de Divriği ilçesinin Sincan bucagına bağlanmıştır.

İkinci Madde - Bu karar İçişleri Bakanı yürütür.

26. Aralık 1951
CUMHURBAŞKANI

Başbakan
İçişleri Bakanı

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Figure 5: 15 Villages Connected to Divriği from Kangal District

[Kangal İlçesinden Divriği İlçesine Bağlanan 15 Köy], December 26, 1951, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 228-45-9.

The population increase between 1955 and 1960 was 1.9% and rose by 4646 people, 2858 of whom were in the town centre and new villages connected to the centre³⁶⁴. There were also some villages incorporated into Sincan, and Dişbudak which was located in Kangal was one of them³⁶⁵.

Table 36: 1960 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	4964	3865	8829	-
Central District	6597	7515	14.112	37
Danişment	2406	2750	5156	14
Hamo	2992	3405	6397	14
Sincan	4373	5136	9509	30
Vazıdan	2705	2977	5682	12
Total	24.037	25.648	49.685	107

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, "23 Ekim 1960 Genel Nüfus Sayımı" (Ankara, 1963), 505-507.

³⁶⁴ See table 36.

³⁶⁵ See figure 6.

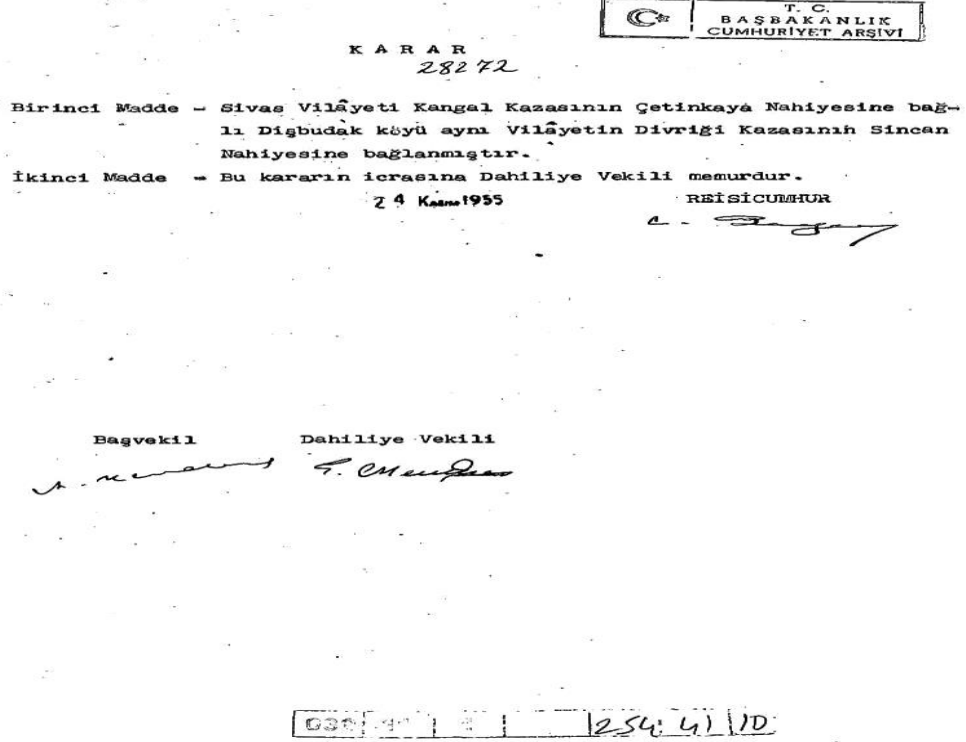


Figure 6: Incorporation of Dişbudak Village into Divriği

[Kangal İlçesine Bağlı Dişbudak Köyünün Divriği İlçesinin Sincan Nahiyesine Bağlanması], November 24, 1955, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 254-41-10.

According to data from the census carried out in 1965, the highest rate was reached by 49.882 in the Republican period, but compared with the previous census, the population growth slowed down and increased by 0.04%³⁶⁶. This rate reflects the lowest level of the Republican period. As to the concentration of the population around the mines, there were 300 workers in both *A-Kafa* and *C Placer*. In the enterprise there were 190 boarding houses, 108 of which were allocated to the workers and 82 of them were given to the civil servants. Apart from the boarding houses in three different workplaces, *A-Kafa*, *C Placer* and *Cüreke*, there were 3 dormitories with 830 beds for workers, a pavilion with 30 beds allocated to the guards and firemen, a guesthouse with 16 beds in the central site, another guesthouse with 14 beds for the technicians³⁶⁷. Furthermore, based on the related documents, there were 791 workers and 143 civil servants in 1973.

³⁶⁶ See table 37.

³⁶⁷ Sivas Valiliği, *Sivas İl Yıllığı 1967* (Ankara, 1967), 227-228.

Table 37: 1965 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	4970	4190	9160	-
Central District	6973	7881	14854	40
Danişment	2362	2909	5271	15
Gedikbaşı	2896	3250	6146	13
Mursal	2562	2814	5376	12
Sincan	4094	4981	9075	29
Total	23.857	26.025	49882	109

TÜİK. Genel Nüfus Sayımı Sonuçları. 1965.

Increasing employment due to the industrial development in large cities such as İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir accelerated the migration from Divriği.

“For the first time, Divriği began to lose the vitality it had in its old days when migration blew up from the 1950s-1960s onwards. It went through an external migration into metropolitan cities, especially İstanbul, so the population started to decrease not only in the town centre but also in the villages” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

In addition, 396.726 tons of iron ore in 1960 and 864.792 tons in 1965 that the enterprise produced indicate how fast the mechanisation increased and underwent employment contraction³⁶⁸.

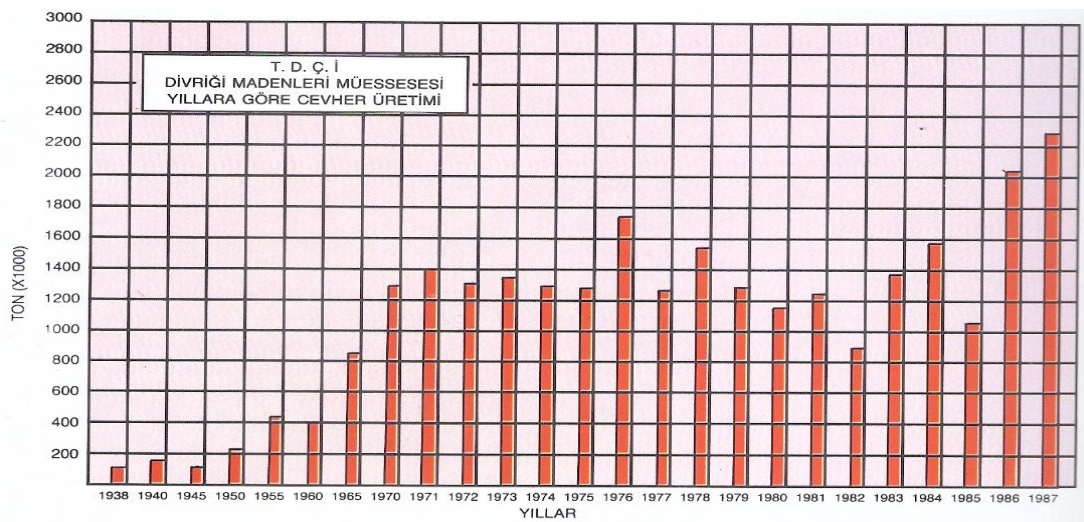


Figure 7: Production of Iron Ore, 1938- 1987

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988), 30.

³⁶⁸ See figure 7.

The fact that there are no industrial enterprises other than the Iron Mines Operation in Divriği caused the employment surplus to migrate to metropolitan cities and this caused the population to become stable in those years. In addition to this, the population shrank by 1.4% in the census conducted in 1970 and there was a remarkable decrease in rural areas in contrast to the population increase in the town centre. The rural population which was 40722 in 1965 dropped to 36,310 in 1970. In 1975, the population fell to 30.912 and it was the period of the time when the migration peaked before the 1980s³⁶⁹.

Table 38: Urban-Rural Population in Divriği Between 1927-2021

Census Year	Total Population	Urban Population	Percentage of Urban Population	Rural Population	Percentage of Rural Population
1927	25.172	4789	19	20.383	81
1935	34.474	5910	17.1	28.564	82.9
1940	36.040	8101	22.4	27.939	77.6
1945	34.456	6804	19.7	27.652	80.3
1950	37.379	6254	16.7	31.125	83.3
1955	45.039	6983	15.5	38.056	84.5
1960	49.685	8829	17.7	40.856	82.3
1965	49.882	9.160	18.1	40.722	81.9
1970	46.699	10.389	22.2	36.310	77.8
1975	43.214	12.302	28.4	30.912	71.6
1980	41.420	14.679	35.3	26.741	64.7
1985	38.382	15.974	41.6	22.408	58.4
1990	33.105	17.664	53.3	15.441	46.7
1997	22.903	15.199	66.3	7.704	33.7
2000	23.313	14.429	61.8	8.884	38.2
2007	17.176	11.980	69.7	5.196	30.3
2008	17.476	11.388	65.1	6.088	34.9
2009	16.713	10.880	65.1	5.833	34.9
2010	16.504	10.769	65.2	5.735	34.8
2011	16.416	10.691	65.1	5.725	34.9
2012	16.272	10.824	66.5	5.448	33.5
2013	16.128	10.530	65.2	5.598	34.8
2014	16.829	10.510	62.4	6.319	37.6
2015	16.040	10.445	65.1	5.595	34.9

³⁶⁹ See table 38.

Table 38-continuing

2016	15.721	10.336	65.7	5.385	34.3
2017	14.953	9.989	66.8	4.964	33.2
2018	16.377	10.286	62.8	6.091	37.2
2019	16.245	10.488	64.5	5.757	35.5
2020	16.195	10.623	65.6	5.572	34.4
2021	16.177	10.748	66.4	5.429	33.6

TÜİK (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu/ Turkish Statistical Institute*)

The continuation of mechanisation in the enterprise was directly proportional to the increase in the amount of ore produced. The amount of ore produced in 1970 rose to 1.301.117 and the production from that time onwards was almost the same³⁷⁰. In the light of these data, the decrease in need of human power along with mechanisation indicates that a part of the population living in rural areas migrated to either the town centre or metropolitan areas. The male population, especially working out of the city, shows a serious decline in the population. By contrast, Özdemir Neighbourhood, next to Ağar Hamlet, populated by the workers of the enterprise was connected to Kayacık (Murmana) in 1968 and Kayacık became the biggest village of Divriği³⁷¹. The population of the village was 242 in the census carried out in 1965 whereas it rose to 448 in the 1970 census.

Table 39: 1970 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	5570	4819	10.389	-
Central District	6428	7775	14.203	42
Danişment	2118	2784	4902	14
Gedikbaşı	2235	2707	4942	13
Mursal	1895	2254	4149	12
Sincan	3503	4611	8114	30
Total	21749	24950	46699	111

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, “25 Ekim 1970 Census of Population by Administrative Division: Province, District, Sub-district and Village Population” (Ankara, 1973), 519-521.

³⁷⁰ Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988), 29.

³⁷¹ İhsan Çalapverdi, M. Mümtaz Armutak, **Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi Kuruluş Bilgileri ve Faaliyet Raporları**, 2008.

The population of the town centre, which was 12.302 in 1975, rose to 14.679 in 1980 and the rural population, which was 30.912 in 1975 dropped to 26741 in 1980. In the 1975 and 1980 censuses, although the population continued to decline in rural areas, a decrease in the female population was seen in proportion to the whole population³⁷². It can also be said that the men who went to the metropolitan cities on their own took their wives with them.

Table 40: 1975 Census of population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	7313	4989	12.302	-
Central District	6054	6467	12.521	42
Danişment	2001	2494	4495	14
Gedikbaşı	1916	2130	4046	13
Mursal	1574	1693	3267	12
Sincan	3161	3422	6583	30
Total	22.019	21.195	43.214	111

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, “26 Ekim 1975 Census of Population by Administrative Division: Province, District, Sub-district and Village Population, 58- Sivas” (Ankara, 1977), 6-7.

After the attempt to set up Concentration and Pelletising Plants in order to enhance the iron ore in 1972, the headquarter of the enterprise moved from Cürekk to Selavattepe located in the west of Divriği in the course of the construction of the plants. In the meantime, all civil servants and many workers settled down in the town centre. The settlement in Cürekk was thereby populated by the relatives of the workers, and so it was left deserted in the following years. Consequently, in accordance with the 1980 census, there was a rise in the population of the town centre³⁷³.

³⁷² See tables 40 and 41.

³⁷³ See table 41.

Table 41: 1980 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	7940	6739	14.679	-
Central District	5477	5991	11.468	43
Danişment	1651	2053	3704	13
Gedikbaşı	1612	1804	3416	13
Mursal	1411	1449	2860	12
Sincan	2479	2814	5293	30
Total	20.570	20.580	41.420	111

TÜİK. Genel Nüfus Sayımı Sonuçları. 1980.

In 1985, the population in the town centre was on the increase and there was a fairly constant rise in the town centre. However, the number of villagers dwindled down. One of the most fundamental problems is that the decrease in the number of the population gave rise to the closure of some schools in rural areas, so the children who didn't have an access to education were displaced and obliged to go to the urban areas where they were given the chance to go on with their studies.

Table 42: 1985 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	8.296	7.678	15.974	-
Central District	4.762	5.378	10.140	43
Danişment	1.293	1.664	2.957	13
Gedikbaşı	1.415	1.533	2.948	13
Mursal	1.155	1.207	2.362	12
Sincan	1.838	2.163	4.001	30
Total	18.759	19.623	38.382	111

TÜİK. Genel Nüfus Sayımı Sonuçları. 1985.

From 1990 onwards, the population dropped drastically, especially in the rural areas, and the rural population, which was 22.408 in 1985 dropped to 15441 in 1990,

especially due to the violent attacks taking place in the eastern part of the country. However, the population of the town centre increased from 15.974 in 1985 to 17.664 in 1990 and in this regard, the urban population exceeded the rural one for the first time³⁷⁴. The disappearance of economic resources generating revenue in the rural areas and the need to maintain a standard of living in the city gave rise to the emergence of such a balance. Moreover, in this period *Aydoğan* situated in the sub-district of Gedikbaşı was incorporated into İmranlı District while *Oğlaklı* located in the sub-district of Sincan became a village of Kangal.

Table 43: 1990 Census of Population

Sub-districts	Male	Female	Total	N. of Villages
Town	8.933	8.731	17.664	-
Central District	3.422	3.944	7.366	44
Arıkbaşı	737	758	1.495	13
Gedikbaşı	960	1.046	2.006	12
Mursal	853	966	1.819	12
Sincan	1.282	1.473	2.755	30
Total	16.187	16.918	33.105	111

TÜİK. Genel Nüfus Sayımı Sonuçları. 1990.

After the events that took place in Sivas on July 2, 1993³⁷⁵, the military operations escalated as a pretext for attacking leftist organisations and PKK, especially in the districts of İmranlı, Kangal, Hafik, Zara, Ulaş and Divriği. As a result, some villages and hamlets were evacuated in Divriği, and the mukhtars of some villages and peasants were detained in prison. The fact that villagers were not allowed to cut wood to prepare firewood for the following winter, they were not allowed to cultivate their lands and the economic contribution of animal husbandry decreased caused migration movements to begin³⁷⁶. As is seen in the 1997 census, half of the rural population was obliged to leave the villages and there was also a decline in the urban population³⁷⁷.

³⁷⁴ See tables 42 and 43.

³⁷⁵ On July 2, 1993, in the central province of Sivas, religious fundamentalists set fire to the hotel where people gathered for the Pir Sultan Abdal Festival and 33 intellectuals, predominantly Alevis were killed.

³⁷⁶ "Sivas'ta Olağanüstü Hal Uygulanmakta", *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, February 8, 1996, 1&4.

³⁷⁷ See table 44.

Table 44: 1997-2021 Census of Population

Sub-districts	1997	2000	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Town	15.420	14.429	11.980	11.388	10.880	10.769	10.691	10.824	10.530	10.510	10.445	10.336	9.989	10.286	10.488	10.623	10.748
Central District	4.027	4.019	2.405	2.701	2.538	2.490	2.448	2.363	2.404	2.734	2.492	2.396	2.223	2.426	2.246	2.185	2.170
Danişment	786	933	510	603	577	627	680	642	621	687	616	593	558	895	821	759	738
Gedikbaşı	985	939	593	713	659	687	670	611	667	642	558	539	549	625	601	597	564
Mursal	1.095	577	757	801	821	772	781	767	767	921	806	765	673	847	786	753	732
Sincan	1.400	1.802	931	1.270	1.238	1.159	1.146	1.065	1.139	1.335	1.123	1.092	961	1.298	1.303	1.278	1.225
TOTAL	23.713	22.699	17.176	17.476	16.713	16.504	16.416	16.272	16.128	16.829	16.040	15.721	14.953	16.377	16.245	16.195	16.177

Another reason why the statistics show a sharp drop in rural areas is that the elderly living alone had difficulty in dealing with the conditions of rural life and they preferred going to other cities to live with their children who had left their hometown for economic reasons: “One of the reasons for the migration from villages to cities is that as young people had already left their villages to work, the elderly could not meet their needs by themselves and they intended to settle in the cities as a central place to solve their health problems” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

After the disappearance of the negative atmosphere of the 1990s and the mobility of the elderly, the growth rate in both rural and urban population levelled off as is seen in the 2000 census³⁷⁸. External migration slowed down with the end of attacks escalating and threatening the security of local people in the 1990s. However, as of 2000, especially in the aftermath of the privatisation of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation, there was a sudden fall deriving from external migration.

“People who couldn’t determine their future there wanted to establish a new life in metropolitan cities in terms of accessibility to education and health institutions... In particular, after the privatisation process in the 1990s, retired people could buy a house and a car by the income they obtained thanks to the trade union and collective agreement. Therefore, they took it into consideration and bought a house in the metropolitan cities. They did this for the sake of their children. It was an opportunity for them to study and get their education because there was not even a private teaching institution. Schools could not provide them with education which was their first priority” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

Consequently, the privatisation of the enterprise played a determinant role in the decline in the population and since then the growth rate has remained stable in spite of fluctuations in population numbers.

3.4 Impact of New Lines of Transportation On Space and Urban Growth

3.4.1 Tackling the Lack of Urban Road Networks and the Case of Isolated Towns

Due to the fact that the Old Spice Road passed through Divriği, many inns that had been built made important economic contributions to Divriği, which was regarded as an important accommodation centre among Central Anatolia and eastern provinces. Divriği, which served as a border city in the Byzantine era, acquired its city feature after it had come under the sovereignty of the Danishmendid Dynasty and gained

³⁷⁸ See table 44.

capital status. Every state passing through the region conceived of this settlement as an accommodation centre and did not cause any damage to the city³⁷⁹.

Until the 1930s, only road transport helped connect the towns to the centre of Sivas and neighbouring cities. This road was first introduced in the Ottoman period during the reign of the ruler Murad IV who had a high opinion of the revival of trade in the region³⁸⁰. Meanwhile, he led his army through the roads he had constructed before the siege of Baghdad in 1638. The itinerary followed on the way to Baghdad was the Sivas-Zara-Divriği-Kemaliye route. The 180-km road connecting Sivas to Divriği through Zara was thereby constructed³⁸¹. The construction of more reliable and shorter trade routes in the later times caused this trade route to lose its feature³⁸². However, since then it had been badly damaged because of negligence. In 1883, the Governor of Sivas, Halil Rıfat Pasha, reconstructed and extended it to the border of Arapgir district which was part of Harput Province³⁸³. Besides, in the period of the Danishmendid Dynasty, paving stones were laid with the aim of facilitating transportation in the city centre. The Ottomans also laid them and started to build dirt roads in order to enable transportation to the countryside³⁸⁴. Likewise, even today in the city centre, instead of asphalt roads, paving stones have been used.

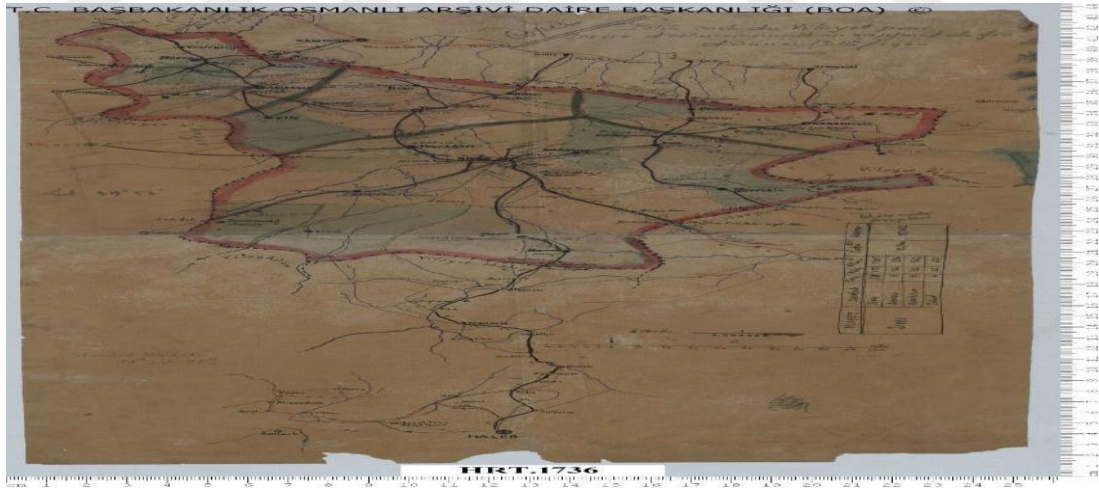


Figure 8: Roads to Sivas Province with its Surroundings (1900)

[Sivas Vilayeti Yolları ile Çevre Vilayetlere Giden Yolların Gösterildiği Harita], Hegira-November 22, 1318, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 1736.

³⁷⁹ Akbulut, *ibid*, 375.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 375.

³⁸¹ Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 53

³⁸² Akbulut, *ibid*, 376.

³⁸³ Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 53.

³⁸⁴ Akbulut, *ibid*, 376.

In the past, some rural areas were isolated from the urban zone and people wanting to go to the town centre to meet their needs used to take their horses or donkeys when cars were not prevalent, especially before the 1960s. If they didn't have a mount, they would walk there. It would take them hours to go there and come back home when they were hit by adverse weather conditions.

“In the past, there were no cars and transportation was done by donkey or horse. Everyone would load some poplar wood on their way to the city, sell it for 3-4 liras in the bazaar, see what they need, and then come back. Going to the town centre would take about 6-7 hours from our village. We would set out in the morning at dawn, and after doing business in the city centre, we would stay in an inn in the evening to rest. The next morning, we would set out again and be in the village in the evening” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Even today, lack of transport connectivity does not give access to the urban zone and many villages still do not have asphalt roads. Special Provincial Administration acts without taking into account whether the villages have any needs or not. If the residents of the villagers urge upon the district governorship for that need, both earth and gravel roads can be paved after a great deal of effort.

“Above all, for those living in villages, there is no sociability in our society. They say the squeaky wheel gets the grease, that's to say, there is no breast if you don't cry. It is necessary to establish a system that the state cannot provide. For example, a road will be built somewhere. Why should I go to the state a hundred times and beg? If it is to be done, under normal conditions, the state should think about it and put it into practice before we act. I can only inform them if the state does not know anything about it. Actually, what we regard it as outcry should only be acquainting the state with it. In this respect, the political mechanism in the state system has not provided anything for us in our region so far, including the opportunities it is supposed to bring up” (Sabri Kabadayı, Retired Worker, 1979-2005).



Figure 9: Sivas-Divriği Link Roads

In spite of the growth in the urban zone of the town, Divriği didn't have any access to the other cities, so the distance between Divriği and other neighbouring districts and lack of transport infrastructure made the town isolated from them.

“Divriği was in a blind spot in terms of transportation. Imagine that it is located at the same distance from three provincial centres. It is 200 km away from Erzincan, 190 km from Malatya and 180 km from Sivas. In the past, it only had an access to Sivas through the highway. There was also an unused road to Malatya across Arapgir. The construction of the roads to Erzincan and Malatya has just been completed and brought into service” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

The Sivas-Divriği Highway which was put into service in 1970 has revitalised the district³⁸⁵. The Divriği-Sincan Highway is connected to the Sivas-Divriği Highway across Çetinkaya and the same route of the highway joins the Sivas-Erzincan Highway through Sincan- Bolucan- Zara. The Divriği- Sincan- Kangal Highway was completed in 1980 but there is also another road which connects Kangal to Divriği through the village of Karasar and the density of this road is higher than the other one. The Divriği-Erzincan Highway through Gedikbaşı was completed a few years ago whereas the Keban-Arapgir-Divriği Highway was recently opened up for use. Consequently, in addition to railway transportation, road transportation became another alternative to be able to reach the neighbouring destinations, but the construction of the roads couldn't come up with solutions to healthcare accessibility. Thus, using the newly-constructed roads has not contributed to access to healthcare due to a lack of doctors.

3.4.2 An Access to External World: The Sivas-Erzurum Railway Line

Divriği's relations with other regions have remained limited due to the inadequacy of the road connecting villages, city centres and other provinces, and consequently, it seemed to have been isolated from its surroundings until the railway arrived which contributed to the development of the social and economic relationship between Divriği and other regions in the country.

“Divriği was an isolated place from the outer world. It remained intact in itself even during the time of the Mengüjekid Principality. If the railway had not come up, Divriği would indeed be a more desolate place. Maybe everyone would go to Ankara or İstanbul and nobody would stay there” (Duran Önder, Engineer).

A law proposal to start laying the railway line in Erzurum was accepted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on May 20, 1933. In accordance with the law no. 2200, building a railway from Sivas to Erzurum and laying a junction line that would extend

³⁸⁵ Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 53.

to Malatya at a suitable point around Divriği was agreed on. From the beginning of the 1933 fiscal year, 80 million liras was envisaged as the cost for the work that was planned to be completed within 8 years at most³⁸⁶.

Among the offers given in the tender, Abdurrahman Naci Bey wanted to get a profit margin of 8.80% whereas the profit percentage that Mühürdarzade Nuri Bey demanded was only 1.60%. In this way, there was a difference of 3.456.000 liras between the two offers and Nuri Bey won the tender³⁸⁷.

Son Posta newspaper reporter Sait Kesler had an interview regarding the Sivas-Erzurum Line tender with Nuri Demirağ. In his interview he said:

“The Sivas-Erzurum Line business is a great enterprise. The American Fox Company had committed 65 million liras for this. My brother Abdurrahman Naci reduced it to 55 million liras and the delegates contracted out the business. When I heard this, I immediately knocked it down by 7 million liras and undertook this project by 48 million liras. Now that I have invested all the money in the construction of this line, I have no money now. Therefore, I cannot invest in an airplane”³⁸⁸.

In determining the route of the Sivas-Erzurum Line, the Ministry of Public Works stated that it should be passed through Zara whereas the General Staff was in favour of Divriği. Although the Ministry of Public Works remarked that if the line was linked in the Divriği direction, the construction cost would increase as the land was very rough, the General Staff thought that the route would be more economical due to the iron ore which was likely to exist in the region. As a result, the line on the route to Divriği was agreed upon³⁸⁹. This route in question reaches the Euphrates Valley after following the Cürek and Divriği Straits and the Çaltı Stream, which is the branch of the Euphrates, along with the Malatya connection line through Çetinkaya. From there, it follows this river to Erzurum by crossing steep gorges such as Pingan, Atma and Kemah³⁹⁰.

³⁸⁶ “Sivas-Erzurum Hattı ile Malatya’dan Başlayarak Divrik Civarında Bu Hatla Birleşecek İltisak Hattının İnşalarına Dair Kanun (L.N. 2200)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 2411 (May 1933): 2513.

³⁸⁷ [Sivas- Erzurum ve Malatya-Divrik Demiryollarını Bağlamak İçin En İyi Teklifi Yapan Mühürzade Nuri’ye Ait İhalenin Kabulü], June 12, 1933, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 37-45-48.

³⁸⁸ “Bir Milyonerle Konuştum: Mühürdaroğlu Bay Nuri 200 Bin Lira Teberru Meselesini Anlatıyor”, **Son Posta**, June 5, 1935.

³⁸⁹ İhsan Çalapverdi, **Sivas-Erzurum Demiryolu İnşası 1933-1939** (İstanbul: Divriği Defterleri Yayın No. 6, 2008), 13-14.

³⁹⁰ Vedat Karadeniz, Deniz Akpınar, “Sivas- Erzurum Yolunun Yapım Süreci, Sosyo-İktisadi Etkileri ve Geleceği”, **Atatürk Dergisi**, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 21. See figure 10.



Figure 10: Route of the Sivas-Erzurum and Malatya-Divriği Lines

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, April 27, 1933.

Before the railway arrived, Divriği hadn't had a proper highway connection with the neighbouring places. It took people three days to go to Sivas on horseback and there was no road safety, security and accommodation. The construction of the line started in Sivas in 1933 and was completed 15 months before the anticipated date³⁹¹.

Table 45: Opening Dates of Stations on the Sivas-Erzurum Line

Name of the Line	Line Length	Opening Date
Sivas-Tecer	43	19.12.1935
Tecer- Çetinkaya	69	01.11.1936
Çetinkaya-Divriği	65	20.11.1937
Divriği-İliç	54	17.08.1938
İliç-Kemah	54	01.10.1938
Kemah-Erzincan	48	23.12.1938
Erzincan-Aşkale	159	22.09.1939
Aşkale-Erzurum	59	20.10.1939

Türkiye İstatistik Yıllığı, Vol. 18 (Ankara, 1950), 366.

³⁹¹ İhsan Çalapverdi, *Sivas-Erzurum Demiryolu*, 5.

On November 20, 1937, four stations called Avşar, Güneş, Cürek and Divriği in the Çetinkaya-Divriği Line were put into operation³⁹². The train services from Çetinkaya to Divriği were scheduled on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday whereas the trains from Divriği to Çetinkaya ran on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday³⁹³.



Figure 11: Secondary School Students Waiting at Divriği Station During the Opening of the Sivas-Erzincan Line in 1938

Anonymous

Railway transportation was not only of great advantage to the inhabitants who have travelled far away, but also the iron mines have benefited from freight transport. The opening of the railway led to the discovery of iron ore deposits, and the transportation of the iron ore to the factories in Karabük and İskenderun has contributed a lot to their industrial growth with their urbanisation process and enabled Karabük to become a province.

“Except for the creation of employment, the mining enterprise did not contribute to Divriği. Before 1940, the population in Karabük had consisted of 13 households prior to the discovery of

³⁹² See table 45.

³⁹³ [Çetinkaya-Divrik Demiryolu Üzerinde Yapılan 4 İstasyonun Hizmete açılması], November 28, 1937, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 152-76-36.

iron ore in Divriği. The population in Karabük had never reached up to 14. Supposing that there were lots of mosquitoes and if there were 5 children in a household, 4 of them would die from malaria. The number would rise to 14 only if they broke up into new households. However, Karabük became the province and it was Divriği which made it possible. There is nothing here (in Divriği) and not even a stake was driven. Iron Mines Operation hasn't left any mark on the town. For example, the buildings intended for workers in Selavattepe were constructed after the Pelletising Plant had been set up. What happened? The population of the town didn't rise and along with the villages, it was 50,000 whereas today it has fallen to less than 30.000. I remember that Turkey's population was 16 -17 million in 1946. Although it rose in each part of Turkey, how was it likely to fall in Divriği? There was a migration from Divriği and because of the lack of employment opportunities here, the ones getting retired were leaving the town. Fortunately, there are privately-held companies today. If there had not been any of them, nobody would be employed. Otherwise, Divriği would turn into a village" (Ahmet Ertuğrul, Retired Worker, 1952-1980).

From the very beginning of the establishment of the iron mining enterprise, KARDEMİR was supplied with iron ores transported by the railway line. However, as far as İSDEMİR (*İskenderun Demir ve Çelik Fabrikaları/ İskenderun Iron and Steel Works*) established in 1970 is concerned, the ore requirement of the factory would be met from abroad due to the lack of the required railway lines, so the factory would start operating as an enterprise through imported raw materials. Because of the fact that the electrified railway line intended to transport iron ore from Divriği and Hasançelebi to İskenderun couldn't be completed in due course of time, the payment for iron ore imports that Turkey made to the foreign countries exceeded \$ 250 million per year³⁹⁴. Nevertheless, this line was realised in 1994 and it enabled Turkey to reduce the quantity of imports³⁹⁵.

3.5 Construction of a New Town Through Education in the Early Republican Period

3.5.1 Production of a New Educational Space in the Town Centre

After the proclamation of the Republic, the first primary school that was the first formal educational institution was opened in 1926 under the name of Cumhuriyet Primary School³⁹⁶. The second one was İstiklal Primary School which was inaugurated in 1933 and Atatürk Primary School founded in 1944 was the third one³⁹⁷. By the mid-1950s, there were only 3 primary schools and a secondary school in the centre of the town:

³⁹⁴ "İskenderun Demir Çelik Fabrikası Müteahhitlerine Fazladan 1 Milyar Lira Ödendi", *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, July 12, 1974.

³⁹⁵ TCDD History. Electrification. <http://www.trainsofturkey.com/index.php/History/TCDD>.

³⁹⁶ See figure 12.

³⁹⁷ Divriği Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Derneği, Divriği'de Eğitim, <http://www.divrigiderneği.com/icerik.asp?KID=4&icerikID=48>.

“Cumhuriyet Primary School located in İmamoğlu Neighbourhood was built in 1926. The classrooms are large, the windows are big and it is a refreshing building with a large garden and a decent recreation area. Next to this building, two classes of this school provide education in the old high school building in a common field, and the school meets the needs of the region. Atatürk Primary School was built around the secondary school in Cedit Paşa Neighbourhood in 1944. Although it was built in an area with each front presenting a nice prospect, it is not as attractive as Cumhuriyet Primary School. It has a water supply and a recreation area with other facilities. İstiklal Primary School was a privately-owned building in Gökçe Cami Neighbourhood, and it was bought and turned into a school in a place where the population density of the town is high. In these schools, 906 students, including 531 males and 375 females, continue their education. There are 21 teachers in the central schools, 5 of whom are women and 16 of them are men”³⁹⁸.

İstiklal Primary School was inadequate compared to the other two schools and had only 3 classrooms. In this school, those finishing the 3rd grade would prefer one of the other two schools and complete their primary school education.

“The first building of the school had 3 classrooms and the number of classes was insufficient. There were no classrooms for the 4th and 5th graders at school. Atatürk Primary School was built on the same road and right up the road, there was Cumhuriyet Primary School. There were 5 classrooms in both of them, and the students leaving İstiklal Primary School could continue studying with their primary education in these schools” (Duran Önder, Engineer).



Figure 12: Cumhuriyet Primary School (1933)

Anonymous

³⁹⁸ M. Kazım Erçoklu, **Bütün Veçheleriyle Divriği**, 1955.

For a long time, these three primary schools as well as other primary schools in the villages and surrounding districts, Maden Primary School in Cürek and Mustafa Necati Primary School established in the 1960s gave students to Nuri Demirağ Secondary School which was opened in the academic year of 1937-1938³⁹⁹.



Figure 13: Nuri Demirağ Secondary School

Anonymous

When the railway line through Divriği was about to be completed, Nuri Demirağ undertaking the Sivas-Erzurum Railway Project decided to build a secondary school which the town felt the lack of. As there were two primary schools in the town, the ones finishing them couldn't go on with their education or they had to leave Divriği so as to study in other cities. In 1937, both Cumhuriyet and İstiklal Primary School were attended by about 700 students. The number of young people continuing their education out of town was more than 1000. However, only 120 students from Divriği enrolled in the new secondary school built by Nuri Demirağ⁴⁰⁰. Necdet Sakaoğlu states

³⁹⁹ Divriği Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Derneği, Divriği'de Eğitim, <http://www.divrigiderneği.com/icerik.asp?KID=4&icerikID=48>. See figures 13 and 14.

⁴⁰⁰ "Tren Divrikte: Yeni Divrik İstasyonu Şu günlerde Büyük Merasimle Açılıyor (Yeni Ortamektepe Derslere Başlandı)", **Tan**, November 8, 1937.

that Nuri Demirağ Secondary School where he started studying in the 1951-1952 academic year was a great chance for Divriği. As a district, Divriği attained secondary school facilities, which the Republican regime could not supply even for small provincial centres, thanks to Nuri Demirağ. Demirağ provided it with laboratory materials, libraries, desks and tables he had brought from Switzerland. He had Muhsin Ertuğrul arrange the theater hall. Sports fields, a park with a pool and an open-air classroom were built in the garden of the school. He asked the Ministry of National Education to appoint the most talented teachers to the secondary school⁴⁰¹.

In 1938, there were 116 secondary schools in Turkey and 25 of them were in İstanbul. Nuri Demirağ Secondary School was the first secondary school which was opened in Sivas and the students from the districts of the neighbouring cities as well as the ones living in other surrounding villages in Divriği used to study there. Therefore, the unique secondary school was subject to the flow of new groups of students from distant places. The economic growth caused by the railway construction was the major factor in the educational development and as the town grew, a new educational space was reproduced.

Moreover, education of the society was one of the main discourses of the modernisation movement in this period. In this respect, great importance was given to education in the Cürekk Settlement in parallel with the country in general. At first, there was only one primary school followed by the inauguration of a secondary school in 1966 and a high school in 1984 which played an important role in the education of the children living in both Cürekk and surrounding villages. The fact that schools were located within the settlement was a reflection of the modernisation goal in the spatial design. They also helped strengthen the relationship established with the centre of the town. When there was not a secondary school in the settlement, the employees' children were transported to the centre of the town by trucks of the enterprise⁴⁰².

“The distance between the Cürekk Mining Settlement and Divriği was 11 km, and the students used to go there and return with the trucks carrying the workers since there was not a school in Cürekk, There was one of them in Divriği. Students from Kemah, Kemaliye, Çetinkaya and the villages of the town used to come to Divriği to study whereas there were no secondary schools in many city centres in Turkey. Secondary school education was hard to reach. High school was opened in the following years” (Necdet Sakaoğlu, Historian).

⁴⁰¹ Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Büyük Kalpli Vatandaş: Nuri Demirağ”, **Popüler Tarih** (July 2020): 68.

⁴⁰² See figure 15.



Figure 14: Maden Primary School

Cürek Yerleşkesi Yeniden İşlevlendirme Projesi, 2012.

Furthermore, the students living in Cürek and having some relatives in the town centre were more fortunate and they used to stay in their houses, otherwise, they would benefit from the workers' truck.

“When I finished primary school, I started Nuri Demirağ School. I spent the first year with my aunts as there were no means of transportation. The truck with tarpaulin allocated as a student bus in the 2nd grade was carrying about 30 students in a cloud of dust and in danger of freezing during the winter months. The new bus for 14 people, while I was in the 3rd grade, made our life easier”⁴⁰³.

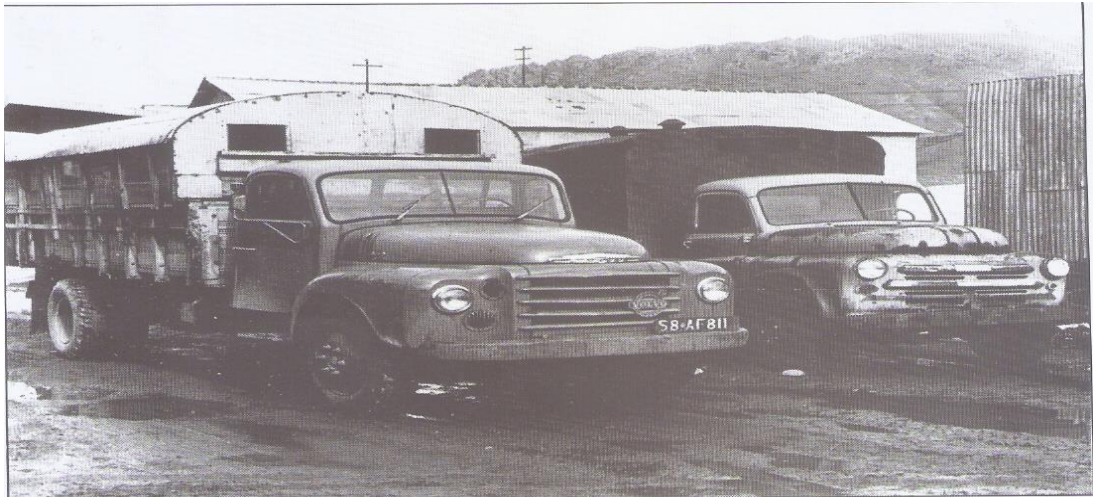


Figure 15: Trucks with Tarpaulin Transporting Students with Workers in 1955

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988), 46.

⁴⁰³ Duran Önder, **Divriği-Cürek Yaşantım** (2010), 17.

The number of enrolled students from 1937 to 1970 is 3828 graduates and 1870 students. After serving as a secondary school for 33 years, it was transformed into Nuri Demirağ Industrial Vocational High School in 1970 whereas the secondary school part merged with Divriği High School⁴⁰⁴. Apart from Nuri Demirağ Secondary School, Cürek Secondary School was opened in 1966⁴⁰⁵. A sudden increase in the population along with the changes in the rate of employment increase gave rise to a great expansion of education at the secondary level, so education was conceived of as a route to social mobility.

As far as high schools are concerned, Divriği High School in 1970, İmam Hatip High School in 1976, Cürek High School in 1984, Sadık Özgür Trade High School in 1993 and Nuri Demirağ Industrial Vocational High School in 1970 were opened to enable students to study when the mobility in the urban space constantly increased. Moreover, the people of Divriği had Divriği High School and a four-storey dormitory built with their efforts. According to the report written in the newspaper, the fundraising committee had raised 200.000 liras by visiting each village and at the groundbreaking ceremony peasants assured that they would raise 1.5 million liras among themselves⁴⁰⁶. Schools in the urban spaces were regarded as important because they played an important role even for peasants to determine the life chances of their children and this dormitory enabled many students living in the rural areas to go on with their studies at secondary school.

From the 2000s onwards, through the privatisation of mining enterprise, the pace of economic expansion started to slow down and people aiming for better living conditions gradually migrated to the metropolitan areas, which had a negative effect on education:

“The number of students has dropped. When I opened up the private teaching institution in 2003, there were 5500 students and today there are 1400 students including the ones in preschool education. From 2003 to 2016, based on the level of success in the university entrance exam, there were at least 30 students out of the first hundred thousand students and 5 students used to be placed among the top ten thousand students. Every year 2-3 students would get into university to study medicine and 5-10 students would prefer law, but in the recent years, the level of education in the district has worsened a lot” (Gazi Orhan Türkyılmaz, Teacher, 1982-2020).

⁴⁰⁴ Divriği Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Derneği, “Örnek Bir Kurum Divriği Nuri Demirağ Ortaokulu”, <http://www.divrigidernegi.com/icerik.asp?KID=4&icerikID=49>.

⁴⁰⁵ Sivas Valiliği, 1967, 137.

⁴⁰⁶ “Dört Katlı Lise Binası Yapıyorlar”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 15, 1968, 5.

That there was a decline in the number of students caused the unique private teaching institution, the schools in Cüre  and the ones in some villages to close down.



Figure 16: Cüre  High School

Personal Archives of G ksel Kaya

Gazi Orhan T rkyılmaz who worked as a teacher from 1982 to 2020 in Divri i and had his own private teaching institution but had to close it down lays bare the reasons why Divri i has dropped behind in the quality of education.

“There are many factors that can be criticised about the educational policies followed. In the first place, preparing for the exam once is a job that requires expertise. The courses opened at schools do not prepare the students for the exam because the school has a curriculum. Therefore, you cannot go beyond this curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education and you have to comply with it... Another factor is that students reach upper levels without failing although they don’t succeed at high school and an illiterate student thereby comes to that level... When you take both factors into consideration, the town suffers in parallel with the whole country’s situation every year, so there will not be any students who could study medicine and law by means of this system in the town. The problem is that there is no equal opportunity in education. There are always new teachers coming to town and the appointed teachers consider how to escape from here as soon as possible. Accordingly, they don’t care about if the students behave well. The teachers used to be appointed for 6 years in a school which was somewhat good, but now it has been reduced to 4 years. In the developed countries of the world, a teacher does not leave the place where they are appointed 15 years before they are recommissioned, but if they have a health problem or they get divorced with their spouses, they can leave that place” (Gazi Orhan T rkyılmaz, Teacher, 1982-2020).

If space is thought to be a historical production, each term is bound to have its own space. The discovery of the iron ore paved the way for the foundation of an

industrialised society. Accordingly, the town prospered and the economic boom dismantling the feudal space to some extent helped produce a new educational space in the town centre. However, the privatisation of the enterprise led to demographic changes and the educational space reproduced itself and created its own mode of historical production.

3.5.2 Urbanisation of Educational Space In Rural Settlements

Before the alphabet revolution in 1928, education was used to be held in village rooms because there were no schools in the villages. The ones wanting to learn how to read and write had to go to the town centre to study in Madrasah. However, the language of education was in Ottoman script, so it was difficult and the literacy rate in the villages was very low.

“Some families who lived near sub-districts and were well-off sent their children there and enabled them to become literate. When a letter came to the villages from other cities, everyone was looking for someone to read because most of the peasants were illiterate. Schools with 3 classes were opened. The three-year education went on till 1940 and from then on, in accordance with the new legislation in the education, it proceeded to the five-year education”⁴⁰⁷.

The first village schools were constructed by the ones who were adept at building houses. The peasants used to provide wood and stones and help each other finish building the one-storey schools with 2 or 3 classrooms⁴⁰⁸.

“The government would give out the tiles, sheet metal and some other building materials along with windowpanes. In the construction of the school, everyone worked. If a person didn’t work or come to work, the mukhtar of the village would check if one of them was not present, send the guard so that he could summon him, and if he didn’t come again or said 'I worked hard', the mukhtar would write down a report about him and complain to the gendarmerie station”⁴⁰⁹.

“The school in Ovacık Village, one of the first constructed schools, was put into service in 1935. It was designed to have 3 parts. One room was for the teachers, one for the hall and the other for classrooms in which 3 different classes received an education. From the enactment of the new legislation in education onwards, it was hard to maintain education in the classroom and a more modern school was constructed in the late 1940s. The tiles provided by the state and brought to Divriği by train from Eskişehir were placed in bags on the backs of the animals and transported to the village since there were no vehicles. A new concrete school, boarding house and modern toilets were built by the government in 1968 by the contractor in a tender process. This school consisted of a teacher's room, a hall and two classrooms. In one of the classrooms, the 2nd and 3rd-grade students were studying, and in the other one, the 4th and 5th-grade students were studying. The 1st-grade students continued to study at the old school” (Birkan Özcan, civil servant).

⁴⁰⁷ Mustafa Gürsoy, *Ovacık Köyü Tarihi* (İstanbul, 2019), 22.

⁴⁰⁸ See figure 17.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 23.

The number of students was high in each village and the school buildings were not spacious enough to provide an effective education for them, so the lack of classrooms with few teachers made the learning process hard.

“The number of students in the classes was very high. Generally, they were poor and would not even have the opportunity to buy notebooks and pens. Apart from that, since agriculture and animal husbandry were common, the ones turning 6 as now could not attend school. I started school 2 years late after grazing the goats and lambs. We were also faced with a shortage of teachers. One teacher used to teach the 1st and 2nd grades, and another teacher was for the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. If there was a new teacher, the 2nd and 3rd grades would be given to him. All in all, training didn’t use to be very efficient. There were around 150-160 students. In our time, there was a school building. The second school is the building which was constructed in 1944 and that today we use as a grocery” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

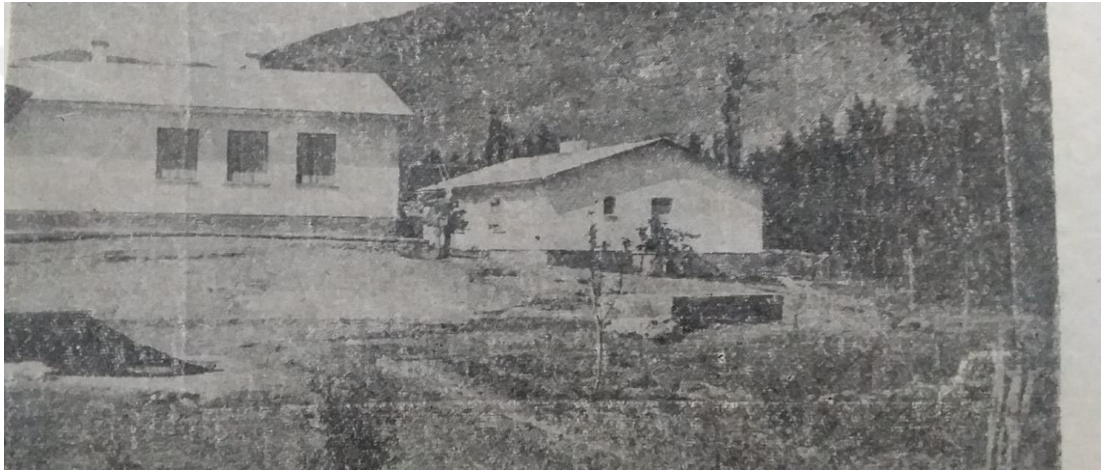


Figure 17: Village School (on the left) and Teacher’s Lodge (on the right) in Ovacık

Ovacık Köyü Bülteni, August 1971, 22.

In direct proportion to the number of teachers in the villages, students could have the opportunity to study in separate classes. Otherwise, the students of some classes had to continue their education together in the same classroom. The former mayor Muharrem Yağbasan’s wife Gülperi Yağbasan working as a teacher in Divriği for a long time (1973-1980/ 1984-1996) illustrated the conditions both students and teachers went through in hard times:

“In the 1973-1974 academic year, 4 teachers were working together in Odur Village. I was teaching the 1st graders. We were working both in the morning and afternoon. At that time, the village was very crowded. One teacher taught two classes, the other teachers taught one class ... In 1974, I started working in Purunsur Village. I also taught the 4th and 5th graders there. We were 2 teachers. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades were in one class, and there was a teacher for both the 4th and 5th grades, and I worked there for 4 years ... Then my husband was exiled to Karabük and after working there for about 6 months, I started working in Ziniski (Akmeşe) Village. We also had 5 teachers there and each teacher had a class. In fact, because we could not fit into the

school, another building was built next to it. Then, I converted a room of that building into a classroom and I had my classes there” (Gülperi Yağbasan, 1973-1980/1984-1996, Teacher).

Village Institutes, which were established in 1940 to train primary school teachers, played a very important role in training assistant teachers to help main teachers in village schools in Divriği. In this way, students in some schools could study in different classes.

“My father was a primary school graduate. During İnönü's presidency, the state gave them the right to take a 6-month training course for those who completed their primary school education or knew how to read. In 1942, 3 people from our village went to Pamukova Village Institute in Yıldızeli District of Sivas. After 6 months of training, he got the right to become a teacher assistant with the diploma he received” (Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983).

The female literacy rate was high in comparison to many other villages in Turkey. Whether they went on with their secondary education or not depended on the distance between the villages where they lived and some of them also had the chance to go to secondary or high school. If not, the parents had much higher educational expectations for sons than for daughters.

“In Odur Village where I worked, the parents had no intention of renting a house, especially for girls to go to school. They preferred boys to be enrolled in secondary or high schools in the town centre and Cürek. However, in the other villages I worked in such as Purunsur and Ziniski, girls were transported by the workers' service and they could attend both secondary and high school after primary school. The female literacy rate was higher there” (Gülperi Yağbasan, 1973-1980/1984-1996, Teacher).

Before the 1970s when the population of the rural areas started to drop and the traditional agricultural life slowed down, most of the girls weren't sent to school supposing that they were supposed to occupy themselves with housework, farming and animals.

“Primary school education was very difficult for girls. Parents didn't use to send girls to school very often because they were expected to do housework. Even before finishing the 5th grade, they got them to drop out of school ... When I went to the secondary school in the town centre, there were no female students in the dormitory where I stayed. It was only for boys. Girls were not sent to secondary school after primary school, anyway” (Sayit Özcan, Retired Worker, 1979-2002).

The number of people living in rural areas dropped especially since the late 1960s. Urbanisation related to employment growth enabled the urban space to expand and caused the peasants to leave rural areas. In particular, after the 1980s, the population continued to decrease more quickly whereas the urban population rose until the early 1990s. Thus, education played an indirect role in the network between urban spaces.

“When the families of those who wanted to attend secondary school started to work in the mines, they rented a house in Cürek and taking their children with them, they enabled them to study at secondary school and high school. The children could go to Divriği by bus belonging to the

enterprise along with the students of the civil servants living in the Cürekk Settlement, so the children of the workers who came from the villages and lived in Cürekk benefited from this service. Those who migrated out of the city were able to study at high school and university, and so the rate of education started to increase” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Boys who finished primary school in the village could continue their education by staying with their relatives living in the town centre or in a dormitory to attend secondary school if their families were not working in the mines.

“After I finished primary school, I went to secondary school and industrial vocational high school in Divriği. At that time I was staying in the house of one of our relatives and I was going to school under difficult conditions. After a while, I started to stay in the dormitory until I finished high school in 1974. Staying in the dormitory was also difficult, it was crowded and we were eating our meals there ... In those years, the ones who didn’t have a house in Divriği either benefited from the dormitory or stayed in the houses of their acquaintances” (Sayit Özcan, Retired Worker, 1979-2002).

Towards the very end of the 1950s, there were 51 schools in the villages⁴¹⁰. In 1967 there were 99 primary schools, 9 of which were in the hamlets, so 21 villages had no schools⁴¹¹. However, the number of schools rose to 127 in 1973⁴¹². These figures indicate that even if there was a decline in the number of people living in rural areas, the number of village schools increased in inverse proportion. However, especially, after the 1980s many schools closed down. Today none of them is open and they are used for multiple purposes⁴¹³.

“Divriği's heart was the Iron Mines Operation. After privatisation, people became unemployed. When they were under the wing of the state, the state could create opportunities... However, when privatisation occurred, new workers were recruited from outside for political reasons. Thus, people living and working in Divriği were not hired and the retired people migrated to other cities. Why did they emigrate? They thought that it would be better for their children to study at university, so they made their investment in big cities such as İstanbul and Ankara... When there were a few children in the villages and the schools were closed down, the families had to migrate to Divriği. When the younger generation came to Divriği, only the elderly remained in the village. Since they had no fertility, the population decreased, so there were no children or few children left. In addition, they opened up a boarding school. When the population in the villages decreased, the children came to the boarding school at the age of 7. Then, students were also transported to the town centre as the rural transport connectivity to the town had been enhanced. If not, people from the villages rented a car and had their children study there. When there were not enough students in the villages, no teachers were appointed. All these factors caused schools to close down in the villages. Fortunately, the school buildings were handed over to village cultural associations, and thus the schools were prevented from being demolished. Associations have owned and made them available for peasants. They use schools for cultural activities as gathering areas such as weddings, dining organisations and funerals. The villages where such activities were done and whose names I remember are Göndüren, Odur, Çukuröz, and accordingly, they remain standing without being destroyed” (Gülperi Yağbasan, 1973-1980/1984-1996, Teacher).

⁴¹⁰ Erçoklu, *ibid.*

⁴¹¹ Sivas Valiliği, 1967, 136.

⁴¹² Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 139.

⁴¹³ See figure 18.



Figure 18: Ovacık Village School Serving As a Museum

Anonymous

After the 1980s, privatisation initiatives, evacuation of the villages and employment for the people deriving from other districts of Sivas or cities caused the rural space to shrink and to be incorporated into urban space

3.6 Spatial Expansion and Transformation in Divriği After Being Designated as a Mining Town

3.6.1 Administrative Units of the District

In the Ottoman Empire, Divriği, as a sanjak, was part of Sivas and worked out as an important place on the way to Harput, Arapkir and Zara till the second part of the 19th century⁴¹⁴. In accordance with the 1831 census of the population of the Ottoman Empire, Divriği was one of the seven sanjaks along with the central sanjak of Sivas, Amasya, Bozok, Çorum, Canik and Arapkir in the Eyalet of Sivas. As to the administrative division of 1847, it was one of the three sanjaks along with the central

⁴¹⁴ Sivas Valiliği, 1973, 53.

Sanjak of Sivas and Amasya in the Eyalet of Sivas⁴¹⁵. However, in 1854, the Ottoman provincial administration system was first subdivided into sanjak, kaza, nahiya, village and hamlet respectively⁴¹⁶. Divriği thereby turned into a kaza as part of the central sanjak of Sivas and it was composed of 9 nahiyas and 125 villages⁴¹⁷. In 1922 it was made a district as part of Sivas Province in line with the new administrative division. The sanjaks in Sivas as well as Sivas itself became independent cities whereas the kazas in Sivas Sanjak turned into a district⁴¹⁸.

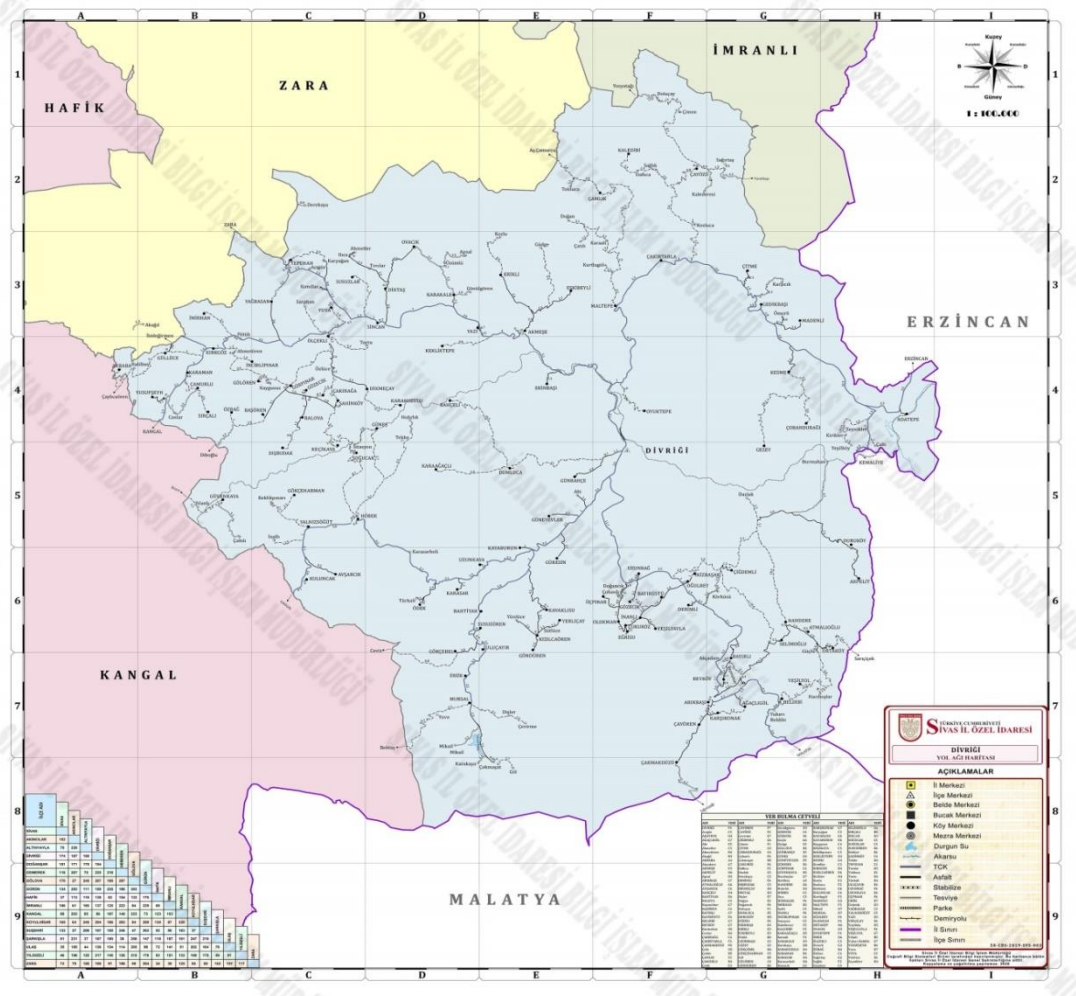


Figure 19: Divriği District Map

Sivas Special Provincial Administration

⁴¹⁵ Yücel, *ibid*, 13.

⁴¹⁶ Ortaylı, *ibid*, 433.

⁴¹⁷ Cuinet, *ibid*, 685.

⁴¹⁸ Yücel, *ibid*, 14.

After the proclamation of the Republic, there have been changes in the administrative field over time. While the area of the district was 2635 km² from 1927 to 1945, this area reached 2762 km² in the 1950s, especially after the incorporation of some villages in Kangal and the boundaries of the district expanded. Today, the area of Divriği is 2781 km² and it consists of 105 villages with 28 neighbourhoods ⁴¹⁹.

3.6.2 Interrelationship of Space and Time Over Village Name Changes

Turkish tribes coming to Anatolia from outside gave the names of the places, which they came from, to the regions they settled in. This situation can be understood from the names given to the areas where the Oğuz tribes such as Salgur, Bayak and Bozoks settled in Divriği and its surroundings during the Turkisation process of Anatolia. However, the place names changed based on the ethnic structures and the language of the communities living in Divriği throughout history and they can be analyzed in several groups according to the names they have adopted. Some of them are based on tribal and personal names: Eskibeyli, Oğulbey, Avşarcık, Atmalıoğlu, Yusufşeyh, Selimoğlu, Beyköy, Çakırağa, Bahtiyarefendi. The ones deriving from natural conditions are as follows: Akmeşe, Oyuktepe, Şahin, Güneş, Bayırüstü, Güvenkaya, Akbaba, Kayaburun, Uzunkaya, Ovacık, Keçikaya, Çamlık, Gözecik, Dişbudak, Çamurlu. There are also some names such as Demirdağ, Madenli, Kesme associated with mines. Some of the place names like Gökçecharman, Ekinbaşı, İncirlişınar, Erikli, Özbağı, Bahçeli, Günbahçe, Çobandurağı, Çitme originate from the activities people engage in. Some place names take their origins in parallel with their existing old and temporary settlements: Ağılcık, Yazı, Başören, Yeşilyayla, Kızılcaören, Gülören, Çayören, Susuzören⁴²⁰. However, several places were nominated in line with a law enacted in 1959 supposing that they had foreign names.

In accordance with the law no. 7267 dated May 11, 1959, a subclause was added to the second article of the law no 5442 on Provincial Administration dated June 10, 1949 and the names of villages were changed by a commission formed in the General Directorate of Provincial Administration, a unit of the Ministry of Interior⁴²¹. In line

⁴¹⁹ Gülpınar Akbulut. “Divriği İlçesi’nin Coğrafyası”. (Phd Thesis, Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2004), 292. Divriği Belediyesi, “İklim ve Coğrafya”, <https://www.divrigi.bel.tr/iklimveCoğrafya.aspx>.

⁴²⁰ Akbulut, *ibid*, 223.

⁴²¹ 5442 Sayılı İl İdaresi Kanunu’nun İkinci Maddesinin (D) Fıkrasının Değiştirilmesi Hakkında Kanun (L.N. 7267)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 10210 (May 1959): 21672-21673.

with this law, the names of some villages in Divriği changed over time⁴²². However, the locals used the old ones and it has taken a great deal of time to get used to calling them by new names.

“The names of non-Turkish villages were changed after the 1960 military revolution. For example, the new name of Ziniski became Akmeşe. The locals had difficulty at first, but then they got used to the new names over time. They have used old names for many years and still continue to use them in public” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

“Many of our villages were renamed. The changed village names were predominantly Armenian. The names of the old Armenian settlements such as Erşun, Odur, Hazerkek, and Venk have equivalent in that language and there was a church in our village called Ekinbaşı. Even now everyone uses Kilisecik instead of Ekinbaşı. In addition, the old name of Akmeşe was Ziniski and you won't hear anyone say that they are from Akmeşe” (Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş, Former Worker, 1974-1980/ City Councilor in İstanbul Municipality, 2019-&).

Table 46: Village Name Changes in Divriği

VILLAGES OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT	
Name of the Village	Old Name
Akmeşe	Ziniski
Avşarcık	Karaguz
Akpelit	Gehmu
Bayırüstü	Timisi
Bahçeli	Pengürt
Çakırtarla	Savrun
Çiğdemli	Tuğut (Ağıcık)
Çukuröz	Tülünk
Demirdağ	Purunsur (Neighbourhood)
Derimli	Gahnıt
Dumluca	-
Duruköy	Türkarege
Ekinbaşı	Kilisecik
Erikli	-
Eğrisu	Anzahar
Eskibeyli	Norşun
Gezey	-
Gökçeharman	Ömeran- Kekliktepe
Gözecik	Eliski
Günbahçe	Hazerkek
Güneş	-
Güneyevler	Erşun

⁴²² See table 46.

Table 46-continuing

Güresin	-
Güvenkaya	Aşudutekke
Höbek	-
İkizbaşak	Kömek
İnanlı	Şigi Müslim
Karaağaçlı	Çüksüzer
Karakale	-
Karakuzulu	Bizevi
Kayaburun	Odur
Kayacık	Murmana (neighbourhood)
Keçikaya	Meliköy
Kuluncak	-
Maltepe	Hornovil
Oğulbey	Kirkidi
Olukman	-
Oyuktepe	Kömüşvengi
Soğucak	Kürtbeyaz
Uzunbağ	Karsı
Uzunkaya	Pağram
Üçpınar	-
Yalnızsöğüt	-
Yazı	
Yeşilyayla	Horozcukuru
VILLAGES IN ARIKBAŞI SUB-DISTRICT	
Arıkbaşı	Danişment
Ağaçlıgöl	Gömündürüm
Atmalıoğlu	-
Bayırlı	Haşke
Beldibi	Livanlı
Beyköy	Sevir
Çakmakdüzü	Palha
Çayören	Pütke
Handere	-
Karşıkonak	Kahtik
Ortaköy	-
Selimoğlu	-
Yeşilyol	Arege

Table 46-continuing

VILLAGES IN GEDİKBAŞI SUB-DISTRICT	
Gedikbaşı	Karageban
Adatepe	Pingan
Çamlık	Kürtarege
Çayözü	Hamo
Çitme	-
Çobandurağı	Kürtlarlı
Kaledibi	-
Kesme	-
Madenli	Hinora
Yozyatağı	- (in İmranlı since 2007)
Yürektaş	Merenli (in İmranlı since 2007)
VILLAGES IN MURSAL SUB-DISTRICT	
Mursal	-
Bahtiyar	-
Gökçebel	Bahtiyarvengi
Göndüren	-
Karasar	-
Kavaklısu	Armutak
Kızılcaören	-
Ödek	-
Susuzören	-
Uluçayır	Vazıldan
Ürük	-
Yerliçay	Vartan
VILLAGES IN SINCAN SUB-DISTRICT	
Sincan	-
Akbaba	-
Balova	-
Başören	-
Çakırağa	-
Çamurlu	-
Dikmeçay	Eşke
Diktaş	-
Dişbudak	-
Gölören	-
Gözecik	Ağın
Güllüce	-
Gürpınar	Çamoğa

Table 46-continuing

İmirhan	-
İncirlişınar	Fero
Karaman	-
Kekliktepe	Galun
Kırkgöz	-
Ovacık	-
Ölçekli	Sofupalanga
Özbağı	Şahna
Sırçalı	-
Susuzlar	-
Şahin	-
Tepehan	-
Yusufşeyh	-
Yağbasan	-
Yuva	-

Ankara Divriği Kültür Derneği, “Köylerimiz”, <http://www.ankdivrigiderneği.org/?pnum=5&pt=K%C3%B6ylerimiz>.

Space is always regarded as under construction and time indicates its own uniqueness composed of the past, present and future altogether. One way or another, it turns out that space and time intertwine and, even though the names of the villages were changed, the people living there have kept them in mind and passed them down from generation to generation.

3.6.3 From Rural Spaces to New Urban Settlements

3.6.3.1 Formation of a Modern Architecture in Cüreğ

After the Great Depression of 1929, the First Five-Year Industrial Plan was put into practice. This programme was a turning point in economic policy and the first reformist move of the new economic organisation, which gave an impetus to the discovery of iron mines in Divriği. Within the framework of the plan to make an industrial breakthrough, many factories were set up in many parts of Anatolia and Divriği was one of these districts where iron ore was high. The works were first carried out in Divriği and then in Kayacık Village, which remained as the headquarters of the enterprise until the completion of the Cüreğ Settlement. The process of building the Cüreğ Settlement took place between 1939 to 1941 and aimed to establish a fully

modern mining village. In 1942, the administration moved to Cürekk, located 5 to 6 kilometres further down from the mining areas. Civil servants and workers, along with their families, settled down in the boarding houses built here as well⁴²³.

The arrival of the railway, opening of the mining enterprise and increase in the population caused the town to go through a rapid expansion outward. Due to the presence of the ore deposits, the central area of the town extended to the west. Old neighbourhoods expanded and the population in the town centre also increased because of the migration of the peasants living in rural areas. They settled in the unused lands outside the town as it couldn't meet this unexpected situation in the population growth.



Figure 20: Cürekk Settlement in the 1950s

Anonymous

The industrial enterprise and settlement constructed around it are spatial formations bearing the traces of the ideology of the Republican period and led to changes in urban life. Within the framework of modernisation and industrialisation efforts, the settlement was designed to help make workers lead a modern lifestyle. The

⁴²³ Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Cumhuriyet’in Örnek Maden Sitesi Cürekk”, **Tarihi Kentler Birliğı Dergisi**, No. 16 (2008): 49; Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriğı Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988), 24.

construction of the employees' houses by the state was thereby a well-organised attempt in line with the Republican ideology and principles.

“The administrative procedures followed and applied by the government of the Republic on the works of development and reconstruction of the country which the Ottoman Empire left to the Republican regime in a ruined and backward state were amended in a more modern and improved way in 1934 after the tenth year of the Republic. With the purpose of creating a general harmony in arts and technical unity to establish cities, towns and buildings, the law that entrusted the works of the construction of the state-owned buildings and urbanisation to the Ministry of Public Works was enacted and it was put into practice since that date”⁴²⁴.

The buildings in the settlement exemplify the modern and Western architectural understanding and life coming to Turkey from Europe in the early years of the Republic. They spatially reflect the new identity represented by the enterprise. Workers' residences constructed in the early Republican period of Turkey (1923-1950) have some features from Ebenezer Howard's concept of ‘Garden City’ (*Bahçe Şehir*) coined at the beginning of the 20th century and Tony Garnier's ‘Cité Industrielle’ (*Endüstri Kenti*) regarded as a vision of utopian planning⁴²⁵. The construction of the buildings lasting for 2 years, from 1939 to 1941, was influenced by German architects and was similar to the examples of modern housing bearing the signatures of famous artists, city planners, and architects such as Walter Gropius, Mies Van Der Rohe, Hans Scharoun and Otto Bartning in terms of both settlement pattern and layout, reinforced concrete construction method, architectural solutions and details⁴²⁶. An engineer, whose father was a grocer in the settlement and who lived there from 1945 to 1951, pointed to the Bauhaus architectural style of the settlement and explained his inquiries in Germany to find any mention of the Cürekk Settlement in the archives:

“The construction of the Cürekk Settlement was inspired by the Bauhaus architectural movement that dominated Germany between 1919-1933. When I went to Germany, I visited Bauhaus University in Weimar where that trend was very popular. I wondered and asked the professors if they had any information about Cürekk in their records. They stated that it was a pioneer trend and their guidance became so influential that the settlements constructed in the foundation of Israel in 1948 were created in accordance with this trend. Therefore, it is said that Cürekk was established by German architects and civil engineers” (Duran Önder, Engineer).

In this regard, the settlements established by the state should also be regarded as a spatial effect that contributes to the westernisation of Anatolia⁴²⁷. However, whereas modernisation emerged as a spontaneous process in Western countries, unlike them,

⁴²⁴ Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, **On Beşinci Yıl Kitabı** (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Matbaası, 1938), 273.

⁴²⁵ Ali Cengizkan, “Türkiye’de Fabrika ve İşçi Konutları: İstanbul Silahtarğa Elektrik Santrali”, **ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Dergisi**, No. 20 (2004): 39.

⁴²⁶ Elifnaz Durusoy, Ebru Omay Polat, “Unutulmaya Yüz Tutmuş Bir Maden Sitesi: Cürekk”, **Mimarlık**, No. 396 (July-August 2017).

⁴²⁷ Burak Asiliskender, **ibid**, 157.

the early Republican period of Turkey benefited from modernisation movements as only a tool to construct a nation-state with altered forms of social consciousness *vis-à-vis* everyday lives and worldviews⁴²⁸. Likewise, economic growth was thereby regarded as a tool to turn Turkey into a modern country and Cüreğ was built as a unique settlement reflecting an image of the aims of modernisation across the country. It was well-designed to create a so-called civilised atmosphere compared to the town centre of Divriği. The residents of the new settlement experienced new things, such as indoor plumbing which they had never been familiar with. Moreover, electricity was regarded as an icon of Republican modernity and an important feature of the spirit of progress⁴²⁹. Houses with luminous windows at night portrayed an image of modernity in urban life. When the town centre was not supplied with electricity in the 1940s, Cüreğ benefited from it. In this respect, the Cüreğ Settlement represented modernisation by electricity, one of the most sought-after components of the Republic.

“In our new house, there were unfamiliar items such as tables, chairs, sofas, armchairs, bed bases, wardrobe and buffet that we didn’t use to have... apart from them there were a lot more things which I was not familiar with... We called the large room where we enter the house from the landing with three steps as a hall. Here there were sofas, armchairs, chairs with a table like the ones at school and we would have our meals at that table from then on... There were iron spring bedsteads in the rooms. Wool-filled mattresses we had brought from the house in Divriği were spread on the bedsteads and we would no longer sleep on the floor but on these bedsteads, so my mom would no longer lay the bed in the evening and put them in the locker in the morning... Next to the entrance, there was a cooker, which had been brought from Germany, taking up a large space... The sink and water flowing through the faucet embedded in the wall made me very happy. I thought for a long time about where the water came from and where it ran... The fourth door to the hall was even more surprising. There was another door after the sink at the entrance. When I opened the door, a white ceramic squat toilet bowl was in sight on the floor of the small room covered with white tiles. When I pulled the chain hanging on the tank called the reservoir, water flowed with a splashing noise. There was even a bidet tap. To remember the semi-open toilet in the garden of our house in Divriği, the problem of carrying water with the pitcher was ending... The greatest surprise came when it got dark. When I pressed the button on the wall, the lamp glass hanging from the ceiling gave light. It even lit up more than both the kerosene lamp numbered 7 and the luxury lamp. We had these buttons and lamp glasses in every room, kitchen, toilet and even in front of the outside door. The lamp glasses would not become sooty at all”⁴³⁰.

The spatial characteristics of the settlement were similar to those of other settlements. In the planning of the houses in the settlement, the physical characteristics of the place and seniority levels among employees were considered, and civil servants with seniority were accommodated in much better houses. There were single-storey houses

⁴²⁸ İlhan Tekeli, “Bir Modernite Projesi Olarak Türkiye’de Kent Planlaması”, *Ege Mimarlık Dergisi*, No. 16 (1995): 51-55.

⁴²⁹ Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası: Erken Cumhuriyet Türkiye’sinde Mimari Kültür* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2001), 147.

⁴³⁰ Duran Önder, *ibid*, 9-10.

for civil servants working in the office while unit managers and engineers were staying in two-storey buildings⁴³¹. As to the manager of the enterprise, he was living in a different two-storey house with a basement where his caretaker was residing⁴³². The manager's house was located in the centre of the settlement and managers living there seemed to keep all buildings with their residents under control as the main representative of the whole country. Given these circumstances, in the first years of the enterprise, only civil servants with their families were allocated houses.

(a)



(b)



(c)



Figure 21: House Models in the Cüreket Settlement. (a) Single-Storey House, (b) Two-Storey House, (c) Manager's House

Cüreket Yerleşkesi Yeniden İşlevlendirme Projesi, 2012

⁴³¹ See figures 21(a) and 21(b).

⁴³² See figure 21(c).

There were also a workers' boarding house and a guest house consisting of two floors designed to accommodate single workers, and single civil servants working in the enterprise or coming from other cities respectively⁴³³. On the first floor of the guest house, there was a club assigned for civil servants with an outdoor and indoor area.

“The workmasters and engineers used to live in their boarding houses. The number of these houses was not enough and they were not designed for the workers. Other workers living nearby commuted from their houses to the workplace and after they left their work in the evening, they went back to their villages such as those of Ziniski, Ağar, and Purunsur. The ones living far from the mines stayed in the workers' pavilion that we regarded as workers' boarding house. For example, our village was distant and there were 15-20 people working in the mines from our village. The ones who hadn't rented a house in the centre of Divriği used to stay in the workers' house because the number of boarding houses was not sufficient” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 22: Workers' Boarding House

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya

“The civil servants' club had both an indoor and an outdoor area with a front balcony. The upper floor was used as a dormitory and I was staying there until I got married. The rooms were generally for one person, but there were also double rooms and if I'm not mistaken, there were around 20 rooms and 1 suite. This was the guesthouse of the enterprise reserved for the elite guests. It was more well-kept, and inspections were made constantly. There was also another guest house in the building used as a sports club with 8-10 rooms, but it was given to the permanent residents. The status of this place was more primitive and simpler than the bigger one” (Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985).

⁴³³ See figures 22 and 23.



Figure 23: Guesthouse

Cürek Yerleşkesi Yeniden İşlevlendirme Projesi, 2012

In case of an extraordinary situation in production, it was necessary for technicians and senior workers to step in immediately, take the necessary precautions, and ensure that the production would return to its normal functioning by making various interventions. This requirement enabled these workers to reside in the settlement. During the following decades, new houses constructed in an area called *Sekizevler* in the settlement were thereby allocated only for them: “These new buildings were intended for workers working in machinery maintenance, workshops, and excavator foremen, charge hands, and technicians. Meanwhile, there were 8 blocks and 16 flats that were adjacent to each other” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995). Only in the late 80s when the Divriği Iron Mines Operation moved to Selavattepe located in the west of Divriği and the settlement was evacuated by the civil servants, the workers were given houses in Cürek. However, they were also obliged to leave the settlement after the enterprise had been privatised in 2006 and since then, it has been abandoned to its fate.

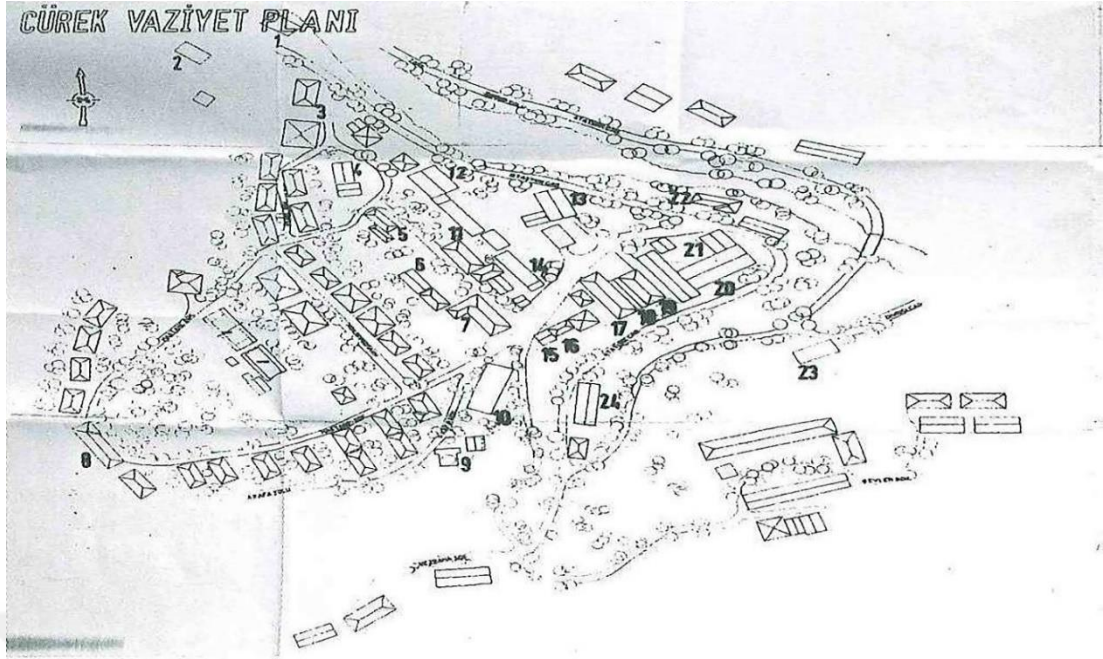


Figure 24: Settlement Layout

Elifnaz Durusoy, Ebru Omay Polat, “Unutulmaya Yüz Tutmuş Bir Maden Sitesi: Cüre”, *Mimarlık*, No. 396 (July-August 2017). 63.

(1) Station, (2) Aerial Ropeway, (3) Teacherage, (4) Movie Theater, (5) Guesthouse, (6) Telephone Exchange Building, (7) Secondary and High School, (8) Hospital, (9) Mosque, (10) Heating Centre, (11) Primary School, (12) Repair Garage, (13) Warehouse, (14) Garage, (15) PTT (Post and Telegraph Organisation), (16) Grocery Store, (17) Warehouse, (18) Warehouse, (19) Warehouse, (20) Workshop, (21) Fire Station, (22) Gendarmerie Station, (23) Coffeehouse, (24) Workers' Boarding House.

A great deal of priority was also given to the development of individual and family life in order to enable work efficiency. There were buildings such as houses with gardens, a hospital, a building for the town official, the mukhtar, a mosque, a grocery store, a butcher's shop, a laundry plant, a tailor shop, a fire station, a post office, a gendarmerie station, and a workers' boarding house⁴³⁴. Other buildings included a guest house, warehouses, a workshop, a primary school, a secondary school, a management building of the enterprise transformed later into a high school. Consequently, the residents didn't need to go to the town centre to shop since almost everything they needed was at their disposal. Over time, those who settled around the settlement also benefited from units such as the schools and the grocery store. Thus, the spatial life in the settlement was shared with other residents of the town, spreading its area of influence in alternative patterns of everyday existence.

⁴³⁴ See figure 25.

“The peasantry of the surrounding villages, even those from Zara, Kangal, İmranlı, Arapkir were shopping at the grocery store (*ekonoma*) because it was 80 percent cheaper than the centre of the town ... It was a complete supermarket, with clothes, underwear, fabric, domestic appliances, food and beverage. It contributed a lot to the economy of the region” (Murtaza Özkan, Retired Grocer, 1968-1992).

“Products such as eggs and milk were brought from the villages to meet the needs of the employees which led to such a contribution and activity. They used to come from Norşun and Güneş villages to sell their vegetables and fruits in summer. For example, the pear brought from Norşun was placed in an open area above the grocery store and sold, and permission was requested in the defence unit and a place was shown for them to be sold” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).



Figure 25: Some Buildings in the Settlement: (a) Grocery Store, (b) Laundry Plant- Tailor Shop, (c) Hospital, (d) Bakery, (e) Mosque, (f) Gardener's House.

C.Y.Y.İ Projesi, 2012; Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya.

Infrastructure facilities were also provided in the settlement. In addition to the sewage system, electricity and clean water equipment, there was a central heating system built in the late 1960s⁴³⁵. As the rents of the houses were cheap, electricity, water and fuel needs were also met free of charge. The enterprise produced its own electricity in the first years of its establishment and supplied the electricity needs of the residents with the power plant it owned.

“My father started to work as a civil servant in the enterprise in 1938. I was born in 1942. We were living in the Cürekk Settlement and it was a beautiful site. The people who came there were very envious of our lifestyle. It was first set up by Eti Bank and in the first years of its establishment and Eti Bank installed the infrastructure facilities... There were more than 100 residences and they were very useful. At first, we used to keep warm with Zonguldak hard coal which was provided free of charge by the enterprise. A central heating system was installed in the late 1960s and the people were relieved. Hot water was running all the time and it was free of charge. In electricity, no fee was charged up to 100 kw” (Saffet Öztürk, Retired Unit Manager, 1970-1987).

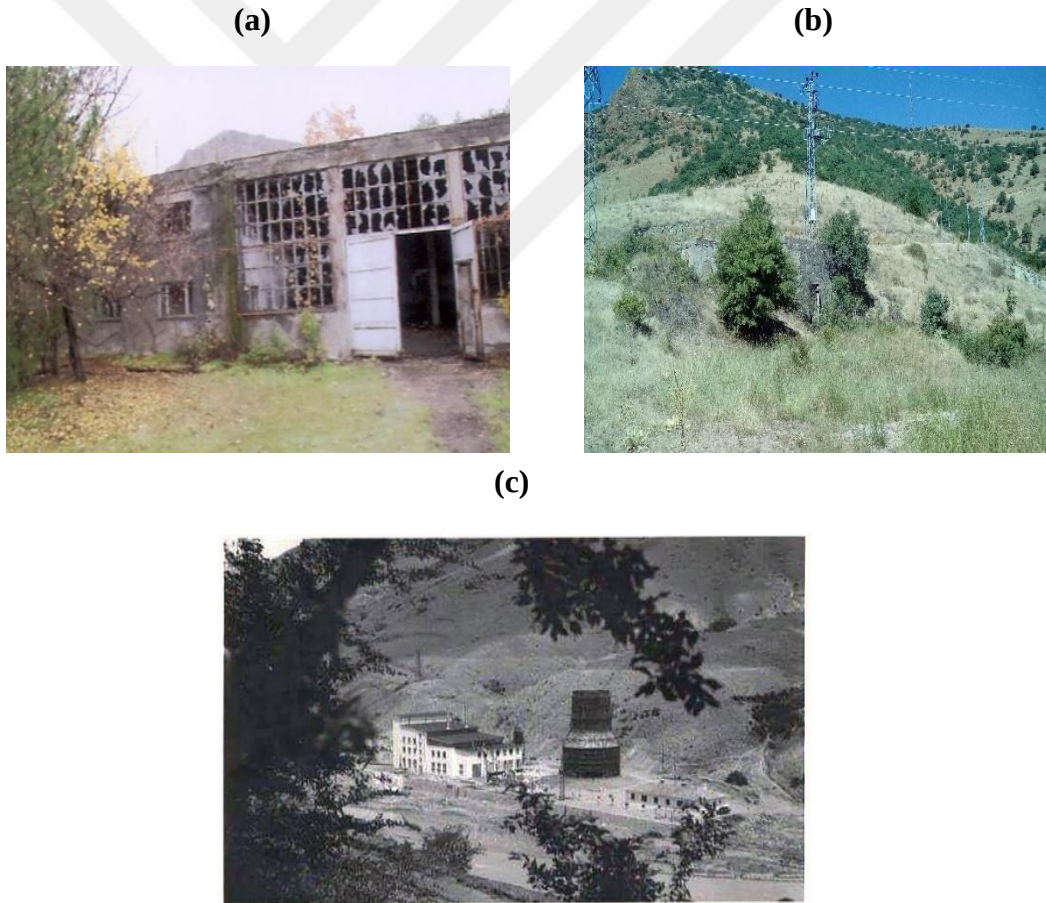


Figure 26: Infrastructure Facilities
(a) Heating Centre, (b) Water Tank, (c) Power Plant

C.Y.Y.İ Projesi, 2012; Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya

⁴³⁵ See figure 26.

3.6.3.2 Towards a More Integrated Urban Planning: Taşbaşı

With the increase in the number of employees working in the enterprise, a new settlement for workers was required. Due to the fact that there was no space to build additional ones in the Cürekk Settlement and the surrounding areas were also uneven, in 1953 the construction of new boarding houses started in Divriği where the land conditions were more suitable. After the settlement in Cürekk had been established around the mines, Divriği seemed to have fallen behind Cürekk where more modern buildings were constructed along with additional facilities that Divriği didn't have. The urban network between those two places thereby went through a fragmentation. However, new boarding houses built in Taşbaşı put an end to its fragmentation and contributed substantially to the boom in the town centre. Meanwhile, Cürekk was a self-sufficient place and the employers living there didn't have to go to Divriği to meet their needs.

“There were people living in the town centre and coming to the workplace. In order to facilitate their accommodation, make fast transportation, and reach them quickly when necessary, the construction of new boarding houses was planned in Divriği. Then, it was very important to build a neighbourhood or settlement where workers could be together. It contributed to the town both culturally and economically. It claimed its place as a workers' town in history. The people met their needs and lived there until they got retired. There was a housing problem, so the housing problem was solved” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).



Figure 27: The groundbreaking ceremony in the Taşbaşı Settlement in 1953

Compared with the houses in Cürekk where civil servants lived and everything was well-designed down to the last detail, the ones allocated to the workers in Taşbaşı were too small for a family to live in: “These houses were small. They consisted of block of houses with 72 square metres, each of which was 36 square metres. They had certain workers settled there. It was difficult for their wives to fit in with their children. There were only workers, no civil servants” (Ahmet Ertuğrul, Retired Worker, 1952-1980).

“There were 74 boarding houses in the Taşbaşı Settlement in Divriği. The enterprise provided 74 houses for the employees in parallel with their positions and it didn’t grant them to the common workers. They were given to the senior employees such as foremen and operators of various machines... However, there were two civil servants on duty in Divriği. One of them was the administrator taking care of the boarding houses and the other was a supervisor in C Placer... They were one-storey houses with two rooms, a hall, a toilet and a kitchen. Besides, there were not any additional buildings around the houses” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 28: Taşbaşı Settlement

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya

After the privatisation of the enterprise, the houses for which the workers used to pay symbolic rent were put up for sale at a bargain price.

3.6.3.3 An Example of Vertical Urban Expansion: Selavattepe

From 1970 onwards, the town has gone through horizontal expansion owing to favorable social and economic conditions, especially the demand for employment increased and the population rose in the town centre. On the other hand, the vertical

expansion also accelerated in the city in the 1980s after the headquarter of the enterprise had been located along with the construction of the Concentration and Pelletising Plants on the way to the town centre.



Figure 29: Selavattepe Settlement

Anonymous

Unlike the houses in Cürekk and Taşbaşı settlements which were designed as single-storey buildings, the houses in Selavattepe constructed in the second half of the 1970s had mostly four floors and they were much bigger than them. There were 412 houses in total. Apart from flats reserved for married workers and civil servants, there were houses allocated for bachelors, two-storey houses for senior civil servants and engineers, and a house with a swimming pool for the manager of the enterprise⁴³⁶.

“Along with the construction of the Concentration and Pelletising Plants of the enterprise, the houses in Selavattepe were built. Workers and civil servants were allocated dwellings in the block of apartments. Houses were given to them according to their rank. Our houses were over 100 m². There was a certain rental fee, and heating and water costs heating were included in the rental fee. There were also duplex houses built for directors. They were located downhill and were detached houses surrounded by walls” (Sayit Özcan, Retired Worker, 1979-2002).

⁴³⁶ See figures 30, 31 and 32.



Figure 30: Bachelor's Houses

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya



Figure 31: Houses for Senior Civil Servants and Engineers

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya



Figure 32: Manager's House

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya

There was also a guest house with 28 rooms and 54 beds for those who came on temporary duty in Selavattepe⁴³⁷.

There were also social and sports facilities where workers could spend time together like in Cürekk.

“The settlement had a lounge and a guesthouse for workers and civil servants. The enterprise had a restaurant that it ran for its own staff at a more affordable price. There were also sports facilities, including an indoor sports hall and a football pitch. In addition, there would be 3-4 pullmans between Selavattepe and Cürekk and Divriği” (Sayit Özcan, Retired Worker, 1979-2002).

After the privatisation in 2006, ERDEMİR buying the enterprise retained possession of some of the houses for their employees. However, most of them were evacuated and as nobody lived there for a while, they were all damaged. At that time, whoever went there had the sensation that the settlement had been completely abandoned.

“What a disappointment. My sisters used to live here. Coming to visit them was a great event for me. The people lived there in luxury. Their houses and streets were very clean and neat, their social life was more encouraging than ours. Where were those people? What had they done to those beautiful buildings and social facilities ... It seemed as if the settlement had been turned into a jungle, and the houses vanished among the trees. The windows and doors of the houses were broken and ruined. It was like Cürekk and we left the place in tears, disappointment and sadness”⁴³⁸.

For a few years, the settlement was left to its fate, but after a while, the houses were put up for sale and sold at very reasonable prices in a short time.

“Hundreds of buildings in Selavattepe lay in ruins and they were sold for 15.000-20.000 liras. It was impossible to get the door and window for 50.000 liras. We built a guest house there. They said that when it was built there, 200 million liras was spent on it. A guest coming from universities or other cities was staying there. It was also in ruins for a while along with the restaurant. Everything was sold. For example, people coming from Kangal bought houses with 20.000-25.000 liras in their pocket. I know 3-4 people from our village buying a house for 15.000 liras” (Rıza Alişan, Retired Worker, 1980-1987).

3.6.3.4 Reconceptualising the Vertical Growth in Divriği: TOKİ Houses

After the establishment of TOKİ (*Toplu Konut İdaresi/ Mass Housing Development Administration*) in 1984, the governments have carried out mass housing projects in order to create sub-local neighbourhoods. However, a new project for Divriği was laid out in the last decade in Turabali Neighbourhood. The first one built in 2015 was made up of 360 houses whereas the second one completed in 2018 consisted of 610 houses. Regardless of Divriği's cultural identity and urban texture, they built eight-storey

⁴³⁷ Türkiye Demir ve Çelik İşletmeleri Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi Müdürlüğü, “1993 Yılı Bilanço ve Faaliyet Raporu” (1994), 25.

⁴³⁸ Rahime Üstüner Baş, “18 Yıl Sonra Divriği’deyim ... (2005)”, *Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi*, March 15, 2012, 8-9.

apartments on the outskirts of Hüseyin Gazi on the left slopes of Hasan Deresi⁴³⁹. The vertical construction of the houses on the hills stands out from the rest of the houses which are typical examples of horizontal expansion in the town centre.

“TOKİ’s buildings are the freaks of this city. I would meet photographers, writers and academicians from outside. They would ask questions about how we protected this town with its two-storey mudbrick buildings. They were astounded when they saw them. I stated that we had been despised, excluded, marginalised by all governments in a district where half of the population in the centre is Alevi and almost all of its villages are Alevi, and thus we remained intact” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

“The construction of high-rise buildings close to the town centre changed the view of the town. Those blocks of apartments caused a lot of people to be held together only in a part of the town and the lively life in the rest of the town died out” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

“TOKİ is a disaster for Divriği. It completely spoiled the skyline of the city. In the past, there were no more than two-storey buildings. These houses contrast with Divriği’s architectural style, and those who bought houses from there left their houses and started living there. For this reason, some of the houses are dilapidated (Duran Önder, Engineer).



Figure 33: TOKİ Houses in the Background

Personal Archives of Yusuf Güldalı

⁴³⁹ “Divriği Sevdalılarından TOKİ Divriği Konutları Projesine Tepki”. **Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi**. January 1, 2013, 1; TOKİ, “İllere Göre Projeler”, <https://a.toki.gov.tr/illere-gore-projeler/2085>. TOKİ, “İllere Göre Projeler”, <https://a.toki.gov.tr/illere-gore-projeler/6124>.

The rural population also contributed to the spatial organisation of the town. Many people having difficulty in meeting their needs, especially when their state of health became poorer, decided to leave their villages. This housing project thereby seems to have been extended towards the periphery. In addition, a considerable number of people, especially the ones getting retired and living in other metropolitan cities, have returned to their hometown. Consequently, moving to a housing project appealed to both low and middle-income families.

“I had been living in a rental in the town centre for 4 years. I also lived in the village. We have never had a house. The house in the village was also in ruins. Years later, we also had a house. May God give it to everyone. I will no longer live in the house with a stove, but in the house with a heating system”⁴⁴⁰.

“There was no housing problem, but there were demands from the people living outside the city, so they had an opportunity to settle in Divriği. Under normal conditions, you should not ask for another house if you have one, but even the ones owning a house had the right to buy another one. 360 houses were built in the first stage and 610 houses in the second stage. Nevertheless, demands from people living in other cities are still continuing. Apart from that, people living in their villages bought a house in order to settle in Divriği, and the majority of those becoming householders consists of low and middle-income families” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).



Figure 34: Traditional Two-Storey Houses

Personal Archives of Yusuf Güldalı

⁴⁴⁰ “Yaşlı Çift 62 Yıl Sonra Ev Sahibi Oldu”, <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/haber/1236230/yasli-cift-62-yil-sonra-ev-sahibi-oldu> [March 6, 2019].

Young people have always been linked to the growth of urban life, but as far as the ones in the town centre are concerned, the youth couldn't find any social space where they might hang out with their own families. They wanted to benefit from the comfort and facilities of the apartment houses for the sake of their family and children. In this way, they put an end to their traditional way of life that they used to live in slums or two-storey houses⁴⁴¹. As to the elderly dwelling in the town centre, they had great difficulty in coping with their housework and the housing project opened a door for them to overcome the difficulties, such as installing the stove with its pipes and chopping wood, which traditional way of life imposed on them.

“Generally, the younger part, who lived in a detached place, wanted to live in an apartment-type house. Besides, some of the elderly people go there due to the warming in the winter and return to their homes in the summer. In winter, he pays less for natural gas in his apartment and does not have heating problems, he has to pay more in the detached house. It is more comfortable for older people to live in an apartment, as they don't deal with maintenance and repair work. The youth don't want to live in a single-storey detached house anyway” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

“The supply of natural gas with the delivery date of the houses changed the preferences of those who want to leave Divriği in winter and live in places with warmer climates. Our elderly people who could not spend the winter months in the district under difficult conditions have now started to spend the winter in Divriği”⁴⁴².

“Half of the population in Divriği now lives in TOKİ houses and the houses through the neighbourhoods are completely empty ... People preferred a more luxurious and comfortable house having access to natural gas. Of course, natural gas was provided more quickly for the area where TOKİ houses are located. Neighbourhoods do not have access to natural gas at the moment. Some people live in TOKİ houses because they have central heating in winter and return to their houses in summer... One of the reasons why they preferred those houses is that they could buy a house in instalments. However, some of them sold them and they came to the city centre. I think they couldn't be happy because it is hard for a person, who used to live in a detached house with a garden, to get used to living in a TOKİ house” (Yusuf Güldal, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

3.6.3.5 Planning for New Settlements After the Natural Disasters

In 1938 as a result of the downpour in Akbaba Village, part of Sincan Sub-district, some of the houses were destroyed by a landslide and the peasants were settled in the surrounding villages due to the presence of danger⁴⁴³. This village suffered from a

⁴⁴¹ See figure 34.

⁴⁴² “Sivas'ta Yuvalar Sımsıcak”, **TOKİ Haber** (February 2019): 41.

⁴⁴³ [Heyelanın Divriği'de Yola Açtığı Hasar], May 7, 1938, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 121-863-9.

landslide again in 1985 and the residents of 10 houses living there were settled in the centre of Divriği⁴⁴⁴.

One of the leading disasters the town suffered was the flood taking place on September 10, 1966. At the end of the heavy fall of rain with the hail, the Musol Stream overflowed and 10 people being swept away by the flood died⁴⁴⁵.

“There was a terrible flood and a few of our citizens died. Some bridges were destroyed. In the town centre, the Gate of Paradise in the Great Mosque was surrounded by mud that the flooding brought with itself and that mud couldn’t be taken away for 2-3 years and the motifs in the historical artifacts were damaged. Accordingly, a wall was put up a few metres off the back of the Great Mosque and the external wall of the mosque not getting stuffy was also damaged” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

12 houses were completely demolished apart from 63 houses and shops which were partly damaged. In addition, roads got distorted and the train service between Divriği and Dazlak stations stopped, so the service of the Orient Express and Erzurum Express remained suspended⁴⁴⁶. After that, the state decided to provide a total of 120.000 liras for construction assistance to 7 families and a pharmacy owner who suffered from the disaster, and a total of 42.000 liras to the owners of an inn, a baker’s, 3 shops and 7 landlords whose buildings were damaged⁴⁴⁷. The following year, with a new decree issued these families would have settled the areas owned by Nuri Demirağ’s heirs and Fahri Divrik, which were located next to Nuri Demirağ Secondary School and Atatürk Primary School in the district centre⁴⁴⁸

3.7 Impact of the Political Atmosphere on the Transformation of the Town

3.7.1 Transition into the Multi-Party Period and its Implications in Divriği

The transition to the multi-party period followed by famine and poverty from which the Anatolian people suffered in the single-party period was an alternative to the previous system of the republican regime and people preferred a party with different promises. The Democrat Party founded in 1946 posed a threat to the hegemony of the

⁴⁴⁴ “Sivas-Divriği-Akbaba Köyünde Heyelana Maruz (10) Hanenin, Hacıkumru Mevkiine Yerleştirilmesine Dair Karar (L.N. 9056)”, **Resmi Gazete**, 18662 (February 1989): 1-2.

⁴⁴⁵ “Sivas’ta Selden 10 Kişi Öldü”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 11, 1966, 1.

⁴⁴⁶ “Divriği ile Dazlak Arası Trafiğe Kapatıldı”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 13, 1966, 7.

⁴⁴⁷ [Sivas’ın Divriği İlçe Merkezinde Meydana Gelen Su Baskınında Zarara Uğrayan 7 Aileye Yapılacak İnşaat Yardımı], January 4, 1967, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 202-2-13.

⁴⁴⁸ [Sivas’ın Divriği İlçesinde Meydana Gelen Selden Zarar Gören Ailelerin Aynı İlçe İçerisinde Başka Bir Yere Yerleştirilmeleri], April 8, 1968, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 218-26-8.

CHP. The general elections of 1950, 1954 and 1957 resulted in a landslide victory for the DP. Then, the AP (*Adalet Partisi/ Justice Party*), the descendant of the DP, led the general elections of 1965 and 1969. In particular, the wealth tax laid by the CHP during WWII was a great burden on the rural population and the DP coming to power after the war offered lots of promises to the peasants, so it gained their support.

“After WWII, Europe fell into a major crisis and Turkey was faced with great depression, poverty and famine, and people were exposed to heavy taxes. The Democrat Party came out with the slogan to be democrat, and the nation preferred a change and voted for a different party. Based on the American Marshall Plan, Western aid flew to the country⁴⁴⁹. The Democrat Party made people believe that they would build dams, roads and hospitals through the funds of the country and people thereby turned to a new party because of poverty during the single-party period. After winning some elections, the oppressive and dictatorial attitudes of the party gradually escalated, and units such as the Fatherland Front and Investigation Commission emerged. Thus, after 1957, the nation gradually began to withdraw its support from the Democrat Party. After the 1960 Revolution, they began to take on the role of victim due to the executions. This time, the Justice Party came to power alone with a large majority in the 1965 elections. In brief, the political atmosphere of the whole country was in parallel with the results of the local elections in Divriği” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

The policy carried out by the DP and the AP consecutively made a considerable impact on the rural population in Divriği as well⁴⁵⁰. The peasants in poverty welcomed the new parties warmly. Contrary to common belief, Alevis constituting the major part of the overall population town took sides with right-wing parties until the 1970s and won the elections in Divriği as in many administrative regions of Turkey at that time. However, the CHP gained support mostly from Sunnis. Then, they shifted to the right due to the denominational conflicts exacerbated towards the very end of the 1970s.

“Until the 1960s and 1970s, the Sunni community in Divriği supported the CHP because of their love for İsmet İnönü. The peasants, on the other hand, took sides with Menderes, mostly because of the difficulties of the period including the wealth tax and the policies implemented by the CHP, and the AP and the DP were predominantly the first parties in the villages. In contrast to the villages, the CHP gained more support in the town centre, but after the 1970s, especially through the enlightenment and the movement of the 68 generation. The mood in the country was one of reawakening or resurrection of a commitment to the left, so the left started to predominate in Divriği as well. Alevis in the rural areas fell under the influence of such groups that turned out to be successful in channeling the revived denominational controversy and they dissociated themselves from right-wing parties and accordingly, this time, there was the tendency to support the CHP. After Bülent Ecevit took over the party following the struggle against İnönü, the support for the CHP increased substantially” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

⁴⁴⁹ When the Marshall Plan was enacted, the CHP was in power. However, the DP is believed to have been responsible for receiving the financial aid from the USA since it was on the rise in the late 1940s.

⁴⁵⁰ See table 47.

Table 47: List of Mayors of Divriği

Name of the Mayor	Period of Office	Political Party/Office
Halil Efendi	1929- 1930	CHP
Ziya Tevrüz	1933-1938	CHP
Rıza Divrik	1940-1942	CHP
Tevfik Koraltan	1942-1947	CHP
Ahmet Ural	1947-1948	CHP
Rıza Divrik	1948-1950	CHP
Şeref Muratoğlu	1950-1955	DP
Sait Aygün	1955-1959	DP
Kemal Katipoğlu	1960-1960	District Governor
Cahit Divrik	1960-1960	Deputy
İbrahim Karagöz	1961-1961	-
Fikri Erdoğan	1961-1961	Vice Fiscal Director
Yurdare Aydoğan	1961-1962	-
Fikri Erdoğan	1962-1962	Vice Fiscal Director
Samî Sönmez	1962-1963	-
Salih Şahin	1963-1963	-
Mustafa Erbaş	1963-1963	Captain
G. Gürbüz Özyazıcıoğlu	1963-1963	-
Kemal Budak	1963-1967	DP
A. Hüseyin Değer	1978-1980	CHP
Hasan Sürer	1980-1980	Captain
Abdurrahman Dinçer	1980-1981	-
Mevlüt Danacı	1981-1981	District Governor
İbrahim Erhan	1981-1983	District Governor
Hayri Türk	1983-1983	Deputy
Sait Eker	1983-1984	-
Muharrem Yağbasan	1984-1999	SODEP-SHP-CHP
Mehmet Güresinli	1999-2009	ANAP-AKP
Hakan Gök	2009-	CHP

Divriği Tabiat Varlıklarını Koruma ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Derneği, “Belediye Başkanlarımız”, <http://www.divrigiderneği.com/dosya.asp?KID=4>.

The 1960 and the 1980 military coups suspended democracy for a few years. The officers of the military junta, district governor or some other public officials took the mayor's office and ruled the district until the elections were held. Following both military coups, in 1963 and 1984 local elections were held. Finally, there is no information about who was elected between 1967 and 1978.

3.7.2 The Local Government

3.7.2.1 Divriği Municipality in the 1980s and 1990s: Muharrem Yağbasan and His Contribution to Municipalism

After the military coup of 1980, leftist fractions started to recover their strength. In addition, mass organisations and the trade union were trying to get stronger than ever. As Divriği is a workers' town, the trade union served as the driving force and it was one of the leading powers to determine the political atmosphere of the town. In this respect, Muharrem Yağbasan, the candidate put up as the mayor of the town by SODEP (*Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi/ Social Democracy Party*), was the one on which all components of the leftist groups agreed and they all did their best to get him to win the election for the mayor's office. Based on the results of the 1984 local election, only ANAP (*Anavatan Partisi/ Motherland Party*) and SODEP contested the election and Yağbasan gained the majority by 247 votes. He was elected by four points, 52% to 48%⁴⁵¹. He became the mayoral candidate of the SHP (*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti/ Social Democratic Populist Party*) in two consecutive elections and defeated his rivals by rising his own votes. Both right-wing and left-wing took part in the election again under a joint candidate in 1989. He gained support from the majority of the electorate by 367 votes and 52% to 48%⁴⁵². As to the 1994 election, the candidates of three right-wing parties fell behind Yağbasan by 750 votes⁴⁵³. Thus, the left could reach success after the military intervention of 1980 leaving a deep imprint, especially on left-wing politics. The victory in the mayoral election for leftists also gave them hope to consolidate their self-confidence and change the political trajectory of both the town and the country.

⁴⁵¹ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, "The Results of Elections of Local Administrations: 25.3.1984" (Ankara, 1984).

⁴⁵² Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, "The Results of Elections of Local Administrations: 26.3.1989" (Ankara, 1989).

⁴⁵³ YSK, 27 Mart 1994 Mahalli İdareler Genel Seçimi Belediye Başkanlığı Seçimi Sonuçları, <https://ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/docs/Mahalli/1994/KesinSecimSonuclari/1994-Belediye-Baskanligi-Secimleri-Sonucu.pdf>.

“Despite a tremendous amount of pressure, Yağbasan's winning the election helped people rebuild self-confidence. It is certain that he did extremely successful work, especially in infrastructure and water problems in his first term of office. After the electoral victory for İstanbul in 1989, Mayor Nurettin Sözen also provided vehicles such as buses and trucks for our town, which helped him deal with the problems. Above all, we became more self-confident and his victory made us think that we could come to power one day. After his second term, especially in his third office, whenever we meet, I always tell him that we could have established the second model of Fatsa⁴⁵⁴ if had acted in a politically different manner. He might have got tired, so in his last term he couldn't contribute a great deal to the town” (Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş, Former Worker, 1974-1980/ City Councilor in İstanbul Municipality, 2019-&).

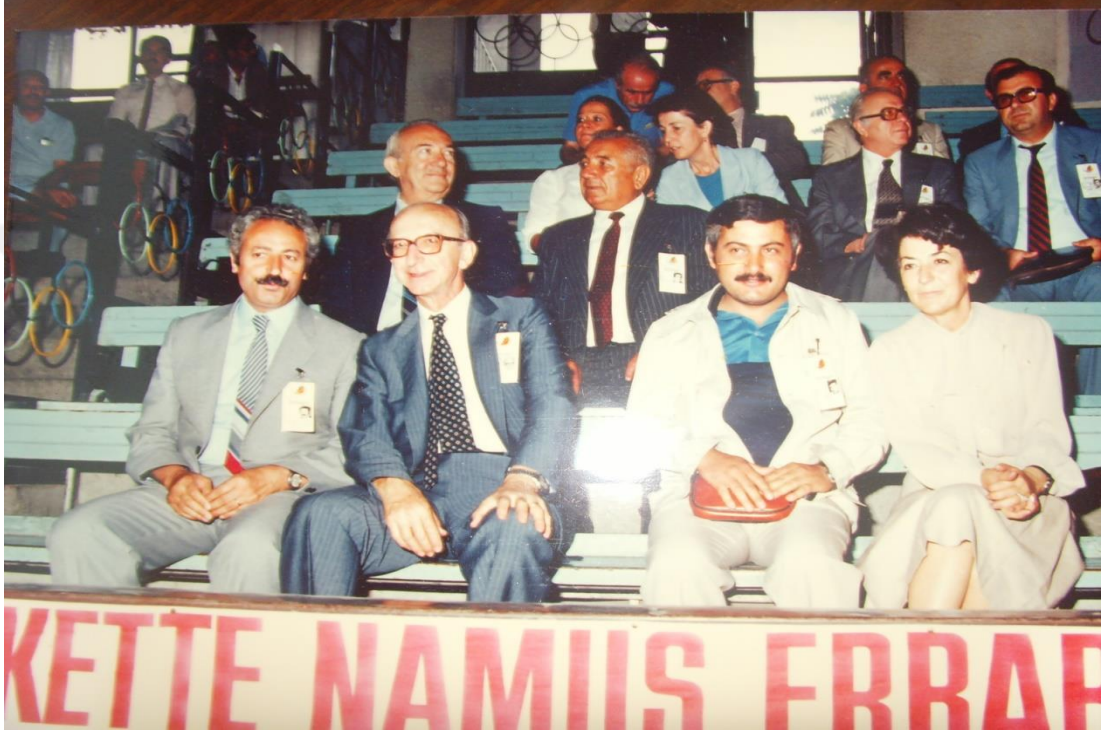


Figure 35: Muharrem Yağbasan (on the left) with the Chairman of the SHP, Erdal İnönü

Personal Archives of Muharrem Yağbasan

He was the first elected mayor with Alevi identity. That he grew up in a village made him serve as a bridge between the urban zone and the periphery. One of the most noticeable services he brought to Divriği was that he met the expectations of some villages to reach the roads which had not been made by the governors of the province. Nonetheless, he didn't have to deal with the affairs of the villages and went above and

⁴⁵⁴ In the 1979 local election, the socialist Fikri Sönmez (Fikri the tailor) won the election in Fatsa, a district of Ordu, and his contribution to municipalism is a very typical example of participatory and democratic model in Turkey.

beyond his duty as the matters related to villages were within the jurisdiction of the Special Provincial Administration.

“The municipality could not legally help the villages. Normally, the Directorate of Rural Services was supposed to do. The municipal workers took the construction equipment with them and worked on both Saturday and Sunday. If they had complained about the municipality, they would have conducted an investigation about it. Nevertheless, I didn’t give anybody an opportunity. I stated that the villagers had deposited their money and put their diesel fuel. As a result, village roads were built on Saturdays and Sundays” (Muharrem Yağbasan, Former Mayor, 1984-1999).

Apart from helping the peasants, he carried out the works which no mayors in past had implemented. “During his three terms he had been a very influential character. He had new roads constructed. The municipality had no heavy equipment and he provided them for benefit of the people” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

“The existence of trade unions and democratic mass organisations contributed to the solution of problems through consensus. Indeed, everything was done in Divriği during the period of Muharrem Yağbasan, but by means of mass organisations. Service buildings and infrastructure were completed in his time” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper 1978-still working).

Another important contribution of Muharrem Yağbasan’s municipality to Divriği can be observed in the field of cultural policies. ‘Mining Culture and Art Festival’ which was first organised in 1984 was held uninterruptedly until 1992.

“Yağbasan contributed a lot to Divriği. One of his most important contributions was the cultural events he used to organise. In the summer, a festival would be held every year. It helped bring close together all people and enabled them to have a culture of solidarity” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

However, the festival could not be held in 1993 when the Madımak Massacre took place in Sivas and Muharrem Yağbasan couldn’t organise it anymore as long as he was the mayor of the district. While making a statement to the press in 1995, he laid emphasis on the importance of the festival and objected to the decision taken by the district governor as to why they prevented them from holding the festival:

“Culture and art activities are as important and necessary as other services are for all of us to have a healthy life ... The recent events in Divriği have devastated us. Despite all the obstacles, we insist to hold the Mining Festivals. However, the district governor threatens us. He says that if any incident occurs, he will hold us responsible. Then, we cannot do it with the concern that we will be held responsible in case of provocation. We do not want the security forces to protect us and take precautions. We ensure our own safety. However, we still fear provocation. Currently, there is not an extraordinary situation in Divriği. However, the Gendarmerie Special Operations (*Jandarma Özel Harekât*) has still established a base in the district centre”⁴⁵⁵.

⁴⁵⁵ “Gayriresmî Olağanüstü Hal: Divriği’de Maden Şenliğine Yasak”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 7, 1995, 4.

In the following years, the festival was held in 2004 and 2006 by the branches of the Divriği Cultural Association headquartered in İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Antalya. In both years, the mayor from AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/ Justice and Development Party*) taking over the office from Muharrem Yağbasan didn't support the organisation. Then, in 2012, 2013 and 2014 the festival was arranged again, but that a bombing attack occurred in Suruç, Şanlıurfa overshadowed the festival in 2015 and the Divriği Cultural Association decided not to arrange it. Since then, the permission to hold the festival has not been granted because of safety reasons.

3.7.2.2 1999-2004 Local Elections: Disassociation From Rural Population

Until 1999 when the local election was held, democratic mass organisations and leftist parties were coming together to determine a common candidate, and elections were being held with that candidate. In the 1999 election, the CHP said it would nominate its own candidate, and thereupon it was thought that the aforesaid organisations had to reunite and enter the election under an independent candidate because the candidate proposed by the CHP was not suitable for them. The leading parties not supporting the candidate of the CHP and deciding to put up a candidate were EMEP (*Emek Partisi/ Labour Party*) and the ÖDP (*Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi/ Freedom and Solidarity Party*). However, the candidate of EMEP withdrew from the election. In the meantime, since the chairman of the ÖDP Ufuk Uras is from Divriği, he placed a great deal of importance on the local elections in 1999. The party thereby nominated a retired teacher as an independent candidate for the mayor's office and he received a high percentage of the valid votes⁴⁵⁶. However, many people agreed that left parties lost out to ANAP due to disagreement over the joint candidate of the left.

“In 1999, to break the power and resistance of the CHP in the local administration, they recruited many workers from outside, especially from Kangal and Sivas. In this way, they helped the ANAP candidate win the election by influencing the district's numerical arithmetic. They reduced the strength of the left potential in the enterprise, took over the union, and the privatisation rush began. In the 1999 elections, as in the previous period, parties such as the ÖDP and EMEP had views on the candidate's profile in accordance with social democratic criteria, but the CHP did not agree with this and stated that they would determine their candidates as they wanted, claiming that it was a big party. Therefore, there was a conflict of opinion and those parties had to nominate their candidates. EMEP withdrew its own candidate, but the ÖDP put up its own candidate independently. Thus, the mayor's office was forfeited due to wrong policies” (Sayit Özcan, Retired Worker, 1979-2002).

⁴⁵⁶ See table 48.

Table 48: 1999 Local Election in Divriği

Name of the Party	Total Votes
ANAP	2.211
CHP	2.176
FP	1.246
DYP	1.049
Independent Candidate	920
DSP	176
EMEP	54
DTP	32
Number of Valid Votes	7.864
Voter Turnout	8.239
Total Number of Registered Voters	9.746

YSK, 18 Nisan 1999 Mahalli İdareler Genel Seçimi Belediye Başkanlığı Seçimi Sonuçları, <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/docs/Mahalli/1999/BelediyeBaskanligi/Pdf/1999Mahalli-BelediyeBsk-Sivas.pdf>.

It is certain that there are a few reasons why the independent candidate lost the election. After the military coup of 1980, the CHP was banned and the SHP taking over from the CHP also put forward social democratic ideas by embracing a range of left-wing ideas. However, when the SHP and the CHP merged in 1996, the merged party CHP seemed to have kept away from the left-wing view the SHP had pursued. On the other hand, Alevis make up the majority of the population in Divriği and they often tend to vote for the CHP putting forward the founding principles of the Republican regime. The CHP taking this fact into consideration seemed to have imposed on the locals to vote for their own candidate. Therefore, they treated this matter very well and claimed that if the people stood up for the independent candidate, they would split the votes and the CHP would lose the election ending up with the victory of a right-wing party.

“After the SHP had joined the CHP, the CHP didn’t turn to the left-wing principles. The people in Divriği, who were leftist, revolutionary, and democratic had resigned from the SHP disapproving of the ideas of the recent period of the party. However, the CHP came into existence with a new organisation and the candidate they determined was not a candidate believing in the left-oriented organisation. Then, we tried to reach a decision by general consensus on a common candidate, yet they undermined the process. They stated that they would put up their own candidate and sooner or later we would support him, so they dictated it to us. Believing in our organisational structure coming from the past against this attitude, we put up our own candidate, too. There was a great deal of serious work, some committees were formed and we could reach

voters in each neighbourhood. The CHP candidate received votes especially due to the old people's loyalty to the CHP and Atatürk. In addition, the former mayor Muharrem Yağbasan coming out for our candidate in the beginning withdrew his support from us by stating that he was a member of the CHP, so he gave into the party's demands" (Ali Ekber Gündüz, Retired Worker, 1985-2015).

Contrary to what some leftist groups, the former mayor was a member of the CHP and helped the candidate of his party win the election even if he was prevented from making a contribution to the campaign because of the CHP candidate whom many people thought was not the right one for the mayor's office. In addition, it was surprising that the votes cast for the council member candidates of the party outnumbered the ones for the CHP's mayoral candidate, which shows that approval for the candidate was not given by the CHP voters.

"I was a mayoral candidate from my party for three consecutive terms, it was not possible for me to leave it and support another candidate. First of all, it was not ethical and would not conform to my principles. If I had given him support, I would not have convinced the ones who voted for the CHP. A week before the election was held, I put out feelers for the sake of the CHP candidate. It is said that the independent candidate would have won the election if I hadn't taken sides with the CHP candidate, but it was very difficult for them to get the better of the other candidate. The CHP candidate was holding house meetings in the neighbourhoods. I said I would join and support him. However, our candidate Zeynel Yayla told me not to come by claiming that people were angry with me and he would lose the election because of me. Hereupon, I didn't go and I wished him luck to win it, so I could not give much support. In fact, I gave it, but they didn't take my words into consideration. Some said that he messed me over and despite this, I told them to vote for him. For instance, 15-20 people within the municipality would not vote and they told me to go to talk to them. When I went to talk to them, they stated that they would not vote on the pretext of the way I was treated. Then, I asked if that candidate would be worse than Mehmet Güresinli. They said he would be worse and thereupon, I decided not to get involved in the issue anymore. To tell the truth, he did not do anybody harm and discriminate against anyone, but he did not work. Then, I told the current district head of the party Hüsamettin Kırkayak that they would not vote for Yayla and I suggested that he get together those people and talk to them so that he could convince them to vote for him by asking if he was more distant from them than Güresinli was and why they were taking action against him. He was at a meeting when they informed him about that. Next, he told them to convene that group in order that he could go to talk to them. He came to the convention hall of the municipality, looked around and asked if they were members of the CHP. If so, he stated that they would vote for him sooner or later and left the hall. He didn't even express himself by not saying that he would not mess them over and it wouldn't be good if they voted for the other side. He lost the election due to his own individual mistakes. In addition, the votes for the mayor were almost 80 less than the votes cast for the council members. It thereby means that the voters regarded the CHP candidate for mayor's office as inadequate" (Muharrem Yağbasan, Former Mayor, 1984-1999).

As to the local election which took place in 2004, for the first time the CHP didn't determine its candidate based on the primary election that had been held until that time, which sparked off reaction from the followers of the party. Thereupon, many of them decided not to vote for the candidate of the party Gazi Orhan Türkyılmaz, a teacher,

even though he was well-known among the people of the town, and accordingly, the mayor from ANAP in the previous election won it again as a candidate of the AKP⁴⁵⁷.

“Until then, the candidate had been determined by primary election in the district party organisation of the CHP in Divriği, but in 2004, they announced their own candidate by appointment. When determined by appointment, that caused a great reaction. The leftist organisations stated that they would not nominate a candidate for mayor’s office, but only candidates for municipal council and they let the people vote for whomever they wanted in the local election. At that time, Muharrem Yağbasan and a few other candidates for nomination showed up, but the candidate was appointed without even a primary election and everybody came out against the appointment. For instance, a group within the CHP did not take their proponents to the ballot box or they did not let them vote for the candidate appointed by the party. That’s why they faced internal reckoning and the same mayor from ANAP winning the previous election achieved one more again as a candidate of the AKP. Consequently, he won the election not because of his services, but because of the internal affairs of the CHP. Nevertheless, the CHP voters passed the buck to other left-wing parties believed to split the votes” (Ali Ekber Gündüz, Retired Worker, 1985-2015).

Table 49: 2004 Local Election in Divriği

Name of the Party	Total Votes
AKP	3.532
CHP	3.179
DSP	89
BTP	68
IP	93
Number of Valid Votes	6.951
Voter Turnout	7.488
Total Number of Registered Voters	10.683

YSK, 28 Mart 2004 Mahalli İdareler Genel Seçimi Belediye Başkanlığı Seçimi Sonuçları, <https://www.ysk.gov.tr/doc/dosyalar/docs/Mahalli/2004/BelediyeBaskanligi/Pdf/2004Mahalli-BelediyeBsk-Sivas.pdf>.

Even if the mayor from right-wing parties was elected for two electoral periods, contrary to what was believed by the leftwingers, nobody was fired from the municipality.

“In the local government, the important thing is to balance the income-expenditure balance and the so-called balanced budget is a correct event. This is perhaps the problem of all municipalities. When I took office, the municipality had some debt and the loans of İlbank (*İller Bankası*) were used. However, I do not accept it as a superfluous loan because the municipal service building was built, most of the drinking water supply was renovated, the municipal hotel was built and a petrol station was established. Accordingly, a loan was raised to do what the municipality was supposed to do. It is certain that when I became the mayor, I tried to balance the budget, but I did not want any workers to be unemployed, even if the number of workers was higher than we expected it to be. It consisted of 117 workers and it should have been 45-50, so I thought about

⁴⁵⁷ See table 49.

reducing it to that point by retiring some of them in the long term. In this respect, I didn't want anybody to be fired. In the meantime, an important service for the district that we did was to have some monuments restored and I made a great deal of effort for that apart from the municipality's main responsibilities to deal with the roads and water drainage" (Mehmet Güresinli, Former Mayor, 1999-2009).

By the time a right-wing party won the local election, Muharrem Yağbasan in his term of office had brought service even to villages. However, when the candidate of the right-wing party was elected as the mayor of the town, he didn't bring service to the villagers by due course of law. However, according to Alevi people living in the villages, the reason why the mayor had not helped the predominantly Alevi villages was that he adhered to the Sunni tradition and discriminated against them.

"The candidate of the Motherland Party, Mehmet Güresinli, served as the district head for years, and when he was elected, he did not take on a partisan attitude towards the staff, but we can say that he was more partisan in terms of service. For example, a grader was bought for the municipality at that time. The purpose was to provide services for the villages, but they did not. Until that time, in Divriği the services for the villages were going on at a slow pace because the right-wing mayors came, and they were trying to close this gap with the municipality. There were setbacks. When the villages needed something, although they were not part of the municipality, the municipality brought service to the villages as best it could, but this came to a full stop with the arrival of the Motherland Party and leftist neighbourhoods went through disruptions in service. Their motto was that if you support the candidate of the ruling party, Divriği will develop and make progress. Investments were not made and nothing was done after the great services of Yağbasan who ruled the city for 3 electoral periods. To sum up, Divriği would make the most of the ruling party, but nothing happened" (Ali Ekber Gündüz, Retired Worker, 1985-2015).

3.7.2.3 Central-Local Relationship within the Scope of Municipality Revenues

The mining industry plays a prominent role in the economy of the town and it has contributed a lot to the economic growth and annual revenue of the mayor's office. However, this revenue was not given to the municipality for a while. The municipality share would be reserved for an amount of 2% of the gross balance sheet profit stated in parallel with the sub-clause (b) of the article 97 of the Municipality Revenues Law numbered 2464⁴⁵⁸. Later, this rate was reduced to an amount of 0.2% and accordingly, the article 33 of the Mining Law numbered 3213 which was amended in 2004 stipulates that in case the area where the ore is produced is within the boundaries of the municipality and neighbouring areas, a profit for an amount of 0.2% of the annual sales amount of the ore produced is paid by the license holder to the municipality⁴⁵⁹.

⁴⁵⁸ "Belediye Gelirleri Kanunu (L.N. 2464)", **Resmi Gazete**, 17354 (May 1981): 1-18.

⁴⁵⁹ "Maden Kanunu'nda ve Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına İlişkin Kanun (L.N.5177)", **Resmi Gazete**, 25483 (June 2004).

When the former mayor Mehmet Güresinli took over the mayor's office, he addressed this issue:

“Divriği mines provide the raw materials for heavy industry, but when I took office, I found out that it did not contribute to the municipality and I looked into the reason for this. In compliance with the 1983 Municipal Revenues Law which was amended, the district municipality had the right to benefit from the mines. According to that law, if the mines and quarries are within the boundaries of the municipality, 2 percent of the gross profit should be given to the municipality and if this mine or quarry is outside the municipality boundaries, it was stipulated that this 2 percent of the same profit ought to be given to Special Provincial Administration. However, as just the gross profit was written in the law, this enterprise seemed not to have yielded any gross profit through the newly issued regulations. Because on that day, all kinds of expenses or investments made with the regulation on the gross profit rate account were recorded as expenses, even the balance sheet was also combined. When it moved into a gross profit, that gross profit was compensated with new investment and therefore no profit was given to the municipality. When I started my duty in 1999, the prime minister was Mesut Yilmaz. I had a friend, İbrahim Hamulu, a civil engineer from Divriği, we went to Ankara to talk to him and I explained to him the situation. He assigned the deputy chairman of that time, Ahat Andican, to look after us and we asked for a change in the law. We told them that the gross profit should not be included and an amount of 2 percent of the turnover of the mine should be given. A legal regulation was made but it did not work out as we wanted because this time, the word ‘gross profit’ was ruled out and instead they opted for the profit of the sales of the run-of-mine. Also, they didn’t approve 2%, but 0,2%. In the previous law, if the mine or quarry was within the boundaries of the municipality, it was essential to give it to the municipality, but it would be given out of the gross profit. In other words, with this amendment they might have wanted not only Divriği but also the whole region of Sivas to benefit from the revenues of the mine. I think following this amendment in the law Divriği Municipality started to receive the share of the mine in the last 3 years of my duty” (Mehmet Güresinli, Former Mayor, 1999-2009).

Taking what the former mayor said into consideration, the state enterprise pretended to operate at a loss and Divriği couldn’t benefit from the profit in question for a while. However, it is claimed that the enterprise reported an increase in profits after it had been privatised:

“In the past, the state enterprise was constantly recording a loss and accordingly they did not give a profit of 0,2% at the time of loss because the law says that if they make a profit, they can give it to the local government. Now the private firms give us the amount of 0,2% because they make a profit” (Hakan Gök, Mayor, 2009-still in office).

The municipality had the right to receive a part of the benefits that the enterprise was supposed to provide. According to public opinion, the main reason why the municipality didn’t make the most of the profit of the enterprise was that the people in Divriği are mostly leftists and Alevis. Karabük benefited from the profit, but the enterprise in Divriği pretended to sustain a loss and the town was punished due to the identity of the people.

“I took the case to the court of law. The law stipulated that you would get a certain amount of the profit but the managers of the enterprise claimed that their accounts recorded a loss and consequently they didn’t want to not give the profit to the municipality. They had a profit made in KARDEMİR. Even after me, Mehmet Güresinli had a meeting with the manager of the enterprise and said that the profit should be given to the municipality by the enterprise. The manager asked him if he hadn’t come over when I was mayor. He stated that Mehmet Güresinli

had told him not to give me money and he had said otherwise it would have been given to PKK. Thereupon, he asked how it was possible to give it to the municipality. After that, the manager sent him away” (Muharrem Yağbasan, Former Mayor, 1984-1999).

3.7.2.4 Demands for More Integration into the Centre: Transformation into a City

The people of Divriği demanded in different periods that the town should be made a province. It was first put into words on the occasion of Minister of Interior Namık Gedik’s visit to Divriği on September 15, 1958 when he signed the book of honour of the mining enterprise through the following words:

“In line with the progress that our country has achieved in every field in our civil organisation in the near future, upon this visit, on behalf of my esteemed prime minister Adnan Menderes, I am honoured to convey to the people of Divriği our government’s decision on the fact that Divriği would be turned into a province”⁴⁶⁰.

This reached its peak especially in the 1950s and 1960s when one of the four founding members of the Democrat Party, Refik Koraltan, served as the speaker of the Grand National Assembly. Committees from Divriği visited him lots of times⁴⁶¹.



Figure 36: Delegation from Divriği with Refik Koraltan

Anonymous

The common thread of all these visits brought all the members of each committee close together even though they all put forward different political ideologies.

⁴⁶⁰ Ankara Divriğililer Cemiyeti, *Yeşil Divriği ve Davamız* (Ankara: Akademi Matbaası, 1959), 28.

⁴⁶¹ See figure 36.

“We went to Ankara before the 1955 election. I was the youngest of the delegation. I was the president of the Association of Beautification of Divriği. We were 50 people in the delegation. Let me count who comes into my mind: Mayor Şeref Muratoğlu, Yakup Pancaroğlu, Draper Uzun Osman, Kemal Topçuoğlu, Mufti Ziya Hodja, Lütfü Avcıoğlu, Mustafa Çankaya, Bekir Armitak, Vızır Dede from Anzahar, Mustafa Gazioğlu... We went to the office of Refik Koraltan. We asked for a dam to be built in Mursal for the irrigation of Divriği. The deceased Uzun Osman stood up: “Our 50-year-old trees are dry. We want water” he said. In addition, he said, "Your Highness, I invite you to Divriği and I will cook rice in your honor. We left him and went to the prime minister's building. Adnan Menderes told the delegation that Divriği would be a province... We went to the Ministry of Interior. He also said that Divriği would be a province. The Minister of Interior was considered our fellow townsman. He was Namık Gedik from Arapkir”⁴⁶².



Figure 37: Delegation From Divriği with Adnan Menderes

Anonymous

In the draft prepared by the Ministry of Interior and sent to the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 8, 1959, it was stated that Divriği had to become a province along with other 11 towns⁴⁶³. This question was not brought forward till 1991 when the SHP deputies introduced a bill on making Divriği a province and called on the parliament to establish a district called Çetinkaya⁴⁶⁴.

⁴⁶² “Hüseyin Gençdal: Mursal Barajının Geçmişini ve Eski Belediye Başkanlarını Anlatıyor”. **Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi**. September 1, 2012, 3.

⁴⁶³ Gökhan Atılgan et al, **Osmanlı’dan Günümüze Türkiye’de Siyasal Hayat** (İstanbul: Yordam Kitap, 2015), 429.

⁴⁶⁴ “3 Yeni İl Önerisi”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, December 5, 1991, 5.

Following the decision taken by the Municipal Council of Divriği in 1992, the mayor and district governor applied to the Governorship of Sivas to make Divriği a province by justifying their decision as follows:

“Divriği is said to be a place that is 184 km from Sivas Province which it is affiliated to and that it has roughly the same distance as Erzincan, Malatya and Elazığ in its surroundings. However, 52 cities are closer to each other than Divriği is to Sivas. Due to the problems in transportation regarding the distance, commuting causes both loss of time and labour. When Divriği becomes a province, İliç and Kemaliye districts which are part of Erzincan, Arapkir in Malatya and Çetinkaya Sub-district in Kangal should be turned into districts under the Province of Divriği”⁴⁶⁵.

Moreover, they also stated that people who had migrated before would return and migration would become controlled. Upon this demand, the governor submitted the report to the Ministry of Interior⁴⁶⁶.

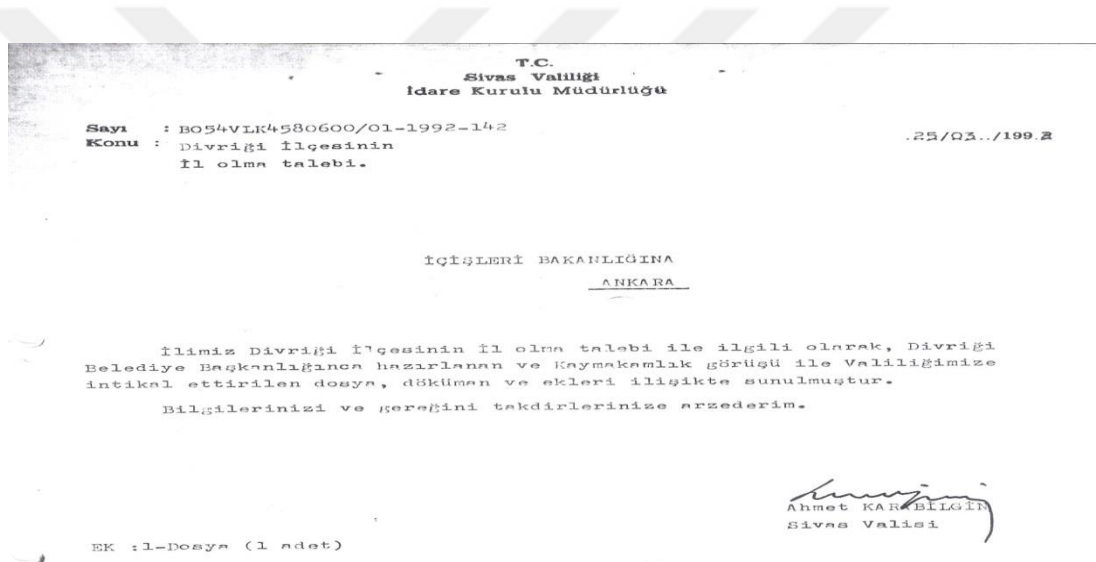


Figure 38: Governor’s Petition To the Ministry of Interior about Divriği District To Be Made a Province

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım

To the Ministry of Interior,

Enclosed are the files, documents and attachments prepared by Divriği Municipality upon the demand of Divriği District to become a province and transferred to our governorship along with with the opinion of the district governor. I hereby submit this requisition for your approval. Governor of Sivas Ahmet Karabilgin⁴⁶⁷.

⁴⁶⁵ Divriği Belediyesi Meclis Kararı (No. 2, February 12, 1992). Divriği Belediye Başkanlığı, “İl Olma İstemi (Sivas İl Makamına)” (No. 258, March 24, 1992).

⁴⁶⁶ See figure 38.

⁴⁶⁷ Sivas Valiliği İdare Kurulu Müdürlüğü, “Divriği İlçesinin İl Olma Talebi”, No. B054VLK4580600/01-1992-142, March 25, 1993. See figure 38.

In 1992, in the absence of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü had welcomed a delegation of 150 people from Divriği just before a few days before the formal report was submitted to the Ministry of Interior. They conveyed their message that Divriği should be made a province and the folk singer Murtaza Yalçın invented a song by playing saz, the traditional musical instrument of the region, so as to make their desire officially known⁴⁶⁸.



Figure 39: Folk Music Singer Murtaza Yalçın Singing While Asking İnönü to Make Divriği a Province

Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 15.02.1992.

In 1993, Deputy Prime Minister Murat Karayalçın made a promise to the Divriği delegation visiting himself that it would be created as a province and he said that Divriği had become the capital and a cultural centre and it thereby deserved to become a province. In 1997, President Süleyman Demirel welcomed another delegation including the CHP deputy Mahmut Işık⁴⁶⁹. He said that in terms of the administrative division Turkey would be subdivided into 100 provinces in the following years and would thereby keep his promise for Divriği to become a province. He also added that he had talked to the members of the government and nobody would refrain from living up to their promise as Divriği was one of the foremost districts taken into consideration

⁴⁶⁸ “Sazlı Sözlü İl İsteği”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, February 15, 1992, 4. See figure 39.

⁴⁶⁹ See figure 40.

However, he asked them to keep insisting on their demand and to be a bit patient for a while⁴⁷⁰.



**Figure 40: Delagation from Divriği
with President Süleyman Demirel (November 27, 1997)**

Personal Archives of Muharrem Yağbasan

The foundation of the state-owned enterprise contributed a lot to the growth of the town, especially in socio-economic space. However, the town experienced this expansion in itself and could establish its connection with the external world only through the road to Sivas and the railway line. It didn't have any road connections to the neighbouring towns in both Erzincan and Malatya.

“The neighbouring districts in Sivas, Erzincan and Malatya did not allow Divriği to become a province. However, the major problem was the lack of transport connectivity. Divriği could have been a province, but those districts did not have an access to Divriği. People would come to the town centre to meet their needs. Therefore, the lack of a road was the biggest obstacle to become a province. There was only railway transportation between Sivas and Erzurum, which was built in 1938. Apart from that, it didn't have an access to the other zones” (Duran Önder, Engineer).

“Personally, Divriği was not a suitable place to become a province. There are no districts that can be connected. Which districts will you connect? Will you incorporate Kangal or Zara which seem closer to us? There are no districts to be linked. Kangal is 80 km from Sivas, and 100 km from Divriği. Likewise, Zara is 100 km from us and 60 km from Sivas. Therefore, in addition to political reasons, as a location of the town, it was not possible to become a province” (Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş, Former Worker, 1974-1980/ City Councilor in İstanbul Municipality, 2019-&).

⁴⁷⁰ “Gençlere İrtica Uyarısı”, **Hürriyet Gazetesi**, November 28, 1997.

Upon each request made to the governments coming to power, Divriği has not been made a province. If it had become a province, it would have contributed to the aforementioned districts in the neighbouring provinces. Nowadays, Divriği has a long-established commercial relationship with Arapkir which is 80 km from Divriği. Lots of fruit and vegetables growing in Arapkir are sold at the market of Divriği. Likewise, the people from İliç maintain their commercial relations with the ones from Divriği and they waste lots of time because of the distance between the district and Erzincan, which does not fit into the economic interests of the people. Hence, the new centre around Divriği could have led to an economic boom and the people going to other metropolitan cities could have come back to their hometowns. In other words, Divriği could have acted as a commercial centre between the East and the West.

3.7.3 Escalation of Political Conflict from the 1970s to the 1990s

3.7.3.1 Political Tension During the 1970s: Denominational Issue

Until the 1970s, most of the people living in the centre of the town were right-wing whereas the peasants leading a life in rural areas were predominantly left-wing. However, the political balance of the town underwent a change because of the fact that peasants living on the periphery of the town were recruited into the mining industry. The main reason why Divriği was associated with a leftist tendency is that industrialisation intertwined with the working class and that the peasants employed in the mines embraced Alevi religious belief. Accordingly, the workers living in nearby neighbourhoods or staying in workers' dormitory incorporated their class identity into the urban area, which helped the pro-labour approach to spread.

The mobility of Alevi population living in the countryside brought about an increasing social interaction with Sunni dwellers of the town centre. There were hardly any Alevi craftsmen and that they wanted to set up shops pitted them against Sunni craftsmen. There was a growing conflict of interest, so they didn't want Alevis to be integrated into urban life in which their economic activities prevailed. However, some Alevis were able to do so although with difficulty: "We were looking for shops and could not find any of them. Sunni shop owners didn't use to provide us with shops although most of them were old and dilapidated, so we felt obliged to pull some strings. In this way, we got the shops" (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

“I was thinking of opening a shop after I had come back from the military. The mukhtar asked me for a certificate of residence stating that I had been living somewhere for 6 months and which was required to give to the Directorate of Fiscal Services. How was it possible for a newcomer to have such a document? The mukhtar did not issue that document. Although the fiscal director of the fiscal services telephoned him, he didn’t step back and did not want to give it to me because our political ideas were different. Finally, the fiscal director solved the problem using his own initiative. I also would like to say one more thing. When I first started working, I rented a shop. At that time, some people from Divriği tried to dissuade the owner of the shop from renting to me even though I paid a deposit, but then he told them that he had given his word. In other words, the locals of the town centre didn’t want to rent their shops out to the people coming from the villages” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

Meanwhile, in the 1970s, the CHP adopted a position associated with the ideology of the centre-left and put forth socialist values to its *Kemalist* principles by highlighting the problems of urban workers, which appealed to the Alevi population wanting to gain ground in the urban space. However, the mobilisation of the population into the town centre caused both religious and political dissent. Religion turned into a political issue and political space played a fundamental role in the denominational difference. As it happened in each part of the country, the 1970s were also characterised by the tension between the left and the right in Divriği, and the district organisation of the CHP brought the Alevi image into the forefront in order to gather Alevi votes. This approach of the party escalated a great deal of tension between both groups.

“As it happened throughout Turkey, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, Divriği went through both internal and external migration. There were population flows from villages to the centre of Divriği. At that time, the locals played an active role in trade and craftsmanship in the centre of the town. That’s why it caused a great deal of conflict between two groups of people in terms of capital and income. They didn’t go along with the population flow from the villages and could not come to terms with it. This led to a political and denominational controversy among people. Through the effect of the atmosphere of that day, the right-left conflicts on the streets took place in Divriği as well. In the years 1977-78, when that process reached its peak, Alevi people who settled in the centre of the town and engaged in trade or craftsmanship made a decision through the CHP to boycott Sunni craftsmen, which brought about a very negative and incorrect separation among the people of the town. Although we, as the youth of that period, through all organised units such as Halkevleri, LİSE-DER and so on, conveyed to the CHP that it was wrong. This approach did not yield positive results in the first process and could not be prevented. It also increased the separation. Instead of the consolidation of the fact that the poor and working people, who had to act together as townsmen, should have lived together in peace and fraternity on the basis of being from Divriği as a district got a slap in the face. In those days, those who had nothing to do with political issues and prioritised their own political interests based on the denominational variable took a stand against the other religious group, closing their eyes to the future of the town. The climate of turmoil was not like the ones taking place in both Kahramanmaraş and Sivas, but there were minor street clashes and incidents bringing to mind” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

One of the most outstanding incidents occurring in Divriği is that a dynamite bomb was thrown at Hasanağa Mosque while the community was praying during the Qadr Night. In the aftermath of this event, the ones leaving the mosque and a crowd of people joining this group gathered in front of the district governorship building,

claiming that the leftists threw the explosive. A student was stabbed to death, 5 people got injured and 19 workplaces belonging to the Alevis were damaged by vandalism⁴⁷¹. In this regard, they intended to create havoc in the town by getting Alevis and Sunnis to clash with each other. Furthermore, in a joint press statement made by some CHP deputies regarding the events of Divriği, they claimed that the events had been carried out by the commandos from the Idealist Hearths and the Pan-Islamists longing for the theocratic state order. According to them, similar incidents in Divriği had been deliberately plotted by these groups and encouraged by the security forces. They added that the goal was to undermine the revolutionary structure of the people of Divriği and take revenge on the mass of people voting for the CHP. They also established an armed base by capturing the concentration plant with the employment of 600 people aimed at carrying out their bloody actions for three years with the help of the MC (*Milliyetçi Cephe/ National Front*) government. Süreyya Şeker, one of the managers of the Pelletising Plant, was caught red-handed by the soldiers while handing out plenty of weapons to his own supporters in the plant in order to break the strike of the workers of the town⁴⁷².

3.7.3.2 The 1980 Military Coup and Its Effect on Social and Political Space of the Town

The military coup of 1980 became a turning point in both social and political life as well as the economic life of the country. The suppressed social atmosphere established by the repressive military rule prevented people from claiming their rights. Non-governmental organisations including the trade union were closed down. Some leftist people believed to lead the political organisations were taken into custody and imprisoned.

“We had the same situation on May 27, before the military coup on September 12. We were working in shifts and we were at work at that time as the military coups usually happened at night or in the morning. On September 12, we left the workplace in the morning and while driving, we learned from the radio that the military seized the administration in the morning. On the way home, there were soldiers patrolling everywhere and the whole town was placed under curfew. We did not go out that day but the following day, we went along the streets through the patrol points, so the cars were constantly stopped and we showed our identity card... Many people were denounced to the military and arrested in Divriği. Legal proceedings generally did not take very long with a few exceptions. Not many people were sentenced and were acquitted of all accusations laid against them” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

⁴⁷¹ “Divriği’de Bir Caminin Yanında Patlayan Dinamit Olaylara Yol Açtı 1 Kişi Öldü”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 12, 1977, 1&9.

⁴⁷² “Divriği Olayını Ümmetçiler ve Komandolar yarattı”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 13, 1977, 1&9.

Towards the end of the 1970s, the union helped the working people concentrated in the enterprise to consolidate their class power by increasing their organisation. It also contributed to the termination of both religious and political discrimination in recruitment.

“We tried to put an end to the religious and political segregation that had existed in Divriği through our own union perspective. There were approaches that fuelled and nurtured this controversy in our present and previous periods. Denominational differences were taken to forefront for recruitment of the workers. They used to employ the people whom they thought were close to them and they didn’t care about others” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

They also took over the municipality governed by the mayor of the CHP winning the local election for the first time after the transition to a multi-party system. That the municipality was taken over by the CHP in the local election held in the late 1970s, contributed to the development of the growing labour movement in Divriği. The most destructive effect of the coup was that many people from other districts of Sivas and cities had been employed in the mining enterprise. As all these organisations lost their influence over the whole town, many workers were fired on the pretext that they had participated in the political activities, which accelerated the external migration to other cities.

“They recruited workers from outside in order to punish the people from Divriği. It is certain that all of these undermined the town. It both damaged the coexistence and affected the economic growth of the district. Thus, it also led to migration. In the past, when 2000 workers were employed, there would be workers from each village, thus the town used to benefit from employment and contribute to both workers’ families and the economic development of the town” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

“I was taken into custody on the night of September 12. Until the 7th month of 1987, I was in prison for about 7.5 years. We didn’t go through significant arrests and detentions due to the organised struggle. They only arrested some of our friends... At that time, people in Divriği took an admirable stance. The arrested friends also put up a remarkable resistance and they didn’t tell them any secrets. We underwent persecution and we were exposed to a great of violence, but we didn’t have many casualties. The closure of the trade union and disempowerment of the municipality weakened us in terms of organisation, so they deprived us of the rights we had acquired... After I got out of prison, they didn’t hire me again and I had to do other jobs ... In 1990, I was overwhelmed with anxiety of being detained and I had to migrate to İstanbul” (Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş, Former Worker, 1974-1980/ City Councilor in İstanbul Municipality, 2019-&).

The recruitment of Sunni workers from other regions made an enormous impact on social relationships between Alevis and Sunnis living in the centre of the town. This relationship established between Sunni craftsmen and the peasants was in sharp contrast to the one between them and Alevis with rural backgrounds becoming civil servants and workers after employment was created for them to work in the mining enterprise. Above all, the ones starting to work there after the 1970s felt themselves

not to have been welcomed. In the meantime, that in the 1980s many workers from other cities or districts of Sivas with a Sunni background were employed escalated the rupture of relations for a while and Alevis claimed that they had been welcomed more warmly by Sunni craftsmen: “Those men were going to Sivas to meet their needs. Nevertheless, they were trying to cherish those people more and treat them better than the people who had settled in Divriği for a long time. They were not aware of this fact. Maybe they realised this later, but it was too late” (Hüseyin Yalçın, Retired Worker, 1977-2000).

3.7.3.3 Political Violence During the 1990s: Oppression on Rural Population

The political atmosphere escalated in Turkey in the early 1990s because of the fighting against PKK (*Kürdistan İşçi Partisi/ Kurdistan Workers' Party*) in the east of the country. Some villages were evacuated due to the ongoing military operations and they had to migrate to town centres or other cities. The people in Divriği also paid the price for their own identity and they were lumped together. Some peasants were enforced to clear out of their houses and some of them were taken into custody on the pretext that they had collaborated with PKK.

“When I first told about what happened in this area, they said I was exaggerating the subject. People had already evacuated their villages for economic reasons. The pressure exerted on the pretext of terror also accelerated this process. They acted as if there was an Alevi-Sunni conflict. We didn't see even the slightest sign of such a conflict among the people. The problem is the one of the oppressor-oppressed. The pressure on Alevi villages is caused by their Alevi identity” (Muharrem Yağbasan, Former Mayor, 1984-1999).

At the beginning of 1996, the detention of 80 village mukhtars and nearly 500 peasants in the operations against the PKK, which were centred in Sivas, drew the reaction of non-governmental organisations and politicians. In a report prepared by 3 CHP deputies and some democratic mass organisations along with the chairman of the Divriği Cultural Association, Müslüm Doğan, it was pointed out that armed forces exerted a great deal of pressure on Alevis pretending to struggle against PKK and the villages were evacuated during the so-called operations organised in Divriği, Ulaş, Kangal, İmranlı, Hafık and Zara. In Divriği District, Ovacık, Dişbudak, Çayözü, Hamuçimen, Hıdırlık and Ezendere were partially or completely evacuated as a result of the operations. It was stated that a curfew was imposed except for the hours between 07:00 and 16:00 during the day and 300 villages were blockaded. The Gendarmerie

Special Operations and security forces asking peasants for help with expressions such as "we are patriots, help us" later detained those who had helped them⁴⁷³.

Lots of investigations were conducted about the mayor of that term. Muharrem Yağbasan went through rather a difficult phase both individually and as the head of the local government.

“They didn't want me to do my duty as the head of the local government and they even attempted to kill me once or twice, but luckily the assassination plot was unsuccessful. There was a hairdresser in Divriği and later it turned out that he became a MİT (*Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı/ National Intelligence Organisation*) agent. When the mayor was said to be blown up, he prevented one of them. That his mother was Alevi may be the reason why he revealed the case. Some other events like that also happened. Once, my daughter Evrim was at home and we went out to visit a neighbour. She phoned us crying and I asked her why she was crying. She said that someone called and stated that they were going to bomb the house out. I told her not to be afraid and that we would come. They were also following us while we were going to the villages. If we had stayed out late, they would have claimed that we were with PKK militants and in the end, they would have said that we had been killed in a firefight. In fact, a citizen from the village of Kaledibi went to the gendarmerie station in Divriği. He said that the militants were wandering through the mountains and added that if they didn't help them, they would not be able to take shelter in these mountains. They said that helping the militants was out of question, and asked him who helped them. The villager replied that the mayor helped and supported them. Later, when I spoke to the sergeant, he told me that they heard of some information about me, and I stated that they didn't need to prove it with rumour but with concrete facts” (Muharrem Yağbasan, Former Mayor, 1984-1999).

The 1993 Sivas Massacre was a turning point in the life of the people living in Divriği along with some other districts such as İmranlı and Zara. It is said that commandos and Gendarmerie Special Operations had been dispatched to these places before the massacre was carried out and these forces had stayed there for a long time on the pretext that military operations would be performed.

“Everything started with vehicular sabotage, murder of a policeman, shooting attack on the lodge in Dumluca two years ago. The Gendarmerie Special Operations came to the town. However, neither the leftist organisations nor PKK undertook all these actions. In previous cases, all actions used to be undertaken by an organisation. In addition, another issue we are curious about is that it is very difficult to escape after taking action in Divriği. There is only one way out. There have been great tensions between the Gendarmerie Special Operations and people in the past years. Members of the Gendarmerie Special Operations walk around the streets of the town making the sign of the Grey Wolves and even come to the tea garden with an armoured vehicle and a panzer. As is known, Divriği is a left-wing town with a predominantly Alevi population. It is required to be more careful about that. Forests were burned in some villages. There is a battalion of soldiers in Ovacık, Sincan and Beypınar regions of Divriği. There are also soldiers in the town centre. Well, why is the Gendarmerie Special Operations in the town?”⁴⁷⁴.

⁴⁷³ “Sivas'ta Olağanüstü Hal Uygulanmakta”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, February 8, 1996, 1&4.

⁴⁷⁴ “Gayriresmi Olağanüstü Hal: Divriği'de Maden Şenliğine Yasak”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, September 7, 1995, 4.

3.8 Transformation of Physical Spaces and Socio-Economic Activities

3.8.1 Urbanisation of Agricultural Land

The Economic structure of Divriği has gone through a transition from agricultural production to industrial production and service sector. Based on the geographical structure of the district, and the fact that the flat areas are insufficient and the mountainous areas cover a large area, agricultural activities are limited. Agriculture was the main source of livelihood in the past. However, they didn't set it down as the only source of income and they preferred breeding enough cattle, sheep or goats for their households.

Agricultural production was aimed at meeting the basic consumption needs of the people and took place just in the surrounding villages of the town.

“This village (Erşun-Güneyevler) was like Divriği's food warehouse in terms of vegetable and fruit production. Vegetables, fruit, grains and legumes such as potatoes, chickpeas, beans, wheat, barley, tomatoes, salads, watermelons and so on, in other words, everything to be produced, were available in this village. There were no vacant agricultural lands and all of the lands were cultivated. When autumn came, all these products used to be transported by Ford trucks” (Güzel Karayılan, Retired Worker, 1986-2004).

“Apart from 1-2 villages, there was no production-based agriculture. All agricultural areas were left fallow and abandoned. There were agricultural activities only in the villages of the central district such as Erşun (Güneyevler), Odur (Kayaburun), and Hazerkek (Günbağçe). Apple picking was also a source of living for a few farmers in Karageban (Gedikbaşı). All these activities were mostly performed to meet the shopping needs of the people in the bazaar. In this regard, Divriği fell short of vegetables and fruit growing, and the neighbouring town, Arapgir provided vegetables and fruit for Divriği. Instead of agriculture, especially husbandry was done in the villages” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

However, agricultural activities ground to a standstill for some families when the foundation of the enterprise aroused the peasants' interest. The peasantry made up the majority of the population in the 1940s in Divriği along with other parts of Turkey and the population started to decrease at a slow pace through the establishment of the industrial zone in Divriği. On the other hand, the products of the villages turned into commodities bought at the market in the town centre after the population had crowded into town:

“Compared to today, the bazaar was not set up only once a week. There was a bazaar every day. In the square where the bazaar was located, especially those coming from nearby villages such as Erşun and Odur used to bring the products they produced and sell them every day. Some villages produced nice things, and each village was famous for a crop. If you bought it, it would be better to buy beans from Norşun, potatoes from Hornovil, onions from Çaltı, dried beans from Şigi, walnuts from Vartan, lentils from Yellice and Dumluca, and tomatoes from Erşun. They would bring them directly to the bazaar and sell them in a square where it was designed as a bazaar place. In addition, Arapgir was famous for grapes and local people in Divriği were very

fond of them. Apart from grapes, bell peppers and basil also came from Arapgir. The bazaar was set up every day, not once a week as it is now. Every morning whoever wanted to go to the square, where the bazaar was, used to grab their market nets to see to their needs. They would buy vegetables and fruits from different villages and take them home. However, now everything changed and there is only one day of the week, on Monday when everybody goes to the bazaar and meets their needs” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Needless to say, the whole population couldn't be fed from home production due to the aforementioned people crowding into the cities. From then on, only two or three families have subsisted on agriculture and livestock. Thus, homemade production has turned into industrial production and the countryside has been urbanised. Most of the agricultural lands have been turned into urban use, farmers have become urban citizens and rural space has been incorporated into the urban space. For instance, peasants sell dairy products or dried legumes to the others who don't have any livestock or farms. Otherwise, they take them to the market set up for the whole town-dwellers on Mondays.

“We had cows, but we stopped breeding them in the 1990s when my mother got a little sick and the last generation was not interested as before. Everyone is in the same situation right now. I wish no one would give it up and they would continue to do this in every village. At present, doing these works in the villages of Divriği has passed from individuality to institutionalism. Each house had two or three cows. Let's say there are some dairy farms nowadays, in other words, there are places that do stockbreeding. For example, milk comes to our village from another village. Nobody has a cow right now. However, everyone used to have 2-3 cows. For example, my mother used to make curd instead of cheese. They used to serve cottage cheese to those coming from Ankara and İstanbul. In addition, they would offer cream. Now we buy everything we used to offer before” (Sabri Kabadayı, Retired Worker, 1979-2005).

The main factor which contributed to the transformation of the rural space and reproduction of the city is how people got used to consuming the food they used to produce. In other words, the spatial form of rural life is embedded in the new mode of production. Peasants living in rural areas don't grow any vegetables and fruit anymore and they instead go to the market to meet their needs in the town centre. They don't even make their own bread instead, they buy it. Viewed in this way, the modern way of life has incorporated the traditional life of the country into urban life.

Although rural life has been integrated into urban life, some peasants starting to work in the enterprise have remolded the physical space on their own. In recent years, with the decline in the quality of life in big cities, retired or some young people have started to settle in Divriği with their families to make use of agricultural lands or to deal with animal husbandry. One of these young people, Mevlüt Özcan, who was born in 1971 and lived for a while in both Sivas and İstanbul made up his mind to settle in Ovacık Village with his family.

“While dealing with marketing in Sivas, many people I met were interested in agriculture and animal husbandry. We returned to our village by deciding to engage in animal husbandry. We preferred living in the nature and we regarded it as a source of livelihood. We also wanted to show that it is a job that should be done in the future and that it is not impossible to do, and to fulfil our childhood dreams with my wife and to inspire everybody” (Mevlüt Özcan, Farmer).

Despite this, as the people from Divriği have not used their lands, those coming from the East have rented the lands and engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry to meet the needs of the region.

The fact that people from Eastern Anatolia, especially from cities such as Diyarbakır and Elazığ, come to this region and activate animal husbandry inspires people and villagers who have migrated out of the city to return to their hometowns and become interested in agriculture and animal husbandry. Only those who come from the East stay in Divriği in the winter, and after the spring, they are engaged in animal husbandry using the pastures they rent from the state or from individuals (Mevlüt Özcan, Farmer).

Furthermore, the DİVKOOP (*Divriği Üretim ve Pazarlama Kooperatifi/ Divriği Production and Marketing Cooperative*) was established in İstanbul on March 27, 2019 with the joint initiative of some associations. Ovacık Cooperative for Agricultural Development set up in Tunceli inspired the project of the foundation of the cooperative.



**Figure 41: Ploughing Barley Field in Güllüce Village
by the DİVKOOP's Contribution**

Personal Archives of Turabi Bakar

The purpose of the cooperative is to produce agricultural or traditional products, to procure them from the producers, and to launch them to the market for the sake of their partners. They prefer primarily the products produced in Divriği, but they also supply products from other regions which are not produced in Divriği.

“While establishing the cooperative, the experience in Ovacık District in Tunceli really motivated us. Our purpose is to provide agricultural tools to meet the needs of the producers in that region, to organise training intended for the producers to make a healthy and correct way of production. We also strive to make a profit for them with an approach appreciating their labour and to serve as a bridge between them and consumers by eliminating the intermediaries. Almost all of the producers whose products we buy live in Divriği for 12 months of the year. Women who make rosehips, marmalade, tarhana, noodles are there, especially during the summer and they give what they produce to the cooperative” (Cafer Yıldız, Engineer).

The cooperative also aims to help farmers contribute to the agricultural revival of the town, so it strives to encourage the people owning areas of land to plough them and cultivate their products.

“There were small-scale productions in Divriği. These products used to be brought to the market and sold there on Wednesdays. Our cooperative formation both increased this process in terms of capacity and enabled other people, who did not contribute to production, to participate in this process. For example, a young friend of ours went to Yuva-Sarphan Village and did a project on medicinal and aromatic plants to cultivate them on 90 acres of land. Another village has established a livestock company with 35 partners to produce milk and dairy products there. In addition, we have made an agreement with Tuborg to produce barley for Tuborg on 1300 decares of land. We aim to increase the cultivation area to 5000 and then to 10,000 acres in the forthcoming years” (Cafer Yıldız, Engineer).

3.8.2 Impact of Urban Transformation on Traditional Crafts

The Bazaar in the town centre has been the centre of economic activities for centuries. The actual part of the Bazaar was around the covered bazaar called *Bedesten* whose ruins can still be seen in front of the Grand Mosque. Later, it was moved from the Naip Eşref Turbe to the stream downhill in three blocks named for the Upper, Central and Lower Bazaar by the locals⁴⁷⁵. It was covered before and it was rebuilt on 14 roads after a fire that took place in 1911⁴⁷⁶.

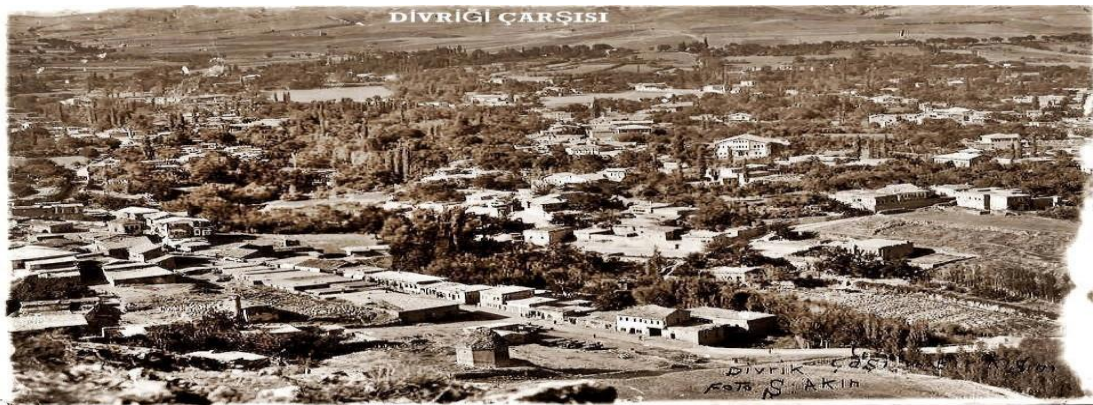


Figure 42: Divriği Bazaar

Personal Archives of Şükrü Akın

⁴⁷⁵ Röportaj: Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi*, February 15, 2012, 4. See figures 42 and 43.

⁴⁷⁶ Erçoklu, *ibid.*

peasants living on agriculture and husbandry, and they used to shoe the animals. Apart from that, there were also some other craftsmen such as coppersmiths, drapers, shoemakers and tailors whom the peasants dealt with.

“In the village, the peasants used to burden their horses or donkeys with poplar wood and go to Divriği. Blacksmiths would work by using bellows in their shops. When they make iron, there was no electricity. For this reason, they needed coal or wood to process the iron, and the peasants would take their mounts carrying loads of poplar wood and sell it for 2.5 or 3 liras. Besides, they used to go to the stores and say they would buy materials for their kids to sew shirts or long underpants for women, so they would ask shopkeepers to give them 2 metres of drill or printed fabric. There were drapers, shoemakers, and coppersmiths and tinsmiths who would tin copper pots and pans of the peasants. Each shopkeeper used to have their own craft. They also used to have their animals shod. I mean, there were a variety of crafts each shopkeeper occupied themselves with in the town centre, so the craftsmen such as coppersmiths, blacksmiths, tailors were part and parcel of the bazaar. The peasants thereby would shop in this way, meet their needs from the bazaar in Divriği from town and go back to their villages in the end” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

At the end of the 1930s when the enterprise opened and the rural workers migrated to the city centre, the workload of the blacksmiths started to decrease gradually. While there were 60 shops in the 1930s, this number dropped to 30 in the 1950s, and only 3 shops remained open in 1984⁴⁷⁸. As far as the tinsmiths are concerned, due to advancing technology, products made of steel, chrome and aluminium have been preferred by people, and copper pots and pans used by the peasants have become historical artifacts, which has caused many of them to close their shops: “There is only one blacksmith in Divriği and there are 2 tailors at the moment. There is also a tinsmith but his shop is closed for now as some other shops in the bazaar as well as his will be renovated parallel to their traditional architecture texture” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

“In the past, the number of farmers was high, and when there were farmers, it means that the number of peasants was also higher. They had iron tools such as ax and hatchet, and they asked blacksmiths to make those tools. When the number of farmers decreased, this craft ended. Besides, the ready-made products are cheaper. As to tinsmiths, one of the most important reasons why their craft came to an end is that nowadays steel products are much more popular. Tinning and labour are more expensive, and factory-made products are cheaper, so the people tend to buy those products” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

“Tinsmiths, coppersmiths, blacksmiths and saddlers used to be found in the place where the recent marketplace is located. Some of the blacksmiths and coppersmiths used to work in 7 shops around the Republic Square, opposite the Kültür Mosque and the post office. The sounds of hammer and sledgehammer from these shops used to be heard from everywhere”⁴⁷⁹.

⁴⁷⁸ Özen, *ibid*, 51-69 cited in Denктаş, *ibid*, 114.

⁴⁷⁹ “Divriği’nin Bakırcı ve Kalaycıları”, *Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi*, September 1, 2012, 5.



Figure 44: Tinsmith Yılmaz Sayar

Personal Archives of Doğan Karapınar

Tailors also made up an important part of the craftsmen and they were mostly in the Central Bazaar. In 1962, there were 68 tailors in the bazaar⁴⁸⁰. The craft of tailoring was very popular as the mining enterprise would provide its employees with clothes for both winter and summer seasons, so they were faced with a great deal of workload.

“We would sew 6000 coats, jackets and trousers a year, 3000 pieces in summer and 3000 pieces in winter. At that time, I was a member of the Tailor’s Association. I used to go to the mines with the chairman of the association and measure the size of the workers one by one. We would share the work with the other tailors to sew the clothes. Our primary goal was to deliver the workers’ clothes sewn in a short time. We would get our money from the mining enterprise all at once. Then, this situation changed. Sümerbank’s high-quality fabrics, most of which were grey and black, were handed over to the workers. At that time, the workers had their clothes sewn wherever they liked. We would sew the clothes for them at a discount. Thanks to many of them, I could sew clothes and make money”⁴⁸¹.

⁴⁸⁰ “Divriği’de Sanatkarlık: Terziler”, *Yeni Divriği İnternet Gazetesi*, September 15, 2012, 5.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid*, 5.



Figure 45: Tailor İhsan Balcı (2012)

Personal Archives of Mustafa Tarakçı

In particular, after the 1990s, in the aftermath of the external migration of the peasants into the metropolitan cities, the population in rural areas dropped by half. Only the elderly remained in the villages and they no longer had the energy to work. Therefore, the blacksmiths, coppersmiths and tinsmiths severed all ties with the peasants and when the people living in the town centre had nothing to do with them, these craftsmen felt obliged to close down their shops. Likewise, tailors met the same fate. In the 2000s, after the privatisation of the enterprise, the number of workers decreased and the clothing aid that the state gave to workers was taken away. Thus, the tailors could not make money either, and many tailor's shops were closed one by one and supplanted by ready-to-wear retailing.

“In the past ready-made garments retailing was not available. Therefore, the number of tailors was very high. Even before I started working in 1980, it was even more. The number has decreased recently. At that time people would buy fabrics and have them sewn. Besides, before the enterprise had been privatised, employees also brought the fabrics to tailors and had them sewn. Meanwhile, the number of workers was also high. When they left the workplace, the craft of tailoring also ended and the sector turned to ready-to-wear retailing” (Zeynel Özcan, Shopkeeper, 1984-2012).

In Divriği, Sunnis constituted a high percentage of the craftsmen. There were Alevi craftsmen as well until the villages highly populated by Alevis went through an

external migration. Nevertheless, craftsmen and peasants developed strong ties with each other in terms of economic activities.

“There were some craftsmen whose names I remember well even though I have forgotten many of them. The blacksmiths I remember were Halim Usta and Küçük Ömer, and the tailors I knew were Mustafa Alpay and Topal Kemal. The craftsmen used to get along like a house on fire with the peasants and they used to behave towards each other like neighbours. They were strongly committed to one another. When I went to the bazaar, I would do my shopping from the same stores. We had been on intimate terms with each other. When they came to the villages, they used to buy butter, cream and cheese from the villages. Meanwhile, they could meet the peasants and become friends. Consequently, the craftsmen and peasants developed close ties with each other” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Losing its former vitality, the bazaar has recently become one of the attractions through the restoration of the shops on one of the streets called Hüma Hatun Street⁴⁸². It was a street-based project and it was renovated through the Governorship of Sivas, the Special Provincial Administration and the Regional Directorate of Foundations. The name of the street derives from a person called Hüma Hatun from the family of Nebi Paşa who established this foundation. The buildings on the street belong to the foundation of Nebi Paşa and Kayaoğlu families. She lived in Divriği in the 1800s and never married. She decided to establish a foundation with her brother so that her property would be left to her family instead of the state after her death. The Regional Directorate of Foundations took these shops from the family in return for restoration and thus the state took over the management for 20 years⁴⁸³. The joint venture of the World Heritage Divriği Mengücek Foundation and the DİVKOOP made a significant contribution to the revival of the bazaar. In particular, the women’s branch head of the foundation, Meral Avcı Delipınar, helped carry out this project. 12 shops on Hüma Hatun Street have a range of local products such as animal and dry food, bakery products, and handicrafts. The rent of the shops was covered for 2 years and 12 women hereby had a job⁴⁸⁴. Furthermore, Hüma Hatun attracts attention with its different features, especially with its cultural texture when compared to other streets.

“The most important feature of this street is that women run all the shops here. There are 12 shops which sell bakery products, local food of Divriği or serve coffee and tea, and so on. Another feature of this street is that it appeals to photographers, tourists and travelers coming from outside as it was renovated in accordance with the authentic characteristics of the old bazaar” (Yusuf Güldalı, Shopkeeper, 1978-still working).

⁴⁸² See figure 46.

⁴⁸³ Based on the interview with Fatma Tepe Şeker, representative of the women shopkeepers on Hüma Hatun Street.

⁴⁸⁴ Yeşil Divriği Gazetesi, yesildivrigigazetesi.com/huma-hatun-sokak-yaz-sezonuna-yeni-baskaniyla-hazirlaniyor/2068/ [April 12, 2021].



Figure 46: Hüma Hatun Street

Personal Archives of Yusuf Güldalı

This project has laid the foundations of the restoration of the other shops as well and the exterior of the shops located in the area close to Hüma Hatun Street will be renovated in accordance with the historical texture of the bazaar.

3.8.3 Deindustrialisation and Urban Decline

The Divriği Iron Mines Operation was of great importance to provide employment for the people of the town and enabled them to be integrated into the urban life of the town centre. However, as of 1980, the economic policies implemented by the new government accelerated the urban process incorporating the rural life into itself.



Figure 47: Iron Ore Mining Landscape in A-Kafa ve Akdağ

Personal Archives of Yusuf Güldalı

One of the reasons why the population loss has been exacerbated is that lack of a factory that produces iron from ore marks a turning point although in Turkey the vast majority of iron ore has been extracted in Divriği. As the iron and steel factories in Karabük and Ereğli coming into operation in 1938 and 1965 respectively were thought to be inadequate to meet the needs of the country, it was agreed that a third iron and steel factory should be established. Accordingly, John Miles Partners Co. Ltd. which was assigned to implement the project management services of the factory focused its work on twelve regions to determine the location of the factory. At the beginning of the research, the Sivas-Divriği region was examined first. However, it was not deemed economically feasible. Although İskenderun was far from important domestic raw materials, iron ore, coal and major consumption centres, it was decided to establish the factory there in 1970⁴⁸⁵.

What almost all people in Divriği agree on is that the production of iron from its ore would have contributed a lot more if a factory had been built in town. Instead, the iron ore has been transported to both Karabük and İskenderun, and enabled the economic life in both places to grow more whereas Divriği lagged behind them.

“If we had not sent the iron ore as raw material to İskenderun or Karabük, we could have set up a factory to produce iron in Divriği. We made a great deal of effort to do this. At least we could have processed chilled iron and rebar as other factories do. Under no circumstances could we contribute to the development of the subsidiary industry. A place was expropriated on behalf of the enterprise. Then, for political reasons, they thought that the idea of establishing a factory here would benefit especially Alevi community and it was shifted to Sivas where a factory was put into operation just for a few years” (Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş, Former Worker, 1974-1980/ City Councilor in İstanbul Municipality, 2019-&).

From the privatisation of the enterprise onwards, those turning the retirement age and deciding not to work anymore because of the bad working conditions migrated from their hometown to metropolitan cities such as İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara and Antalya, which led to a deterioration in the urban space of the town. The external migration to the metropolitan cities caused Divriği to shrink and people going there contributed to the expansion of other cities through capital they invested in housing, food, education and so on.

⁴⁸⁵ İ.S. Barutçugil, **Türkiye’de Demir Çelik Endüstrisi** (İstanbul: Bilen Basımevi, 1978), 65-66 cited in Mehmed Gökhan Polatoğlu, “Türk Ağır Sanayisinin Öncü Kuruluşlarından İskenderun Demir-Çelik Fabrikası”, **Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, No. 22 (April 2018): 632.

The Divriği Iron Mines Operation as a state-owned enterprise made substantial contributions to the development of the town of Divriği. For a long time, the enterprise offered a job opportunity to the people of the town where it was established. The concentration of the peasantry around the enterprise and in the town centre reveals the most outstanding feature in the acceleration of urban transformation. Education, one of the essential means of the modernisation since the foundation of the Republic, showed a remarkable improvement in the town. In the aftermath of the inauguration of the enterprise, the ones employed in the enterprise had the possibility to send their children to the secondary school in the town centre, which made very eager to go on with their high school education in Sivas and other cities. In addition, after the integration of the Alevi peasantry into the urban life, the political issues were exacerbated and it was aimed at disrupting the political power of the left, especially through right-wing workers coming from other cities. Socio-economic activities were also affected parallel to the establishment of the enterprise. Because of the decline in the number of population in rural areas, some craftsmen keeping in close contact with peasants closed down their shops and then they were employed in the Divriği Iron Mines Operation. Finally, the privatisation of the enterprise had negative effects on the town and turned it into a backward town.

4. ADVENT OF IRON ORE MINING: THE DİVRİĞİ IRON MINES OPERATION

In this part, the Divriği Iron Mines Operation, one of the industrial enterprises set up as a result of the etatist policies in the 1930s when an intense industrialisation programme was carried out, will be examined. The enterprises inaugurated in the early Republican period were not only industrial projects but also an instrument for inculcating a new lifestyle and culture into society. In this respect, they all contributed to both social and cultural transformation of the towns or cities where they had been established. The enterprise set up in Divriği was also an extension of these policies. This part will also refer to how the transformation of relations of production affected the life of the people living in both urban and rural space. The historical stages of the enterprise ending in privatisation along with unionism and formation of the working class will also be focus of this part. It will help make out how the traditional life of the peasantry incorporated into urban life and it will thereby analyse the process of the peasants' transformation to both workers and urban residents laying the foundations of the modern and industrial societies.

4.1 Foundation of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation

During the researches carried out by the MTA in May 1936, it was determined that there were iron ore deposits in Divriği. Thus, iron imports would come to an end. With the industrial breakthroughs made following the foundation of the Republic, the establishment of KARDEMİR was planned on the imports of iron ore, and the discovery of the iron ore in Divriği looked promising for the future of the country. Atatürk also thought highly of the iron ores detected in Divriği in his opening speech of the assembly on November 1, 1937 and laid emphasis on the fact that Turkey would

be one of the countries exporting iron ores instead of importing them to meet the needs of KARDEMİR whose foundation was laid on April 3, 1937:

“The iron mine found in the Divriği field by the Mineral Research and Exploration Institute and which is important in terms of ore ratio should be started to be operated quickly and the exports of the part other than the required planning for our Karabük Iron and Steel Works should be initiated”⁴⁸⁶.

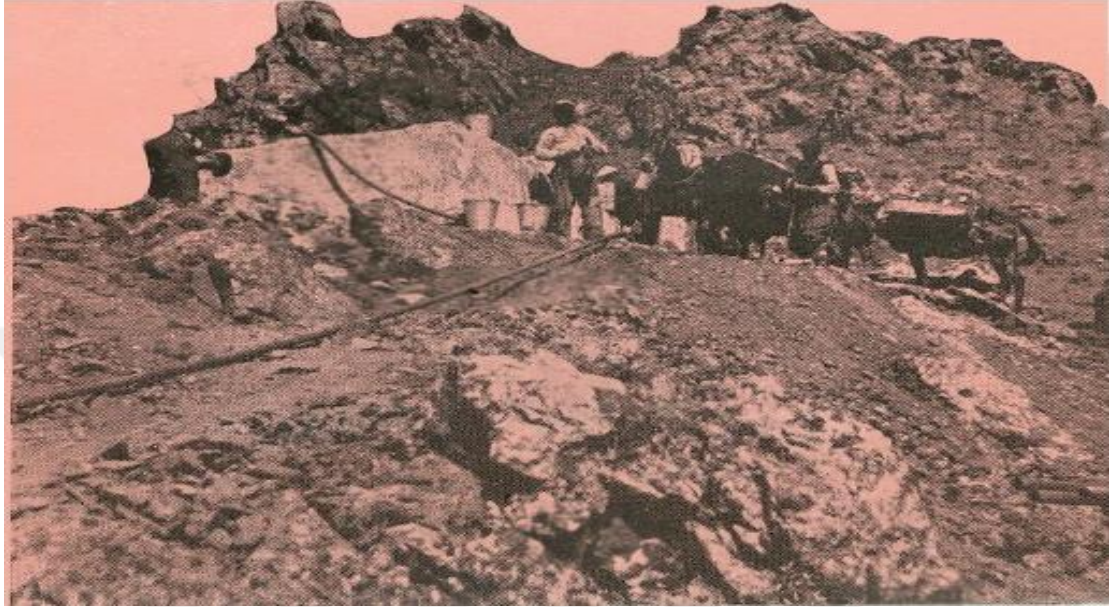


Figure 48: Supply of Water in the Course of Drilling

MTA, “On Beş Yılın Bilançosu”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 13 (Ankara, 1938): 17.

The contribution of the iron mines in Divriği to the country's economy was also mentioned by Minister of Economy Celal Bayar:

“I think there is no need to talk about the special importance of the iron. We see that the importance of this mine and iron industry, and its great value in terms of real industrialisation, national protection and establishment were expressed most eloquently in the great prime minister İsmet İnönü’s speech which he made at the groundbreaking ceremony in Karabük. In this respect, we have given special importance to our iron research out of the necessity of finding enough primary materials from our own soils for our own factory, which we are in the process of establishing. Taking these into consideration, the iron mine in Divriği which I will talk about now is the result of the systematic work carried out through research on the Hekimhan-Çetinkaya-Divriği route for over a year. The new mineral we have found meets the desired criteria. The amount of iron ore embodied in Divriği is 60-65%. Its reserve is estimated to be 10 million tons in accordance with what our geologists stated. Our research is going on in the field of Divriği. What I mentioned above belonged to those seen on the surface as a shell. If this research yields positive results, it will be possible to say that Turkey has one of the richest and most precious iron mines in the world, even with reference to this mine itself”⁴⁸⁷.

⁴⁸⁶ “Atatürk Dün Yıllık Nutkile Meclisi Açtı”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, November 2, 1937, 8.

⁴⁸⁷ “Divriği’de Bulunan Demir Madeni”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, June 19, 1937, 3.



Figure 49: Importance of the Iron Ores Detected in Divriği on Newspaper Headlines on June 19, 1937

“Büyük Demir Servetimiz”, *Ulus*, June 19, 1937, 1; “Çok Zengin Demir Madenine Sahip Olduk”, *Tan*, June 19, 1937, 1.

In 1938, a thorough exploration of the galleries and drilling was done and in the meanwhile, explorations in the vicinity were initiated with a geophysical method. According to the results of the drillings, 20-25 million ores were detected especially in the *A-Kafa* ore deposit. On May 19, 1938, the iron mine was established and the ore was transported to Divriği and Cürekk stations by trucks to be sent to KARDEMİR. The first iron ore shipment by train was on October 20, 1938, and 20,333 tons of ore had been shipped by the end of the year. The supply of ore in 1938 was implemented by throwing dynamite into the holes drilled either with hand augers or with small portable compressors. Then, the iron was crushed by hand at Divriği and Cürekk stations and reduced to a 7-cm length, which was the required size for Karabük smelting furnaces⁴⁸⁸. Until the end of 1944, 700,139 tons of ore were produced and 616,506 tons of this amount were sent to Karabük. In addition, Turkey imported 2,541 tons of ore between 1934 and 1938, and it turned into a country exporting iron ore from 1939 onwards⁴⁸⁹.

⁴⁸⁸ [Divriği Demir Madeni Hakkında Bilgiler], February 17, 1939, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 110-694-2.

⁴⁸⁹ MTA. “Umumi Maden Durumu”, *Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration*, No. 34 (Ankara, 1945): 262-263.



Figure 50: Headquarters of the Enterprise in Kayacık (Murmana) Village

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

The headquarters of the iron mines which started to operate in the district centre of Divriği before, settled in a small area in the south of the junction of the Çaltı Stream and the Hornovil Stream which flows in front of Kayacık Village⁴⁹⁰. After operating in this area for 3 years by making use of the buildings and facilities belonging to the railway contractors, in 1942 it moved to Cürek which is located in Kilisecik Village⁴⁹¹. The operating right of the mines was given to the Ministry of Economy in line with the decree dated December 15, 1938 and numbered 2/10050⁴⁹². Then, Eti Bank maintained iron mining activities under the name of ‘Divriği Iron Mines Operation’ affiliated to the bank in compliance with the decision taken by the Council of Ministers on July 23, 1940⁴⁹³. The General Directorate of the Turkish Iron and Steel Enterprise incorporated the operation which was later called ‘Divriği Iron Mines Enterprise’ on June 21, 1955.

⁴⁹⁰ See figure 50.

⁴⁹¹ Etibank Divriği Demir Madenleri İşletmesi 1941 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu **Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti** cited in İhsan Çalapverdi, M. Mümtaz Armutak, **Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi Kuruluş Bilgileri ve Faaliyet Raporları** (2008), 28.

⁴⁹² Necdet Sakaoğlu, “Cumhuriyet’in Örnek Maden Sitesi Cürek”, **Tarihi Kentler Birliği Dergisi**. S. 16 (2008): 48.

⁴⁹³ [Divriği’deki Demir Madeninin Divriği Demir Madenleri İşletme Müessesesi’ne Devir ve Ferağı], July 23, 1940, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 92-73-15.

İsmet İnönü going to Erzincan visited Divriği on December 16, 1939. After getting off the train at Divriği Station, he received information on the loading of the iron ore to the wagons there, and he went to the iron mines after arriving at Cüreğ Station, which is 20 minutes away by train. He was also informed about how the iron ore was extracted from the soil and transported to Cüreğ Station in addition to the workers' house, houses for civil servants, school and hospital under construction⁴⁹⁴.



Figure 52: A Visit to the Enterprise by President İsmet İnönü talking to Yusuf Gürata, the Manager of the Enterprise

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

“I am glad to have seen the iron mountain”.

İsmet İnönü- December 16, 1939

⁴⁹⁴ “Milli Şef Divriği Demir Madeninde”, **İkdam Sabah Postası**, December 17, 1939, 3.



Demir dağın gezerik, gördük;
radikal çalışmalar baş-
lanmış.

Çalışanların bilgili
faaliyetinden memnun
olduk.

27 - IV - 1940

H. Çakır

R. P. Saydam

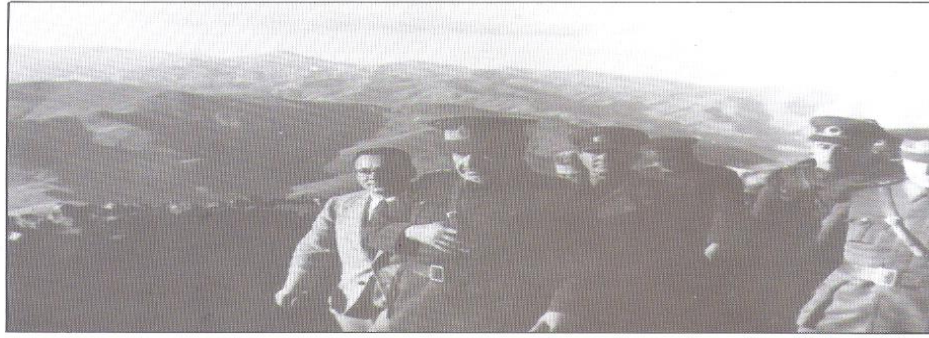
Figure 53: A Visit to the Enterprise by Prime Minister Refik Saydam

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında (Ankara, 1988).

“We visited and saw the Iron Mountain, and radical works had been initiated. We were pleased with the knowledgeable activity of the employees”.

April 27, 1940

Dr. Refik Saydam- Hüsnü Çakır



6 / 2. Teşrin / 1940

Divrik Demir madenlerini deştim. Türkiye'nin gölgesinde aksi Tesisatı
 işleyen bu demir madeni vatandaşlarımızın iktisadi olacağı kadar
 askerî kuvvetlerini tekniğe eklemek ve cumhuriyet hükümetimizin
 esaslarını tersin eylemi ektedir. bu işlerde çalışan Türk mühen-
 dislerine şükranlarını sunar ve büyük münafakatlar
 dilerim

Şharsal
 Fevzi Çakmak

K. Orbay

**Figure 54: A visit to the Enterprise by Chief of General Staff Marshal
 Fevzi Çakmak and Inspector of the Third Army Kazım Orbay**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

November 6, 1940

“I wandered around the iron mines in Divrik. This iron mine which works with modern installations in the heart of Turkey strengthens the military forces of our country as well as the economy and consolidates the principles of our Republican government. I would like to express my gratitude to Turkish engineers working in these works and wish them great success”.

Fevzi Çakmak- Kazım Orbay

The chairperson of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Refik Koraltan, coming from Divriği visited his hometown and the enterprise. The following lines written by him in the honor book of the enterprise express his unhappiness about the iron ore which had to be taken to Karabük due to the lack of some plants:

“The underground wealth is great and we have benefited from it. However, unfortunately, we have not thought of the consequences of a life of contentment for both engineers and employees as well as their children and the people who will live here between the two mountains. I have been deeply moved by this impression at first sight and I am leaving. My dear fellow townsmen from whose bosom wealth gushes, people from Divriği suffering over these treasures became helpless. At the moment, my only wish is to relocate the enterprise, which was established here, to Divriği, saying that a fault confessed is half-redressed. At that time, the result to be obtained

from the source of wealth will increase at least twice as much and should increase as well. These words which express the pain in my heart, are addressed only to those who spared this tiny enterprise from Divriği, my devastated and exhausted compatriots”⁴⁹⁵.

Minister of Interior Namık Gedik visited Divriği on September 15, 1958 and when he also went to the enterprise, he signed the book of honour with the following words:

“Iron and coal are two important ores that make up the civilisation of the twentieth century. Our beloved homeland has many underground treasures apart from these. Our resolution and determination to accommodate our self-sacrificing and patriotic nation condemned to live in hollows for many years due to various reasons and negligence, in workplaces and houses that are now being built with cement and iron made from their own lands and extracted from their own mountains, and to rebuild the homeland from end to end, are firm. We will definitely be successful in this. This facility was built on a reserve of one hundred million tons for now. It will be possible to expand and thereby increase its production to over one million tons in the very near future. In line with the progress that our country has achieved in every field in our civil organisation in the near future, upon this visit, on behalf of my esteemed prime minister Adnan Menderes, I am honoured to convey to the people of Divriği our government’s decision on the fact that Divriği would be turned into a province. The expansion of this beautiful and beneficial facility for our country, towards the centre, after this decision of our government has been ratified by our assembly, will rapidly change the social and economic face of Divriği. I wish constant success to the engineers, technicians and employees working here”⁴⁹⁶.

In the forthcoming years, the enterprise was visited by some ministers of industry as it was affiliated to the Ministry of Industry. One of them was Selahattin Kılıç coming to Divriği in 1970 and he was the leading politician striving to help with the foundation of a blast furnace in Divriği but to no avail.



**Figure 55: Minister of Industry Selahattin Kılıç
on the Shoulders of the People**

Personal Archives of Cemal Bozkurt

⁴⁹⁵ İhsan Çalapverdi, M. Mümtaz Armutak, **Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi Kuruluş Bilgileri ve Faaliyet Raporları**, 2008.

⁴⁹⁶ Ankara Divriğililer Cemiyeti, **Yeşil Divriği ve Davamız** (Ankara: Akademi Matbaası, 1959), 28.



Figure 56: Selahattin Kılıç and the Manager of the Enterprise, Murtaza Karataş with Workers

Personal Archives of Cemal Bozkurt

“When it was decided to build a blast furnace in Divriği, Minister of Industry Selahattin Kılıç came to Divriği. Selahattin Kılıç was welcomed by the people of Divriği in Höbek Village, and rams were sacrificed on the way to Divriği. He came here at the time of the 41's movement and received a very nice welcome. He addressed the people of Divriği and conveyed their government's decision. He gave the good news by telling them that a blast furnace would be built in Divriği, the ore would be melted here and it would go to Karabük in the form of ingots. Meanwhile, after visiting the Iron Mines Operation, he visited the district governor. The minister was sitting in the governor's place. One member of the parliament was sitting on one side and another one was on the other side. Kadri Eroğan came, grabbed one of the deputy's arm and told him to give a seat to the district head of the AP, Hayber Bozkurt, by stating that they were all there at his disposal. That day we heard the news on the tv about the dismissal of Kadri Eroğan from the party who led the first 41's movement” (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

There were also deputies and some other ministers visiting the cities of Eastern Anatolia and on the way to Ankara they stopped over in Divriği to spend the night in the guesthouse allocated for the civil servants.

“Erzincan, Sivas, Malatya deputies and ministers would come to Divriği and stay in the guesthouse of the enterprise in Cüreğ. Hasan Polatkan came there when Adnan Menderes was the prime minister before the 1960 Revolution. Minister of Finance İsmail Rüştü Aksal also visited it. Then, Necmettin Erbakan who was the deputy prime minister during Bülent Ecevit's term came to the town. A delegation came from Erzincan to Cüreğ with him. They assigned me instead of assigning my friend who was the mechanic at the cinema that day. Necmettin Erbakan asked me about my education, I said I was a primary school graduate, and he made me write something. I wrote “after dinner, you will watch a 24-minute episode that Mr. Deputy Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan will appear on”, and I received a thank-you on my shoulder. We

went down to the music room and he asked: "Can you read it again?" I read it again and he said: "it's very good". Finally, I played the 24-minute film. Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock Korkut Özal and the governors of Malatya, Erzincan and Sivas accompanied him" (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).

The foundation of Concentration and Pelletising Plants was of great importance to the history of the iron mines in Divriği, which contributed greatly to the increase in the production of the ores transported to both Karabük and İskenderun. President Kenan Evren thereby came to Divriği to inaugurate both plants in 1987.



Figure 57: A Visit to the Enterprise by President Kenan Evren in 1987

Anonymous

"Kenan Evren came to Divriği. Although the workers were compelled to attend the opening ceremony of the new Pelletising Plant, seventy percent of them did not attend it. They did not step back. Only the civil servants had to join the ceremony unwillingly. Maybe their unit chief obliged them. Perhaps those from the right-wing ideology, who made the most of September 12, also participated. Consequently, Kenan Evren was so frustrated that he couldn't find what he wanted in Divriği contrary to the warm welcome that he had received in other places" (Ahmet Manilacı, Retired Worker, 1972-1990).



Figure 58: Kenan Evren's Visit to Divriği on the Front Page of a Local Newspaper

Yeşil Divriği Gazetesi, June 8, 1987.

4.2.2 Managers of the Enterprise

In the early Republican period, due to the skilled labour shortage, some attempts were made to establish new schools and train engineers. In line with this purpose, Mining Engineering School in Zonguldak (*Zonguldak Yüksek Maadin Mühendisi Mektebi Alisi*) which was opened in 1924 graduated 70 students until it was closed in 1931. The first managers such as Yusuf Gürata (1928), Faik Birkan (1928), İhsan Yayla (1929) and Hikmet Sözen (1931) assigned to the enterprise were graduates of this school⁴⁹⁷.

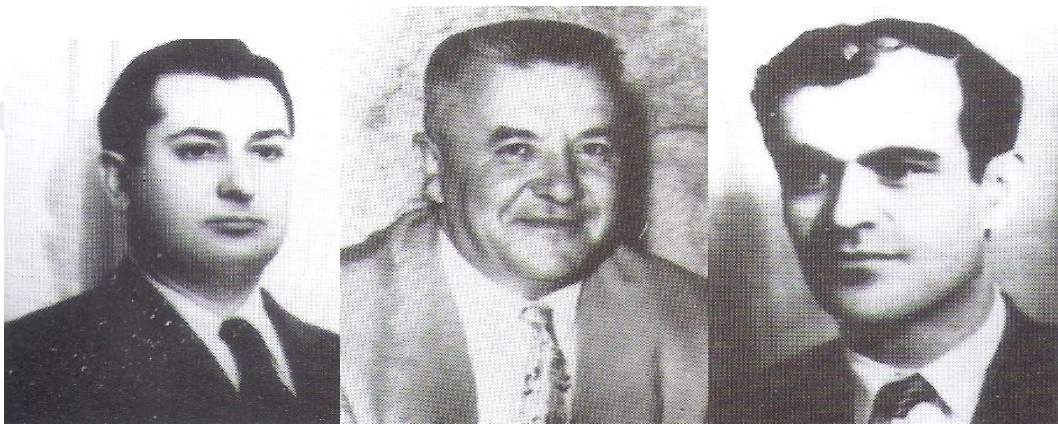
⁴⁹⁷ Nadir Avşaroğlu, "Türkiye'de Maden Mühendisliği Eğitimi Tarihçesi", (Yayınlanmamış Rapor, TMMOB Maden Mühendisleri Odası, 2001), 24-26.



Yusuf Gürata
19.05.1938- 30.10.1941

Necit Erkin
1.11.1941- 14.1.1946

Hikmet Sözen
15.1.1946- 9.7.1951



A. İhsan Yayla
10.7.1951-1.6.1956

Faik Birkan
1.6.1956- 6.12.1966

Tevfik Ay
6.12.1966-14.4.1968
19.2.1976-3.11.1977
5.7. 1979-15.1.1980



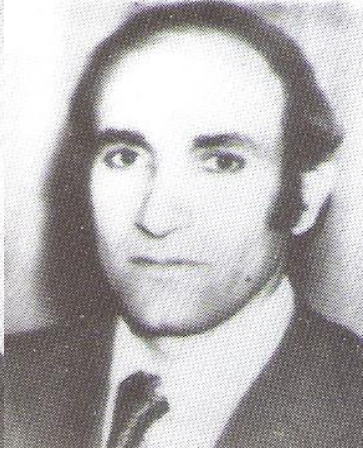
Murtaza Karataş
14.4.1968-8.6.1970
12.7.1973-19.2.1976

İrfan Pehlivan
8.6.1970- 5.10.1970

M. Remzi Solakoğlu
19.10.1970- 6.7.1973



Ömer Beğenir
3.11.1977-5.4.1978
16.1.1980-8.8.1980



Medet Ablak
5.4.1978-4.7.1979



Enver Bostancı
8.8.1980-21.11.1982



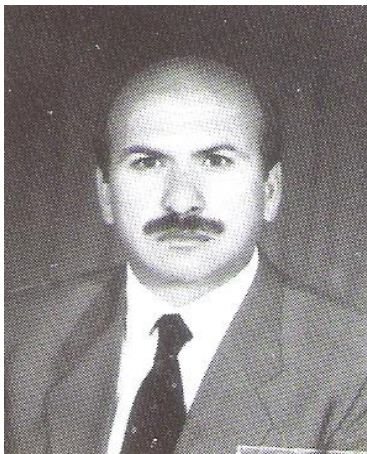
Aydın Keskin
22.11.1982-28.6.1984



Abdurrahman Ömerbeyoğlu
29.6.1984-17.6.1985



Ergün Tuncer
17.6.1985-26.12.1986



M. Hanifi Polat
13.1.1987-1992



Celal Dağgez
1992-1994
1994-2002



Mehmet Salih Uzun
2002



Figure 59: Managers of the Enterprise, 1938-2004

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988); Retrieved from information based on personal interviews.

The first managers were very successful and the enterprise used to make huge profits. Hikmet Sözen was one of these managers, but Faik Birkan made a breakthrough and enabled workers to gain new rights

“Hikmet Sözen was a hardworking manager who always made the enterprise profitable. When I started work on April 4, 1958, Faik Birkan was the manager of the enterprise. At that time, they were giving one percent profit to Eti Bank. As a result, they did away with the profit share and gave bonuses to their workers and civil servants over 26 daily wages. The enterprise used to be called the 2nd Germany at that time. We were making good money. They also gave extra money based on the education of the workers, and they were given overtime pay to the ones working after 5 pm. Summer and winter clothes, shoes, towels and soap were given every 6 months. The workers had to extract a ton of ore. The group consisting of 8 workers was called *posta* and if they gave less than a ton, they would be penalised...” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981)

Faik Birkan was also strict about the rules of the workplace. He was expecting his employees to obey them and he didn’t allow them to act negligently.

“Compared to today, the relationship between managers and employees was different at that time. We would be more cautious about sleeping for fear of the managers. Faik Birkan was a hardworking, honest and serious person. I would like to talk about what happened to me one day while I was working during his term. There was no central heating as there is today, there was a coal-burning stove, and there were 3 large stoves in the entrance hall. Esad Özcan from Ovacık was occupying himself with the stove, Süleyman Kaya was the manager’s caretaker, and İsmail Korkmaz was our tea maker. Once, I was sitting on the sofa, I took a chair under my feet and lay down. The security guard of the administrative building left the door open and Faik Birkan suddenly came in. He asked what was going on and I had nothing to say about it because I was caught. Then, he told me not to do it again. I responded: “Yes sir!”. He asserted that I could do it again. I told him that I wouldn’t do it again, and I didn’t act in that way anymore” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).

Authorised people such as unit managers, engineers and supervisors who were assigned, when Faik Birkan was the manager of the enterprise, are shown in following the table.

Table 50: Authorised Personnel On Duty During Faik Birkan's Term as the Manager of the Enterprise

Position	Authorised Personnel
Chief Engineer	Lütfi Krom
Deputy Manager	İnayetullah Kudeki
Accounting and Finance Manager	İsmet Odabaşı
Account Manager	İbrahim Tür
Manager of A-Kafa	Murtaza Karataş
Assistant Manager of A-Kafa	Faruk Aldinç
Manager of C Placer	Refik Samur
Assistant Managers of C Placer	Bekir Çulcu- Hayati Gökkaya
Staff Manager	Nihat Akkaya
Assistant Staff Manager	Nihat Yazıcı
Social Services Manager	Mustafa Özer
Social Services Assistant Manager	Ruşen Kar
Metrology Engineer	Ali Davut Akdeniz
Metrology Assistants	Nabi Özer- Ziya Aydoğan
Civil Engineer	Mehmet Yurdakul
Mining Security Engineer	Sabri Ersun
Medical Personnel	Aziz Karayığit- Hasan Değer
Senior Chemical Engineers	Muammer Yalçın- Rukiye Yalçın
Supervisor of the Workers' Boarding House in Cüreke	Osman Sert
Supervisor of the Workers' Boarding House in C Placer	Ahmet Hürmeydan
Supervisor of the Workers' Boarding House in A-Kafa	Hacı Türk
Mining Transport Manager	Saffet Öztürk

Personal Archives of Abidin Akça

Murtaza Karataş was one of the two managers from Divriği and made a huge contribution to the growth of the enterprise by enabling it to make a profit.

“We were making a collective bargaining agreement in 1968. Minister of Industry, Mehmet Turgut, was a very valuable minister and said that he would not give a raise to the workers of an enterprise that made a loss. We said that if the enterprise was making a loss, neither the union nor the workers were responsible for it, but the employer had to be responsible for that because the employer carried out the monthly and annual programmes given to the employees. Then, he asked what they had to do. We stated that if they changed the employer, the enterprise would relieve itself of the loss. Tevfik Ay was the manager at that time. He asked us who we wanted as the manager. The first name that came into my mind was Murtaza Karataş from Divriği, who had previously worked as an engineer at *A-Kafa*, and he was working in Karabük at that time. He said: "Okay, go and see that fellow citizen, if he wants to go there, let me make his appointment." We went as a union and talked to him. He was stunned when we made our offer and he said that he had never thought of becoming the manager of the enterprise. Then, we told him that we had talked to the minister and we would meet up with the prime minister if necessary. We asked if he had accepted the offer and we added that we would go to Minister Mehmet Turgut again. He said: “Ok, if they assign me to the enterprise, I will go to Divriği”. We went back to Ankara and talked to the minister, and then Orhan Acarlar who was the manager of KARDEMİR at that time. As a result, both of them approved of his appointment and Murtaza Karataş, who was from Divriği, became the manager in 1968. We exceeded the annual yield scheduled that year, the company made a profit, and the employees thereupon received a share of the profit along with a rise in the salary” (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

Murtaza Karataş was extremely disciplined at the workplace and would not tolerate any attitude and behavior that was likely to be to the detriment of the enterprise. On one occasion he couldn't put up with his brother's indiscipline and he fired him, which demonstrates that he didn't discriminate between workers even if one of them was his brother.

“Murtaza Karataş's brother, Kemal Karataş was an excavator operator and there was a grinder called Sait Manlı. Both of them were in the quarry tunnel. They told my countryman Eşef Karababa that they were sitting off to one side, and to let them know if the manager came. Eşef was walking around whistling with his hand in his pocket. Murtaza Karataş, Faruk Aldinç and Hayati Gökkaya came to the field to scout. Murtaza Karataş asked Eşef what he was doing there. He told him that his co-workers had sent him and he would let them know when the manager of the enterprise came. Then, they took him to the field by car. When they arrived there, he saw some of them take off their helmets and the others take off their shoes. Mr. Karataş dismissed his brother without hesitating by telling him that his brother was lucky not to have had any children, otherwise, he would have taken undeserved gain for his children. After that, the mayor attempted to mediate between them, but Murtaza Karataş didn't want to rehire him. In the end, a manager who came after him hired him back, so he was such a kind of man” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).

Tevfik Ay was another prominent figure and he was appointed three times as the manager of the enterprise. He is believed to be helpful to the people of the region to be employed. He is also claimed to have damaged the enterprise's financial balance, but he returned to Divriği in the following years.

“Tevfik Ay was a perfect person. However, he was easy-going. During his first term, the enterprise made a loss and he was relieved of duty. Then, he was appointed to Karabük. Murtaza Karataş took over as the manager of the enterprise. He both recuperated Tevfik Ay's loss and made a profit. After that, Tevfik Ay took office again. He was a valuable person and we did not

encounter anything with the unit managers he worked with as long as he was on duty” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).

Table 51: Authorised Personnel On Duty During Tevfik Ay’s Third Term as the Manager of the Enterprise

Position	Authorised Personnel
Deputy Managers	Mustafa Gökçedağ – Muharrem Yağbasan
Manager of A-Kafa	Haydar Erkan
Staff Manager	Zafer Atalay
Training and Organisation Manager	Mehmet Ali Özdemir
Senior Civil Engineer	İsmet Yılmaz
Study and Planning Manager	İbrahim Hamulu
Construction Maintenance Manager	Nizamettin Yıldız
Concentration & Pelletising Manager	Ali Başdağ
Machine Maintenance Manager	Hüseyin Ünsal
Workshop Managers	İsmail Asil followed by Azmi Baydar
Transport Manager	Saffet Öztürk
Social Services Manager	Ali Haydar Şahin
Accounting and Finance Manager	Kadir Yavuz
Commercial Manager	Coşkun Lokman
Laboratory Supervisor	İhsan Küçükayazıcı

Based on the interview done with Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985.

The names proposed by the Ministry of Industry and Technology in the appointment of the managers of the enterprise would be submitted to the Prime Ministry along with justifications why they were believed to be the right candidates for their position and the prime minister would approve them. To set an example, on September 22, 1982 when Mehmet Turgut was the minister, the Ministry of Industry and Technology based its intention to assign Aydın Keskin as the manager on his experience as follows: “Since he had worked as a mining engineer for many years in the mining enterprises in both private and public sectors, and he also had held senior management positions

in these enterprises, his appointment was deemed appropriate with the belief that he would be beneficial in the management of the enterprise”⁴⁹⁸.

BİYOĞRAFI VE GEREKÇE FORMU

BAKANLIĞI		Sanayi ve Teknoloji Bakanlığı							
Adı ve soyadı		Aydın KESKİN							
Babasının adı		Abbas							
Annesinin adı		Yadigar							
Doğum yeri ve yılı		Yusufeli - 1936							
Nüfusa kayıtlı olduğu İl-İlçe		Artvin - Yusufeli							
ÖĞRENİM GÖRDÜĞÜ OKULLAR, YER VE YILLARI	Orta	Erzurum Ortaokulu							
	Lise	Erzurum Lisesi - 1956							
	Yüksek	İ.T.Ü. Maden Fak. 1962							
	Lisans üstü	-							
Bildiği yabancı dil Devlet lisanı imtihanından aldığı not %		İngilizce (iyi)							
Askerlik görev yeri ve terhis tarihi		(1963-1965-İzmir Top.Ok.Grb)							
Halen bulunduğu görev ünvanı ve bu görevin kadro derecesi bunu alış tarihi		Çamlıca Madencilik Lmt.Şt.Ankara Merk.Md.Teknik Koordinatör ve Genel Md.Yrd.							
Atanacağı görevin derecesi, ünvanı ve yeri		Divriği Madenleri Mües.1.derece GİH sınıfı Müessese Müdürü							
Kazanılmış hak aylık derecesi ve bunu alış tarihi		2/1 der./Knd.(+400)							
657 Sayılı Kanunun 2595 Sayılı Kanunla değişik 68. maddesinde değinilen hizmet süreleri (Sadece 160 sayılı Kanunun 4. maddesindeki kurumlarda)		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Gün</th> <th>Ay</th> <th>Yıl</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>13</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Gün	Ay	Yıl	-	-	13
Gün	Ay	Yıl							
-	-	13							
Hakkında idari veya cezai kovuşturma olup olmadığı									
Bulunduğu memuriyetler 1-Çamlıca Madencilik Lmt.Şt.Ankara Merk.Md. Teknik Koordinatör ve Genel Md.Yrd. 1980 - Devam ediyor. 2-Ararat Tic.AŞT.Şişirmit Kurşu Çinko İşletmesi İşletme Md. 1979 - 1980 3-Çamlıca Madencilik Lmt.Şt.Atıman İşletmesi İşletme Md. 1978 - 1979									
GEREKÇE Gerek özel gerekse resmî sektörde Maden işletmesinde uzun yıllar Maden Mühendisi olarak çalışmış olması ve bu işletmelerde üst düzeyde Yöneticiliklerde bulunması nedeniyle, kendisinin Müessese MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNDE faydalı olacağı kanaatiyle tayini uygun görülmüştür.									
Not : a) İhtiyacı karşılamadığı hallerde bu forma bir sayfa daha ilâve edilebilir. b) «Bulunduğu memuriyetler» bölümünde resmî ve özel kurum arda geçen bütün hizmetler belirtilcektir.									

(Mühür ve imza)

570.62.11

⁴⁹⁸ [Türkiye Demir ve Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü GİH Sınıfı Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi Müdürlüğü'ne Aydın Keskin'in Tayini], November 16, 1982, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 570-62-11. See figure 60.

4-Üzdemir Antina Lit.Şt.Turhal İşletme İşletme Md.	1975 - 1978
5-İstibank-İzmir Terlit Tesis Md.Tesis Md.	1973 - 1975
6-İstibank-Elazığ Volfram Tesis Md.İÜGH Bağmüh. ve Tesis Md.Mv.	1970 - 1973
7-İstibank-Ermet Kromat İşletmesi İşletme Mühendisi, Etüd Kontrol Bağmüh.	1965 - 1970
8-Yedek Subaylık Tepçe Ölçme Grubu-İSKİM	1963 - 1965
9-İstibank III KÜPRÜ Krom İşletmesi Muşla (Arama ve İşletme Mühendisi)	1962 - 1963



Figure 60: Proposal for the Appointment of Aydın Keskin as the Manager of the Enterprise by the Ministry of Industry and Technology

[Türkiye Demir ve Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü GİH Sınıfı Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi Müdürlüğü'ne Aydın Keskin'in Tayini], November 16, 1982, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 570-62-11.

As far as the managers assigned to the enterprise are concerned, especially from 1987 onwards, the ones adhering to the political power of that time became the manager. In parallel with what both residents of the town and workers stated, they helped accelerate the privatisation process. Even though they called for the appointment of managers to be responsive to the needs of the town, the ones with opposing views were assigned.

“All of the managers who came to Divriği made a significant contribution to the town. In general, they hired workers from Divriği, but I complain a lot about one of them. I was one of the people who helped Celal Dağgez become the manager of the enterprise. He was also a MHP (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi/ Nationalist Movement Party*) deputy for 4 months in 2015, but he was not elected in the following election. Chairman of the Chamber of Drivers Naci Küpeli, Chairman of the Muhtars' Association Mahmut Duran and I were in Ankara. We went to Süleyman Demirel and the Secretary of the State Planning Organisation, İlhan Kesici. I said that there had to be a change in the management of the enterprise and they asked who they would assign. I suggested that they appoint Celal Dağgez by stating that he was a kind of person who could help both the enterprise and their party, and he was appointed in 1992. I met him in Kuluncak, chatted and wished him good luck. I didn't expect anything from him for myself. I hadn't demanded anything even from either Çiller, Demirel or my best friend becoming a minister. He came here and tried to go into politics, one day in one party, one day in another one. Once, in order to be ranked as the first deputy candidate in ANAP in the parliamentary election, two people from all districts

of Sivas were recruited as security guards under the direction of the district heads of ANAP. Then, I said to his own district organisation to oppose him. We were the ones who brought this man and we didn't want anything, but he should not have gone into politics and employed a person through other district heads so as to be elected as a deputy. I was not satisfied with the way he did and I must confess that I made the mistake of bringing him to the town" (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

"As the union, we got in touch with Erdal İnönü and had the opportunity to talk to him when he came to Divriği in 1992. We requested that the SHP should take a more active role in the appointment of managers of the enterprise. However, İnönü refused our offer. He said that this was a decision made at their own discretion and that it didn't concern us. We also said that each manager showed a different approach to the town by then and there was a lot of disagreement between the management and the union, municipality, people. When there is a lack of harmony, the relationship between institutions weakens. For example, the relationship between the manager of the enterprise and the municipality became very inactive for a while. However, they were supposed to produce work for the benefit of Divriği" (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

That Mehmet Salih Uzun, district head of ANAP in Çankaya, Ankara, who didn't meet the criteria such as sufficient state service and management experience related to iron and steel enterprises was appointed as the manager exacerbated the trajectory of the enterprise and made a large mass express their anger. For instance, Konya Deputy Lütfi Yalman asked questions about the appointments made to the Divriği Iron Mines Operation and Minister of State Yılmaz Karakoyunlu answered them as if the new manager had been an expert in his field. Contrary to what many people thought, he asserted that the manager had had enough experience and added that he had got his degree in International Relations and served as the member of board at Anadolu Agency, deputy general manager of TURAŞ affiliated to the Ministry of Tourism, and vice chairman of the executive board and general manager at Anadolu Radio and Imaging Services affiliated to Anadolu Agency⁴⁹⁹.

4.3 Transformation of Relations of Production in the Mines

4.3.1 Manual Labour in the Early Years of Mining

In the years when the mines were first opened, production was made through primitive methods, and tools such as pickaxes, shovels and sledgehammers were used⁵⁰⁰.

"When we started working in the mines, manpower was prevailing and the mining was not mechanised a lot. We were working by wrist and manual labour, pickaxes, shovels, levers, hand wagons. We always extracted the minerals from the mountains. We used to work physically and that's how we worked. Later, mechanisation began" (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

⁴⁹⁹ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Term 21, Vol. 103 (October 1, 2002): 313-314.

⁵⁰⁰ See figures 61 and 62.

“In the first period, ores were extracted with pickaxes and shovels, and there were small hammers with long handles used for breaking the useless materials off the iron ores. After they had been broken, the workers would drag wheelbarrows with ores which were later transported to the wagons” (Musa Ergün, Retired Worker, 1958-1978).

Although the new machinery had been supplied in some units in the following years, open mining was implemented by manpower which was prevalent to a certain extent.

“We got the job, but at that time 3000 people were working in the enterprise. There were not many machines, but some of them started to arrive. An engineer, who was the chief of the field, said to me, "You will work with a pickaxe for 6 months, with a crusher for 6 months, and finally on the aerial ropeway for 6 months, I said ok, but I first loaded a wagon for 6 months, and in this job, I put the dynamite into the soil and received a certain amount of ores that stuck out after the explosion. After hitting the 75-80% of iron ores with a hammer and breaking them, we were putting as much as we could lift onto the wagon. We had to deliver 16 tons of goods per day” (Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983).

As far as the labour process was concerned, the ores extracted from *A-Kafa* were transported to the primitive cable cars by wagons, and from there they were lowered to Cürekk by cable cars⁵⁰¹. Finally, they were taken to the station after it was broken in Cürekk⁵⁰².

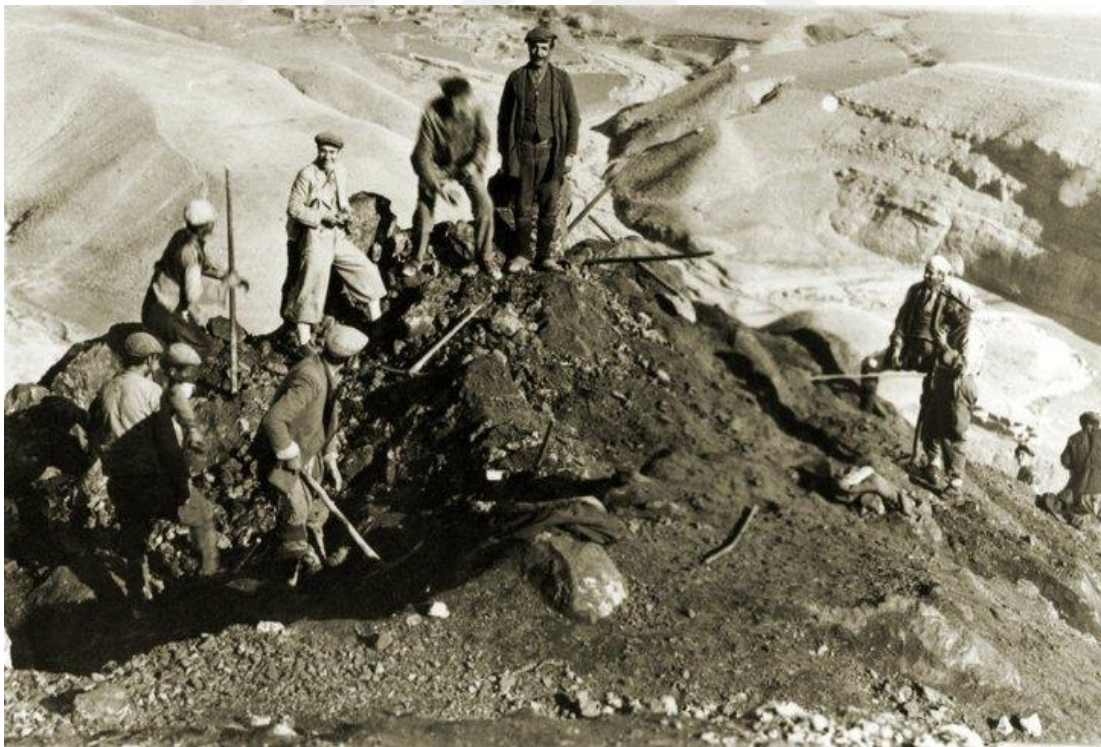


Figure 61: Workers Extracting Iron Ores by Shovels and Pickaxes

Anonymous

⁵⁰¹ See figures 63 and 64.

⁵⁰² See figure 65.



Figure 62: Ores Broken with Sledgehammers and Loaded into Wagons with Pitchforks

Anonymous



Figure 63: Transportation of Iron Ores by Wagons at A-Kafa in 1938

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



**Figure 64: Bringing Iron Ores Down from the Hillside
by the Primitive Cable Car in 1941 (A-Kafa)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



**Figure 65: Transportation of Broken Iron Ores to Cüreğ Station
by Wagons (A-Kafa)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

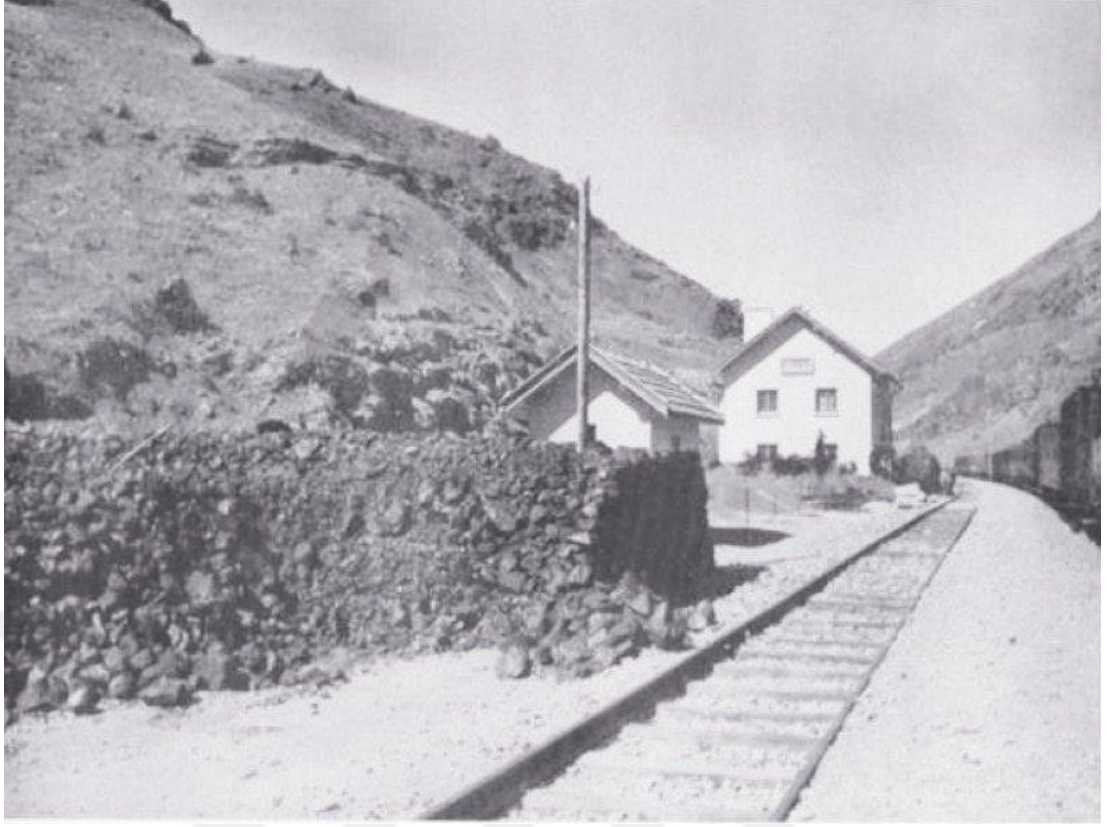


Figure 66: Iron Ores Stored at Cüreç Station in the 1950s

Anonymous

In the years when the Divriği Iron Mines Operation was first opened up, the ores extracted from *C Placer*, a few kilometres away from Divriği, were transported to Divriği Station with chests on animals' backs: “At first, the ores extracted from the ground were loaded into the chests and transported on the backs of mounted animals such as horses, donkeys and mules to Divriği Station which started operating within the same year” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982). In the following years, after the ores brought to the crushers by wagons had been broken, they were transported to the station by trucks⁵⁰³. There were 9 trucks available in the enterprise used for ores and material transportation⁵⁰⁴.

⁵⁰³ See figures 67 and 68.

⁵⁰⁴ Etibank Divriği Demir Madenleri İşletmesi 1941 Yılı Umumi Murakabe Heyeti Raporu **Başvekalet Umumi Murakabe Heyeti** cited in İhsan Çalapverdi, M. Mümtaz Armutak, **Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi Kuruluş Bilgileri ve Faaliyet Raporları** (2008), 28.

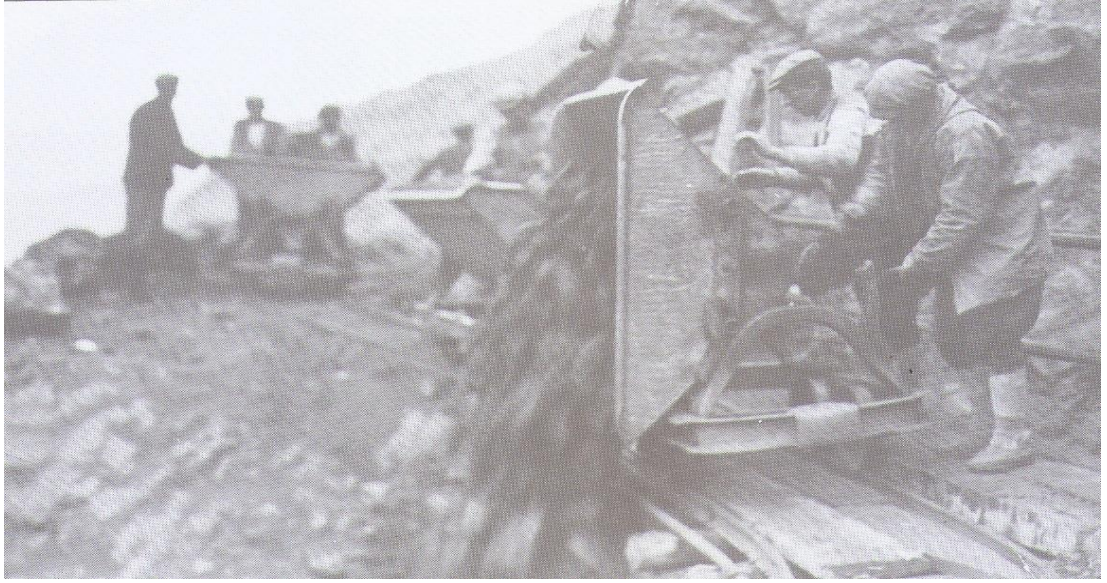


Figure 67: Transportation of Ores to the Crushers by wagons at C Placer

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

Iron ores were transported to Divriği Station by trucks until the aerial ropeway was activated.



Figure 68: Transportation of Ores From C Placer to Divriği Station by Trucks

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



Figure 69: Iron Ores Stored at Divriği Station in the 1940s

Anonymous

4.3.2 Mechanisation in the Extraction of Iron Ores

After the period of transportation by primitive cable cars, in A-Kafa iron ores were dropped into the wells by trucks and transported to the crushing machine through the quarry tunnel by narrow-gauge railway⁵⁰⁵. Finally, they were sent to Cürekk through the aerial ropeway, which made the transportation of ores much faster than before⁵⁰⁶. The tender for the construction of the aerial ropeway was made on April 25, 1951. The shipment of the required pieces of equipment was ordered to a German company called Pöhling in the same year and it came into operation in 1952⁵⁰⁷.

“Beforehand the ores were transported from *A-Kafa* to Divriği by trucks and with the improvement in the labour process, a quarry tunnel was opened from *A-Kafa* underground and workers put the ores down into the wells from the top of the quarry. The narrow-gauge railway picked up the ores in the tunnel and they were transported by aerial ropeway to Cürekk Station” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

⁵⁰⁵ See figures 70, 71 and 72.

⁵⁰⁶ See figure 73.

⁵⁰⁷ MTA, “Umumi Maden Durumu Türkiye Madencilığının 1950 yılı bilançosu”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 41 (Ankara, 1951): 15. MTA, “1951 Yılında Türkiyede Madencilik Faaliyeti”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 42-43 (Ankara, 1952): 17. MTA, “Türkiye Madencilik Faaliyeti”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 44,45 (Ankara, 1953): 6.

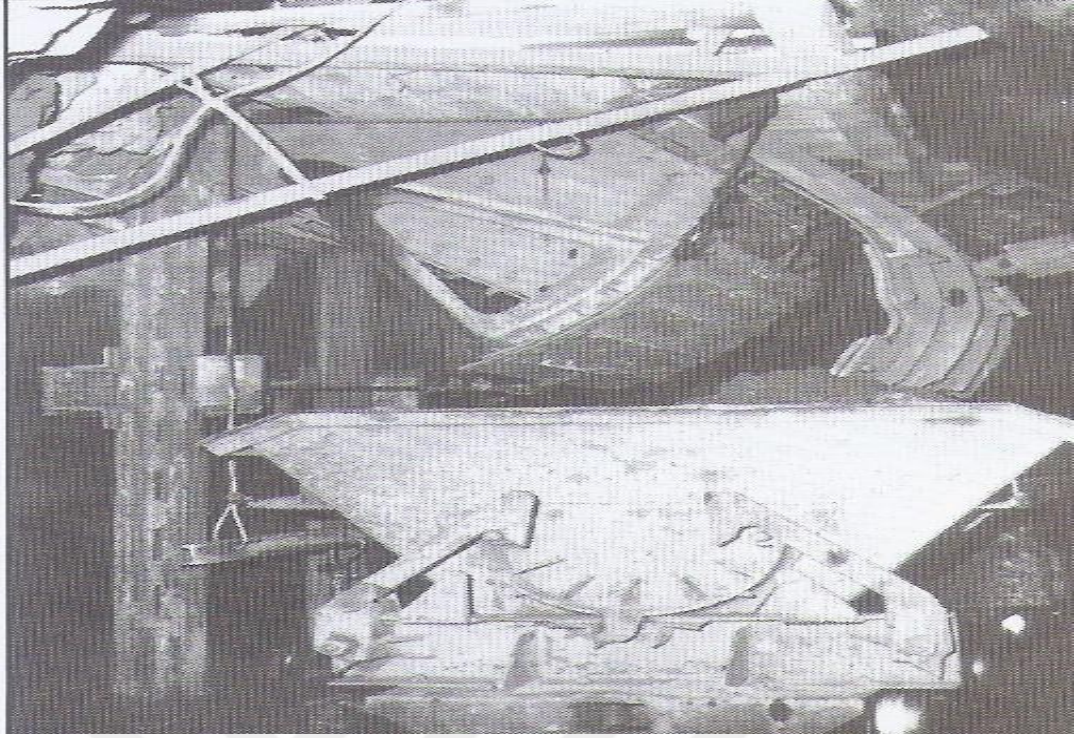


**Figure 70: Loading of Iron Ores on the Cars
After Being Taken out of the Well (A-Kafa)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



**Figure 71: Transportation of Ores to the Crushing Machine Through the
Quarry Tunnel by Narrow-Gauge Railway (A-Kafa)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



Figure 72: Iron Ores Processed at the Crushing Stage (A-Kafa)

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

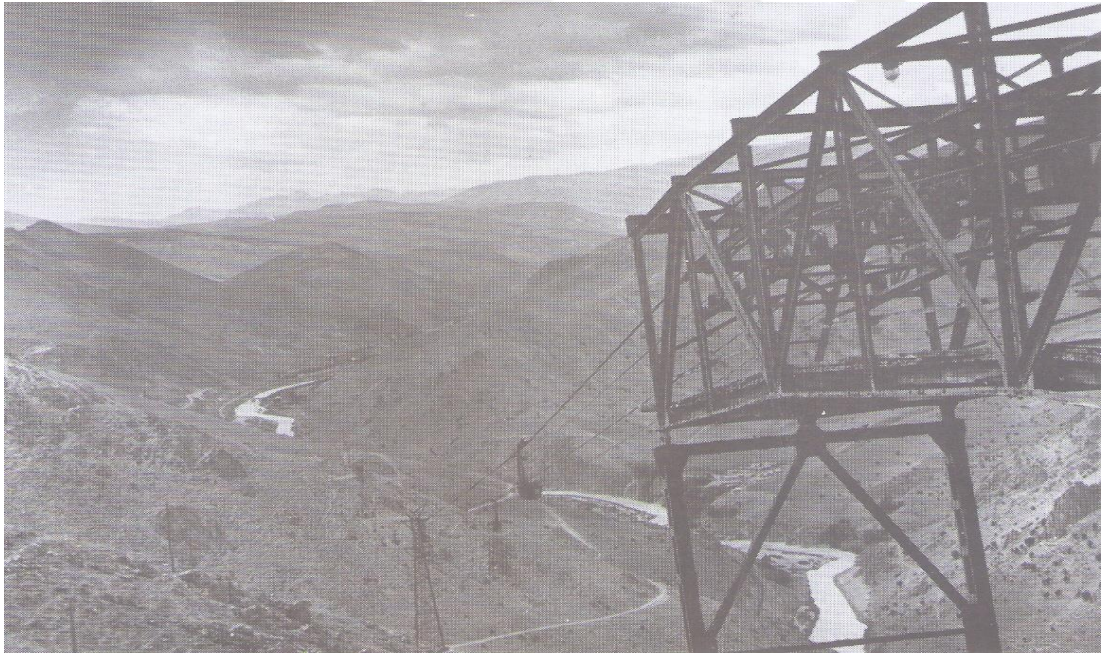


Figure 73: Transportation of Ores by Aerial Ropeway to the Loading Silo After the Crushing Process (A-Kafa/1952-1972)

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

The extracted iron ores at C Placer were transported to the crushers by narrow-gauge railway and the broken ores were taken from there to Demirdağ Station by aerial ropeway⁵⁰⁸. The construction of the new station which was completed in 1942 made the transportation of the ores much easier than ever.

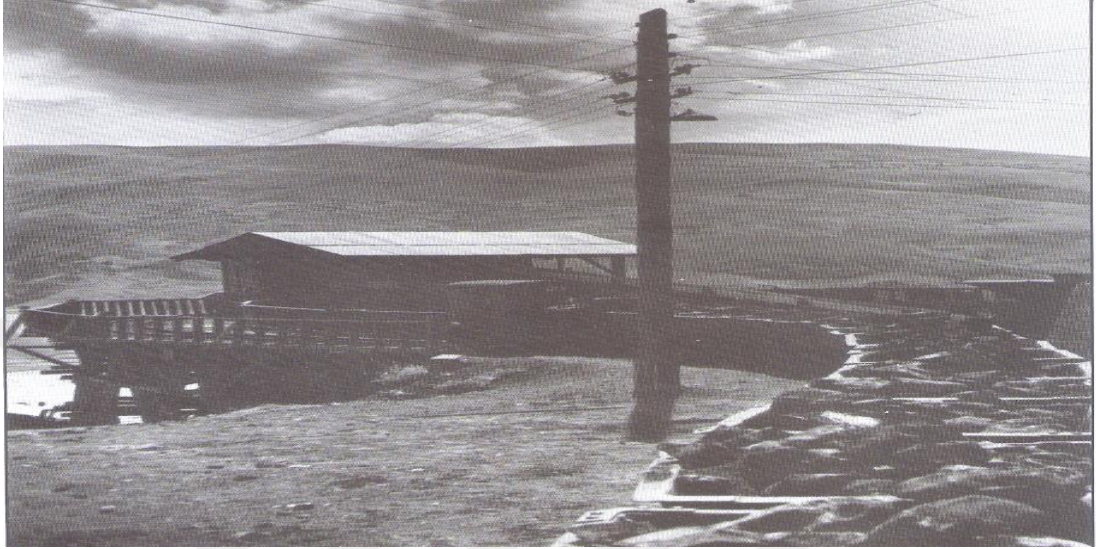


**Figure 74: Transportation of Ores to the Crushers
by Narrow-Gauge Railway (C Placer)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).



**Figure 75: Transportation of the Broken Ores
from C Placer to Demirdağ Station by Aerial Ropeway (1942-1985)**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

⁵⁰⁸ See figures 74 and 75.

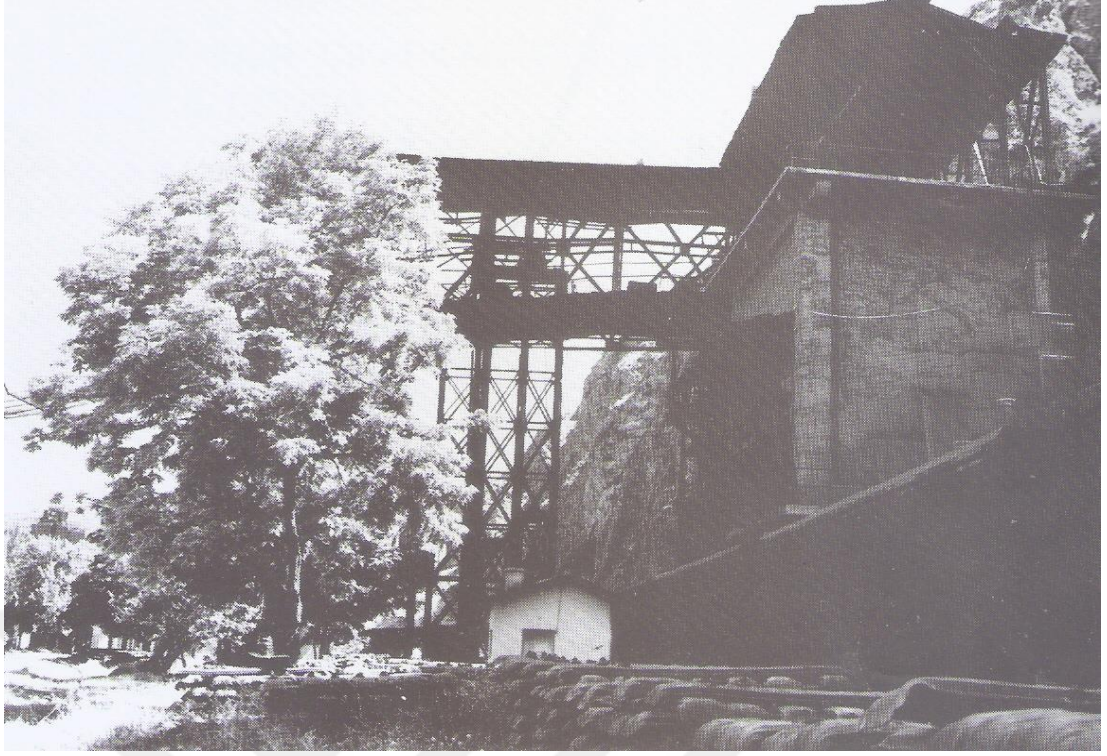


**Figure 76: Aerial Ropeway Silo
Loading Iron Ores into the Wagons at Demirdağ Station**

Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

When the number of drilling and crushing machines increased within a decade, production increased as well as the ease of working. The soils on the ore deposits were drilled and dynamites were stuffed into the holes and ignited. The waste was transported to the stream outside the ore field. After removing the waste, the ores in the form of steps were extracted or loaded by picks, shovels, large drilling machines, excavators, wagons, Euclid trucks and bulldozers.

“After the 1950s, mechanisation began to increase. Heavy machinery such as excavators, drilling machines and hammer guns played an important role in mining. With the increase in production caused by mechanisation, ores were transported from *C Placer* to Divriği Station with Euclid trucks” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Moreover, the setting up of the aerial ropeway in *C Placer* in 1952 made a huge impact on the production process and helped accelerate the production after it supplanted the Euclid trucks transporting the ores to Divriği Station⁵⁰⁹.

⁵⁰⁹ See table 52.

Table 52: Production of Iron Ore Between 1938 and 1952

Year	Production of Iron Ore (tons)
1938	76.507
1939	231.316
1940	130.337
1941	60.754
1942	19.044
1943	91.751
1944	55.889
1945	125.708
1946	112.210
1947	145.620
1948	185.434
1949	209.648
1950	220.847
1951	220.010
1952	362.447

MTA, “Türkiye Madencilik Faaliyeti”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 46-47 (Ankara, 1954-55): 122. MTA, “Umumi Maden Durumu Madenciliğimizin 21 Yıllık Bilançosu ve 1944 Yılıının ilk 6 Ayındaki Durumu”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 32 (Ankara, 1944): 164.

Moreover, in the aftermath of the foundation of the enterprise, there was open pit mining and the adverse effects of winter weather, especially in both 1941 and 1942 led to a decrease in the production of ore. Only 5,863 tons were extracted within 3 months in the first half of 1942⁵¹⁰.

“When the winter conditions were heavy, they would reduce the number of workers. During this time, the ores were stocked and made ready for loading. It continued in this way until the weather conditions normalised, that is, until March and April, and they would call the workers to work again. 90% of the workers came from the villages as there were no areas for closed pit mining and no advanced workshops” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Another reason why the output was not sufficient in the mid-1940s was related to the export marketing problems caused by WWII. Consequently, the production of iron ore in the mines was reduced to the amount required for KARDEMİR⁵¹¹.

⁵¹⁰ MTA, “Umumi Maden Durumu 1942’nin ilk yarısında Türkiye Madenciliği”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 28 (Ankara, 1942): 364.

⁵¹¹ MTA, “Umumi Maden Durumu”, **Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration**, No. 34 (Ankara, 1945): 262-263.

The General Directorate took the initiative to found the Concentration and Pelletising Plants for the enrichment of iron ore in 1972, which marks a breakthrough in the mechanisation. Turgut Öncan, mining engineer and one of the managers of the enterprise from 1971 to 1974, contributed substantially to the foundation of these plants:

“In 1970-71, the General Directorate of the Turkish Iron and Steel Enterprise would decide whether to build Concentration and Pelletising Plants. An English company had prepared a report stating that the existing sinter plants in Karabük should be modernised and there was no need to establish any plants in Divriği. The General Directorate was about to make a decision in line with this report. In the light of the Concentration and Pelletising tests we had performed in the USA, and in line with the briefing and statements I gave to the General Directorate, I convinced the senior management that it was feasible to establish the Concentration and Pelletising Plants in Divriği and then it was decided to establish them”⁵¹².

Two years later, the transportation system and construction of the Pelletising Plant were contracted out. The construction of the plants began in 1977 and when the plants were under construction, the enterprise transferred its administrative building located in Cürekk to the new plants in 1979⁵¹³. In 1980, Sönmez Ulutaş, head of group of the plants, stated that the social units and, crushing and screening units of the plants had been completed and that the remaining ones would have been completed by the end of the year⁵¹⁴. However, Concentration and Pelletising Plants were put into service in 1985 and 1986 respectively⁵¹⁵.

4.3.3 Mechanisation and Training

With the rise in mechanisation, especially in the second half of the 1940s, the need for a more educated and skilled workforce increased⁵¹⁶. Operators knowing to use machines were employed and they helped others to use them. For instance, the children of the surrounding villages, who were educated at the primary school of the enterprise as boarding students and employed in the workshops, helped meet the needs of the enterprise for employment in the future. It was regarded as appropriate to hire the

⁵¹² TMMOB Maden Mühendisleri Odası, **Madencilik Bülteni Özel Sayısı**, No: 54 (Ankara, 2020), 8.

⁵¹³ Türkiye Demir Çelik İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü, **Divriği Madenleri Müessesesi 50. Yılında** (Ankara, 1988).

⁵¹⁴ “Sivas Div-Pelet İşletmelerinin Yıl Sonunda Üretime Başlayacağı Açıklandı”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, August 18, 1980, 4.

⁵¹⁵ Zekai Seyhan, Kemal Öztürk, Aydın Karatepe, “Dünya’da ve Türkiye’de Demir Madenciliği ve Erdemir Maden”, **Türkiye Demir Yatakları Jeolojisi, Madenciliği ve Mevcut Sorunları Sempozyumu Bildiriler Kitabı, 23-25 June 2005** (İstanbul, 2005): 420; Şengül Coşar, “Demir Konsantrelerinin Peletlenmesinde Bor Minerallerinin ve Atıklarının Kullanımının Araştırılması” (Master’s Thesis, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2006), 11.

⁵¹⁶ See figure 77.

children completing primary school as apprentices in order to get faster results in the efficiency of the workforce. Sadık Özgür, the founder of the Kale Lock brand, was one of these children studying and working in the enterprise from 1945 to 1948. Becoming a worker was the indication of becoming a member of the modern world and, the enterprise established in the early Republican period helped peasant children get an education and create new members of the working class through primary school.

“I was also very happy with the dream and excitement of being a brand-new person. Now I came to believe that I was freed from shepherding and misery. I was going to school from morning to noon, and in the afternoon I started to work as an apprentice in the workshop. My clothes had also changed. I was wearing my school clothes from morning to noon, and in the afternoon I was wearing my overalls and going to my master at the lathe”⁵¹⁷.

“We regard the workers working in the mines as unskilled workers. Therefore, there was no point in subjecting the workers working with pickaxes and shovels to test. Those working in the workshops, on the other hand, left their profession in the city such as tinsmithing and blacksmithing and started working as a lather or leveler because they were artisans. Apprentices were recruited so that they could learn the profession with their own masters, and they were trained through their help. They first became journeymen and then charge hands. In order to become a foreman, the charge hands in the workshop took the exam and one of them was chosen as a foreman” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 77: A Job Advert for Air Compressor Technician and Blacksmith

Cumhuriyet, December 9, 1941, 4.

⁵¹⁷ Rıdvan Akar, **Benim Kale'm: Sadık Özgür'ün Yaşam Öyküsü** (İstanbul: Kale Kilit ve Kalıp San. A.Ş., 2011), 31.

As far as the heavy equipment and machinery such as excavators, breakers and lorries are concerned, if there were no operators in the enterprise, new ones were employed to use them⁵¹⁸.



Figure 78: A Job Advert for Excavator Operator

Cumhuriyet, May 21, 1944, 4.

The assistants were trained to learn how to put them into operation so that the enterprise could not employ operators from other cities. They were also examined on their knowledge of the machinery they were using and they got their certificates to be promoted to a chief machine operator⁵¹⁹.

“If a new machine came to the enterprise and there was no one to operate that machine at the workplace, a charge hand working in other enterprises would come. He would put the machine into operation and they would take someone with him to learn how to operate it. After the first start, the rest was easy. If they needed a machine operator, they would test the assistant operators and have the successful ones become chief machine operators. For instance, Mehmet İnan was the assistant of Muharrem Taş who was an excavator operator. He was given a test and he finally became a chief excavator operator” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

“After working as an unskilled worker for a certain period of time, I took care of the lubrication, that is to say, maintenance of the excavator. They said that a test would be held. I was very good at math. There were 80 workers taking the test and they were all primary, secondary, high school and art school graduates. According to the results of this exam, excavator and digger operators, drivers and artisans would be recruited. I studied mathematics for a while with our countryman and engineer Haydar Erkan. I took the exam and got 95 points. Then, I wanted an easier job as a digger operator since the maintenance of the excavator was very challenging, but the manager wouldn't let me. Thus, after going into a profession requiring skill, I used the excavator as an assistant for 7-8 months. Then, I took another exam. An examination board came and they checked to see if I was doing well or badly, and as a result, I became the main operator” (Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983).

⁵¹⁸ See figure 78.

⁵¹⁹ See figure 79.

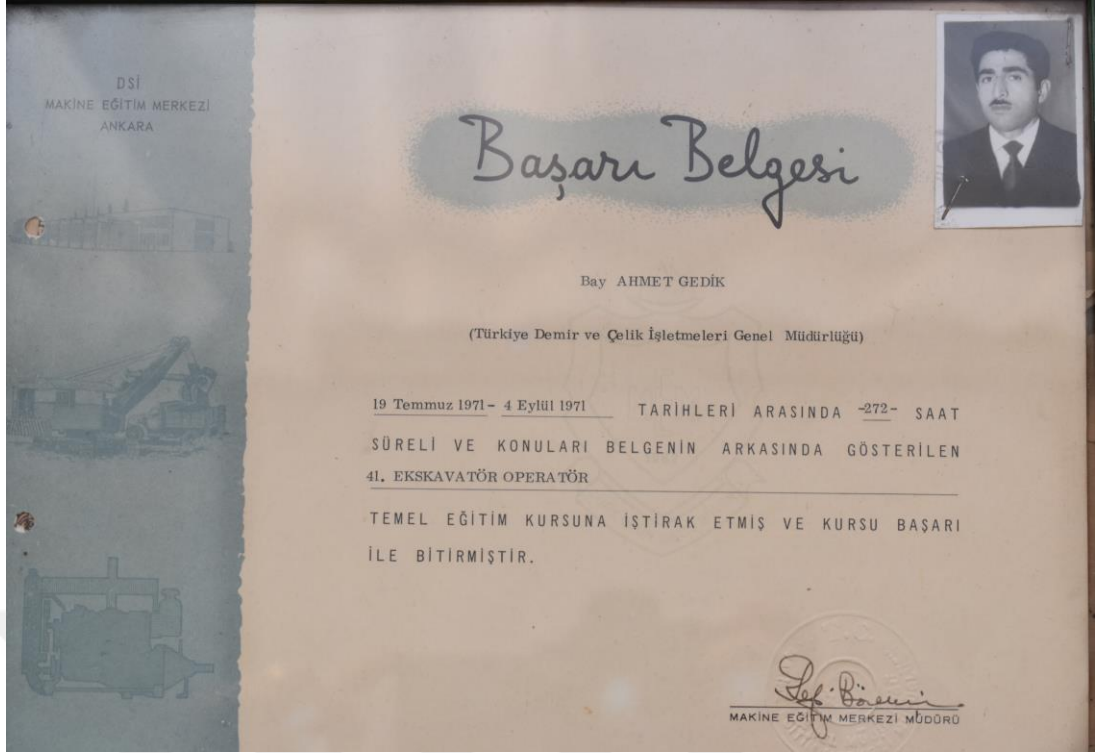


Figure 79: Ahmet Gedik's Excavator Operation Certificate

Personal Archives of Ahmet Gedik

Even in the first years when the enterprise was opened, there were courses which were held. Professional courses were opened in Divriği and in *C Placer*. In addition, for the application of the physical training law, they benefited from secondary school gymnastics teachers who were summoned to those places during the summer vacation⁵²⁰. In addition to the courses held in the enterprise, there were also training activities arranged in some public institutions⁵²¹. Otherwise, workers also went to iron and steel factories in Karabük and İskenderun. A worker shares his experience as follows: “My unit manager sent me to İSDEMİR for a welding course although I was assigned another job in the enterprise and I attended the course for 45 days there. Then, I returned to Divriği and started working in line with the training I received in the repair garage at *A-Kafa*” (Ahmet Manilacı, Retired Worker, 1972-1990).

⁵²⁰ İktisadi Devlet Teşekküllerinin 1941 Yılı Bilançolarını Tetkik Eden Umumi Heyet Zaptı cited in İhsan Çalapverdi, M. Mümtaz Armutak, *Divriği Demir Madenleri Müessesesi Kuruluş Bilgileri ve Faaliyet Raporları* (2008), 29.

⁵²¹ See table 53.

**Table 53: Number of Employees Attending Training Courses
in Public Institutions Between 1.1.1994 and 31.12.1994**

Training Course	Place of Training	Type of Training	Date	Participants
Labour Law	TDÇİ-Kamu İş	Seminar	24.3.1994-25.3.1994	1
Labour Law	TDÇİ-Kamu İş	Seminar	14.4.1994-15.4.1994	3
Implementation of Official Correspondence Boards	Prime Ministry	Seminar	13.5.1994	1
Ore Dressing	HÜ-İTÜ-DEÜ-ODTÜ-YMGV-TMUOB-CHZD	Symposium	6.9.1994-8.9.1994	2
Geoscience	MTA	Conference	3.10.1994-7.10.1994	1
Dust Control	İSGÜM	Seminar	2.11.1994-4.11.1994	1
Designing, Optimisation and Modeling of Ore and Coal Preparation Plants	İTÜ	Seminar	14.11.1994-16.11.1994	1
Radiation Protection	Turkish Atomic Energy Authority	Courses	21.12.1994-22.12.1994	1

Divriği Hekimhan Madenleri Ticaret ve Sanayi A.Ş Genel Müdürlüğü, “1994 Yılı Bilanço ve Faaliyet Raporu” (1995), 21.

“Whereas some courses were intended for training at the workplace, there were also some other compulsory courses stipulated by the Ministry of Labour for the training of the workers to gain knowledge and improve themselves. These on-site training courses were aimed for firefighting, accident prevention and occupational safety and so on” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

Some courses were also opened based on the needs of the line of work⁵²². At the end of the course, those who received a high grade from the exam result would be recruited for some positions and supervising (*çavuşluk*) was one of them. However, in order to apply for this position before attending the course, there were some requirements such as age, education and completion of military service⁵²³.

⁵²² See table 54.

⁵²³ See figure 80.

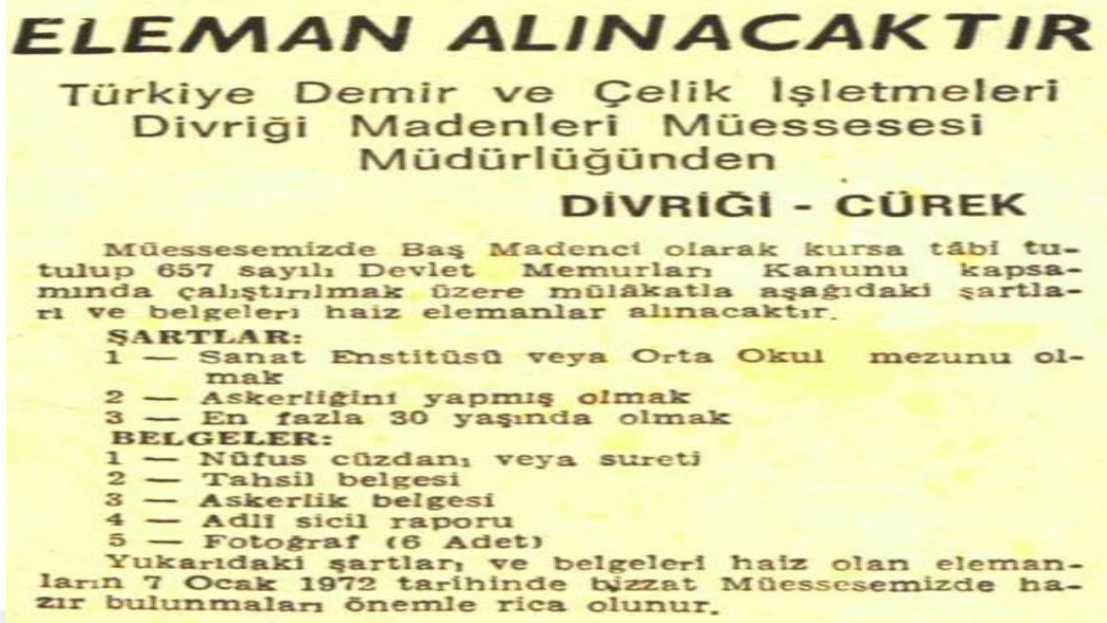


Figure 80: A Job Advert for Supervising

Cumhuriyet, December 31, 1971, 11.

Table 54: Supervising Training Courses Attended by Mustafa Gürsoy in 1970

Courses	Trainer
Open Pit Mining	Hasan Bayav- Abdurrahman Ömerbeyoğlu
Mining Transportation	Nejdet Savaş
Machine Maintenance	Mustafa Azmi Baydar
Advantages and Disadvantages of Open& Closed Pit Mining	Yaşar Yanar
Mine Ventilation	Adnan Şağban
Economic Geology	Kemalaettin Zorlu
Importance of Iron Ore In Industry	Nejdet Savaş
Ground Support	Abdurrahman Ömerbeyoğlu
Description of Explosives	Adnan Şağban
Law	Kemal Yüksel
Health Propaganda	Vahdet Eroğlu
Work Safety	Remzi Aksaray

Personal Archives of Mustafa Gürsoy

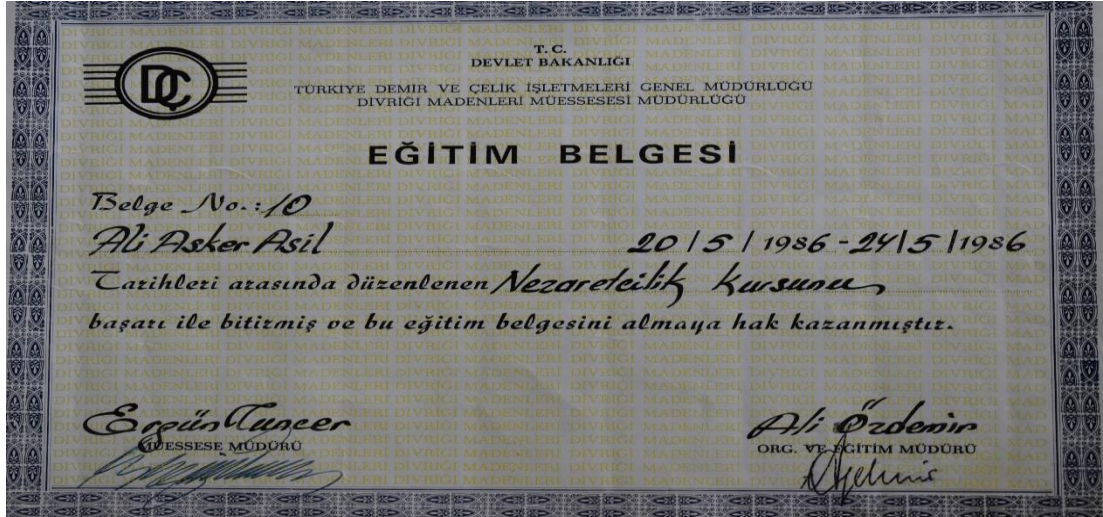


Figure 81: Ali Asker Asil's Supervising Certificate

Personal Archives of Ali Asker Asil

As a result of the mechanisation of the labour process in the enterprise, a reduction in employment did not occur. By contrast, there was a regular increase in the number of workers⁵²⁴.

Table 55: Number of Workers in the First Years of the Enterprise

Year	Number of Workers
1941	900
1942	680
1943	1570
1944	1560
1945	1221
1946	940
1947	820
1948	651
1949	668
1950	981
1951	860
1952	1051
1953	1025

MTA, "Türkiye Madencilik Faaliyeti", *Bulletin of the Mineral Research and Exploration*, No. 46-47 (Ankara, 1954-55): 122.

⁵²⁴ See table 55.

The production made for KARDEMİR increased substantially in the aftermath of the rapid mechanisation and it was intended for fulfilling the needs of the expanding the market. In addition, despite the commissioning of the new plants built over time, the need for a qualified or unskilled workforce to work had always been constant. In this respect, the determining factor in terms of the volume of the workforce is not only mechanical innovations, but also having a production capacity that can meet the needs of the market.

4.3.4 Occupational Accidents

The mining industry has extremely harsh working conditions. Workers are also exposed to factors such as noise and dust depending on the department they work in. The risk of fatal work accidents caused by construction machines is quite high. For this reason, employers must give great importance to occupational safety and health. Despite this, we do not have any information on how much work safety was given by the employer in the first years of the enterprise following its foundation. Here are some of the fatal occupational accidents witnessed by the employees in the enterprise:

“İlyas Öztürk, a supervisor from Dumluca, whom I loved so much, died after an unexpected accident. I had spoken to him on the phone half an hour ago and told him what to do. I went to Cürek for lunch. As soon as I had entered the house, I received a phone call, and it was Kamber Erkan, an excavator operator. He said that he would give me some bad news and I asked him what happened. He responded that İlyas Öztürk had passed away. I couldn't believe it to be true because I had talked to him half an hour ago. While he was using a hand signal for directing a digger to come back, he was run over by it. I remember bursting out into tears after hearing about his death” (Abdurrahman Ömerbeyoğlu, Retired Manager, 29.6.1984- 17.6.1985).

“In 1984, Sait Arı from Galun, who worked without a contract while he was on the night shift taking the mud off the drum, got entangled in the drum and got caught in the conveyor belt, so he was crushed in this accident and he died at the scene. Afterwards, in order not to have any problems, they pretended that he had been employed on a permanent staff beforehand. In addition, Kani Karabaş from Eliski (Gözcik) Village died after being run over by an 80-ton Euclid truck. Finally, Naci Belligün, a local of Divriği, fell into a 1000-metre deep mineshaft at night and died” (Hüseyin Özcan, Retired Worker, 1984-1999).

“A few people got trapped in the conveyor belt due to inexperience and the fact that workers were not trained for this job. There were also others who died in other units and you had to pay attention especially when you were distracted or engaged in any negligent act. There were very big powerful motors and when you got your hands caught inside these bands, it would take you away” (Bektaş Güller, Retired Worker, 1984-2000).

“While working the night shift in the quarry in 1984, while scraping the mud off the crusher's belt from the bottom, I fell on the belt and a friend from Çamşık saw me and stopped the belt. In this way, I survived before falling into the silo. In another accident, while I was working on aerial ropeways during the night shift, I was looking at a conveyor band, and in the dark, I suddenly fell into the silo where the ore was poured. 2 friends stopped the tape and they took me out” (Hüseyin Özcan, Retired Worker, 1984-1999).

4.4 An Overview of the History of the Mining Workers in Divriği

4.4.1 Origin of the First Workers: Peasants Flooding into the Enterprise

In the first years when the enterprise started its production, lots of peasants were employed because of the work process based on manpower and because the type of work they assumed did not require any qualifications.

“90 percent of the workers were peasants because there were no workshops or closed working areas. In the following years, it was necessary to establish a workshop due to the deterioration of the existing machines in the field. In addition, warehouses were built. With the construction of the social facilities, the town dwellers began to flow there. Since they were more knowledgeable in terms of art, they also started to work in the workshops and contributed to the improvement of those places. There were craftsmen such as blacksmiths and tinsmiths in the town centre. No one in the villages knew about these professions. Therefore, most of the workers in the workshops were from the urban area and were working in closed working areas such as warehouses and grocery. Peasants were working in the mines and other open working areas” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

“My father Rıza Özcan started working in the enterprise in 1943. Since he was illiterate and he did not have knowledge of the work, he was assigned duties in different positions. Firstly, he started working as a worker and continued to work as a groom. He used to take care of horses so that managers and engineers could go to the field. I remember him talking about horses in 1953 when I was 5 years old. He also worked as a guard and firefighter respectively, and he retired after a thirty-year service” (Şükrü Özcan, Retired Worker, 1974-1992).

Sunni families, on the other hand, made their living by farming, mostly by utilising the lands around the centre of Divriği. Apart from this, there were artisans and craftsmen in the bazaar who did not have any financial difficulties. Initially, members of this group despised working in the mines, but over time they started to work in the mines as well. Fatma Pekşen, a writer who is descended from a Sunni family and whose father worked in the mines as a driver from 1955 to 1985 said that the majority of the Sunnis didn't want to work for the enterprise in the aftermath of its establishment:

“Before the mines were opened, bellmen in the bazaar used to announce that the enterprise would be opened and that people in good health should come and register for work. Only the Sunni youth from the wealthy part of Divriği didn't condescend to work. They thought that they were the children of the landowners (*ağa*) and that this job was for the lower class. Despite this, some of them went to work secretly from their families. On the one hand, there was unemployment and they couldn't make a living only from farming. However, the ones working as a tradesman and craftsmen were trying to make ends meet in a way ... Those who were studying continued their education, and those who could not study went to the mines to work. In fact, there was Sinan Ağa from the Ayanaga family, one of the deep-rooted families of Divriği, and it was claimed that he did not carry the lunch bowl while going to the mines, but he had someone else carry it. In addition, a mining head supervisor (*başçavuş*), who was my relative, had someone else from the lower strata of the neighbourhood carry it in the same way” (Fatma Pekşen, Writer).

In the first years when the enterprise was established, especially the people living in the villages located in close proximity to the enterprise wanted to become workers. Accordingly, at the end of the shift, they would occupy themselves with farming when

they arrived home in the village. However, the first manager of the enterprise made an agreement with the mukhtar of Ekinbaşı (Kilisecik) Village where the mining settlement was located and he promised that the priority of employment would be given to the residents of the village.

“The mining enterprise was established within the borders of our village. The place where it was established in Cüreğ was temporarily rented and expropriated, and in return, as a result of the agreement made with the mukhtar, everyone in the village who was in need and in the working-age would be employed in the enterprise, and such an opportunity would be provided. In this respect, 1-2 people from each family had the opportunity to work in the mines, and if there was no employment, there would be no one living in our village. Apart from our village, the enterprise employed workers predominantly from the surrounding villages such as Ziniski, Murmana and Purunsur” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

“There were many people in 7-8 hamlets of Kaledibi Village. It was the village that gave the most workers after Ziniski, Murmana, Kilisecik and Purunsur. When we made a collective agreement with the enterprise, we said that the workers to be recruited to the mines would first be from the expropriated areas where Kilisecik Village is located, and other villages such as Murmana and Ziniski. Osman Sert, the husband of my teacher Melahat Sert, was working with Ruşen Kar in the Social Services, and he would go to İmranlı and Zara to look for workers. At that time, agriculture and animal husbandry improved a lot in Divriği. Everyone made a living from agriculture and animal husbandry, and miners were regarded as unskilled workers. It was not very popular until the 1960s and I remember that in the following decades 3,000 people were working” (Hayber Bozkurt, journalist).

Although the ones living in the distant villages were also employed, especially the residents of some villages in the vicinity of the enterprise preferred working there because of accessibility. Nevertheless, the acquaintances who had a high position helped the people of the region to be recruited even if they were subjected to tests. In this case, the test seemed to be just a formality.

“The villages that gave the most workers to the enterprise were especially big villages close to Cüreğ. For example, there were many of them from Ziniski because it was just few kilometres from the enterprise and within walking distance of the residents of the village. Murtaza Karataş, who was once the manager of the enterprise from Anzahar (Eğrisu), supported his region at that time. Apart from that, when Gazi Gündüz was the union chairman, there were about 30 workers from his own village called Eşke (Dikmeçay) while in our village (Şahin) only 4 or 5 people were working for the enterprise. Generally, those who had a lot of acquaintances such as unit managers hired their friends or relatives at that time” (Süleyman Erdoğan, Retired Worker, 1977-2003).

In this period, peasants worked in the mines on a rotational basis and they regarded themselves as farmers earning a side income in the mines. In this respect, they retained their peasant identity and failed to develop a sense of working-class consciousness.



Figure 82: Workers' Boarding House Near Purunsur Village

Eti Bank 1935-1945, Ed. Aslan Tufan Yazman, Ankara, 1945.

With the increase in production and the improvement in closed pit mining, more workers were hired on a permanent basis. Most of them were employed from the peasantry and the ones who continued to work by spending some portion of their time on agriculture and the rest of their time at the workplace constitute the major part of the workforce profile in the mines. Above all, the ones living in the vicinity of the enterprise were fortunate to have more time off and they didn't break their habits which were characteristic of peasant identity.

"I thought of myself as a peasant and we retained our rural identity. 99 percent of the workers were peasants and dependent on the village. People didn't tend to migrate to other cities. When I left Divriği, the population of the town was around 17.000, now it has decreased to 10.000. If the enterprise had not been privatised, today the population would increase even more than ever. People would not break off their ties with the villages and would occupy themselves with agriculture. I had chickens and cows here in Cüreğ. In addition, I used to go to the village and cultivate my land. Even though I didn't have any income, I felt compelled to take care of the land. This feeling was perceived by all our peasant friends working in the enterprise" (Ahmet Manilacı, Retired Worker, 1972-1990).

"In order to help their families living in the villages with agricultural activities, they arranged their annual leave in the summer accordingly. In the same way, they would go to the village every weekend or talk to their unit managers and take 2-3 days off. After the 1980s, due to the inadequacy and inefficiency of agricultural lands, the workers gradually cut off their ties with their villages" (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

"Even though we left the village to work for the enterprise, our connection with the village continued. I used to send my children to the village during the summer school holidays. We had crops and a lot of animals, and we were collecting straw for them, we were reaping our crops. For example, I had 20 days off a year and I was reaping my crops with the children. In the fall, we were collecting our supplies and returning to Divriği when the schools opened" (Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983).

Before the 1980s, the most striking factor in the recruitment of workers was that workers used to be employed from Divriği. Moreover, many young villagers from Divriği were hired in 1979 when there was an increase in the population of the town centre. Where there were 1.167 workers in the enterprise in 1978, the number rose to 1.762 in 1979⁵²⁵. Moreover, some engineers and managers were arrested for the recruitment process in the following years.

“Before 1980, those from the villages of Divriği were preferred as far as the recruitment of workers was concerned. Although they were not from this region, some engineers and managers such as Tevfik Ay, Mustafa Gökçedağ and Hüseyin Yurdakul contributed substantially to this process. Right after the 1980 coup, they were kept in Divriği Prison for a few months because of their attempt to employ the people of the town, and I visited them occasionally as long as they were there” (Ahmet Manilacı, Retired Worker, 1972-1990).

“After some workers got retired, there was a growing need for new workers in the enterprise. We needed them urgently. Appointed as the deputy manager with the support of the minister of justice of that period, Mustafa Gökçedağ coming from Adana started to work. He was also confident, and he and Tevfik Ay, the manager of the enterprise, approved the new hires. The exam was held, and 90 percent of the recruits were children of that region. However, a complaint was made, claiming that the documents of the workers who were employed for political reasons were missing. Eight people including the assistant managers were arrested and sent to prison” (Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985).

In order to meet the workforce of the enterprise, a policy such as giving priority to the family members of the employees living in the Cürekk Settlement was also followed in personnel recruitment.

“The people in the settlement consisted of an elite class, lived very comfortably and seemed to know everything. They were called as if they were an elite group separate from the residents of Divriği and the surrounding places. Maybe they came from there, but once they got inside, they came into contact with a different atmosphere.... One of the reasons why the social structure was different is that some lived there and went to study in other cities, and those who did not go to study would start working in the enterprise through an acquaintance after a while since the management building was there. They didn't have a problem and so to speak they didn't have anything to worry about. At worst, those living in the settlement would become civil servants or workers, but the outsiders would look at them with envy and could not be employed. In other words, it was a little more difficult to get a job from the outside, but our position was an exception. We were desired employees and then we would start working there directly” (Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985).

Besides, there were only few women working in some units of the enterprise. They were mostly working in the laundry plant, guest house, workers' boarding house, dining hall or they were assigned as civil servants.

“There were few laundrywomen and cleaning women working in the social facilities and the hospital. They came from the nearby villages and their number was not very high because the line of business we work in was one of the heaviest lines of work. There was a woman I knew at hospital. Maybe I remember a couple of women and there were not many of them” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

⁵²⁵ Levent Yener, “Türkiye Madenciligi-79”, *Bilimsel Madencilik Dergisi*, Vol. 19. No. 1 (1980): 29.

4.4.2 New Policy of Employment in the late 1980s

From 1987 onwards, the managers adhering to the political power of that time were appointed to the enterprise and they all preferred employing workers from other cities or districts of Sivas. The locals claimed that the reason lying behind this employment policy was to undermine the leftist structure of the district where people are predominantly Alevis.

When Turgut Özal was the prime minister, I was an ANAP voter and not a leftist. Mehmet Güresinli was the district head of the party and he told me to inform the ones I knew to be recruited in the enterprise. Thereupon, I phoned my children living in Ankara and İstanbul to come, but they did not leave their job (Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983).

“There were periods when the district organisations of the political parties were effective in recruiting workers. However, the CHP could not play a very active role when it was in power or coalition. When the right-wing parties were in power, they were more active because they had goals and expectations for the future. It was a matter of changing the democratic structure in the political arena. In other words, the idea was to weaken the political structure, the left, and to neutralise the Alevis and break them off from the left. They found a way to do this by bringing in workers from outside. This was one of the reasons why they insisted on obligatory retirement. Thus, they would dismiss the workers, the majority of whom were Alevis. In addition, especially during the period when ANAP was in power, the ANAP district presidency operated as a labour recruitment agency” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

When M. Hanifi Polat from Kahramanmaraş was assigned to the enterprise as the manager in 1987, he entrusted the management of some important positions to his fellow citizens and recruited lots of workers from his hometown. Non-governmental organisations, the union in particular, couldn't gain power over the decision that affected the life of the people living in Divriği. It was one of the leading factors causing the locals to migrate to other cities as most of them were not hired or they didn't see any prospect of employment for their children.

“Veysel Sönmez was the chairman of the union when the manager of the enterprise and unit managers from Kahramanmaraş came and they recruited workers from their hometown. We as the union made an effort to take a more active stance, but we were unsuccessful. Only the general secretary Ali Altun showed an individual reaction. He prepared a placard saying “no to the recruitment of workers from other cities and placed it in his car. He pulled his car over in front of the government house to protest alone without our knowledge. When we heard about his protest a little late, they had already arrested him and we went to the police station to stand by him. Even though we found his action wrong and individual, we invited all workers to support him. We took him out of the cell, but unfortunately, we could not prevent the recruitment of new workers. However, if we had united around a combined action, both Divriği would have won and the mines would have been in a better condition. We missed this opportunity and could not take advantage of it. To criticise ourselves, this was also our mistake” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

“Before 1987, the managers were democrats, and from that year onwards, all the democrats in the administration were eliminated. After the appointment of a manager from Kahramanmaraş, he brought along members of the management from Kahramanmaraş. They recruited around 800 workers between 1987 and 1989 to weaken the leftist ideology in the district, seize the mayor's

office and keep the union management under control by establishing a yellow union. Among those recruited were militants who had been involved in Kahramanmaraş, Sivas and Çorum massacres, or their children. During this period, very few people from our region were recruited. In those years, ANAP was in power and those adhering to the party or having acquaintances gained the right to work” (Hüsnü Öztürk, Retired Worker, 1986-2004).

Contrary to what many people thought, the government led by Turgut Özal asserted that the number of workers recruited at that time was not as high as it was believed to be⁵²⁶. The question asked by Sivas Deputy Ekrem Kangal to Prime Minister Turgut Özal regarding the workers recruited to the Divriği Iron Mines Operation between 1985 and 1989 was answered by Minister of State Işın Çelebi:

“The number of those who were born in Sivas and Divriği is 571, 251 of whom were born in Sivas and 320 of them were born in Divriği out of 809 workers recruited in the last five years. Its ratio to the general number is around 71%. The remaining 29% of the workers were born in thirty-five different provinces”⁵²⁷.

Table 56: Origin of the Workers Hired Between 1985 and 1989

Province/District	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Divriği	47	48	71	52	102
Sivas	17	63	41	62	68
Ankara	1	3	1	-	-
Tunceli	1	2	-	-	-
Kars	1	-	-	-	-
Erzincan	1	1	1	1	2
Zonguldak	4	12	-	-	-
Malatya	1	5	3	2	4
Gaziantep	1	-	-	-	-
Konya	1	1	-	-	-
Tokat	3	10	1	1	-
Kayseri	4	5	-	1	-
İzmir	1	-	-	-	-
Muş	1	-	-	-	-
Yozgat	2	1	2	3	-
Çankırı	-	3	2	1	-
Balıkesir	-	1	-	-	-
Amasya	-	1	-	-	-
Kahramanmaraş	-	4	16	10	5
Mersin	-	1	-	-	-

⁵²⁶ See table 56.

⁵²⁷ **TBMM Tutanak Dergisi**, Term 18, Vol. 25 (25 Nisan 1989): 391-394.

Table 56-continuing

Elazığ	-	3	-	1	-
Eskişehir	-	1	-	-	-
Samsun	-	2	1	-	-
Edirne	-	1	-	-	-
Trabzon	-	2	-	-	-
Bingöl	-	2	-	-	1
Ordu	-	2	-	-	-
Isparta	-	1	-	-	-
Bursa	-	1	-	-	-
Kütahya	-	1	-	-	-
Gümüşhane	-	3	7	1	-
Adana	-	2	-	2	-
Hatay	-	-	1	-	-
Afyon	-	-	1	-	1
Germany	-	-	1	-	-
Çorum	-	-	-	-	1
Van	-	-	-	-	1
Total	86	182	149	137	185

TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Term 18, Vol. 25 (April 25, 1989): 393-394

There was also another group of people In 1989 when Turgut Özal was the prime minister, the Turks living in Bulgaria were forced to migrate to Turkey and settled in different parts of the country. Some of them also came to Divriği to work as civil servants in the enterprise. All couples were employed and they all lived in the Selavattepe Settlement.

4.4.3 Foreign Experts

Since the establishment of mining enterprise, foreign workers from many countries, especially the Germans had contributed to the establishment of different plants. The Germans played an important role in the construction of a new settlement after the foundation of the enterprise and helped build the aerial ropeways intended to transport the iron ores to the train stations.

“People came from abroad as additional facilities were established. A lot of foreign people came from Germany, America, England and Holland to help the engineers, who were working for the MTA, with their projects. For example, as far as I remember, an aerial ropeway was established in 1952. The Germans prioritised its installation and many Germans had a working life of about 3 years” (Saffet Öztürk, Retired Unit Manager, 1970-1987).

“When the Germans built an aerial ropeway, the main warehouse where the loading silo was located became the warehouse of the aerial ropeway. At that time, at *A-Kafa* the ores were transported through the quarry tunnel and unloaded in Cüreğ. Those who did this were Chief Engineer Trepter and two other German engineers called Willy and Meiser. I also worked there and the year was 1952. We were carrying iron ores with the Germans, making a lot of money” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).



Figure 83: German Engineers

Anonymous



Figure 84: German Engineers

Anonymous

In September 1939, Nils Olof Berggren, a Swedish engineer, was allowed to work in the mines for a month to prepare the installation plan of the enterprise by the Council

of Ministers upon the proposal of the Ministry of Interior and with reference to the request of the Ministry of Economy⁵²⁸. He asked 3000 liras for his service⁵²⁹.

Concentration and Pelletising Plants were constructed by some foreign companies in cooperation with Turkish ones. The Turkish-German (Kutlutaş and Thyssen Rheinstahl Technik GmbH) partnership for the Pelletising Plant and another Turkish-German (Krupp Technick and Fenni Gama A.Ş.) partnership won the tender for the Concentration Plant in 1975. REXNORD, an English company, had the right to install the Crushing and Sieving Plant in 1974⁵³⁰. Accordingly, some workers and engineers came to Divriği to help establish these plants.

“When I started work in July 1985, we worked together for 1.5 or 2 years until the facility was completed. Their salary was very high and they got paid in German marks. Cars were rented for them and they had private chauffeurs. When production started, they returned to their countries one by one. They did not have their families with them and they were constantly going to their country. They were staying at the guesthouse in Selavattepe. A few of them were also allocated houses and they were staying there” (Ali Ekber Mercan, Retired Worker, 1985- 2015).

4.5 Insight into the Life of Unionism in the Enterprise

4.5.1 1950-1963: The Birth of the First Union in Divriği

On February 20, 1947, Turkey's first trade union law numbered 5018 on Workers' and Employers' Unions and Trade Unions came into force. Article 1 of the law defined trade unions as “Associations to be established by employees in the same branch of work or in professions related to this line of work for the purpose of helping and protecting and representing their common interests”⁵³¹. The law did not only mention the right to strike but also it did not recognise the right to strike for the unions. After that, a number of unions were founded in different parts of Anatolia. One of the first trade unions was thereby established in Divriği in 1950 by the workers working in the Divriği Iron Mines Operation under the name of "Divriği Iron Workers' Union" (Divriği Demir İşçileri Sendikası)⁵³². Until the foundation of the union, workers

⁵²⁸ [İsveç Uyruklu Nils Olof Berggren'in Etibank Divriği Demir Madenleri İşletmesi'nde 1 ay İçin Çalıştırılması], September 13, 1939, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 88-90-14.

⁵²⁹ [Divriği Demir Madenlerinin İşletme Tesisatına Ait Planın Tanzimi İçin İsveç'ten Getirilecek Mühendislerden Berggren'e 3000 Liralık Serbest Döviz Verilmesi], June 15, 1939, Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı Cumhuriyet Arşivi, No. 87-57-4.

⁵³⁰ “Yatırımlar/ İhaleler”, <http://www.imo.org.tr/resimler/ekutuphane/pdf/15519.pdf> [April 1, 1975].

⁵³¹ “İşçi ve İşveren Sendikaları ve Sendika Birlikleri Hakkında Kanun (L.N. 5018)”, **Resmî Gazete**, 6542 (February 1947): 11929-11930.

⁵³² Kemal Sülker, **Türkiye’de Sendikacılık**, Sendika Kültürü Serisi No.1 (İstanbul, 1955), 92.

couldn't claim their rights and they had to come to terms with whatever the managers wanted them to do.

“In the first years of the enterprise after it had been established, there was not a trade union, people did not have a meal time and they used to live on insufficient wages. Those who had areas of land and a craft, and who could make their living, would not work in the mines. The manager of the enterprise of that time would get into his car and gather workers from the villages for employment. However, the ones getting their wages would run away and the manager would take them again to the mines” (Hasan Oğuz, Retired Worker, 1971-1994),.



Figure 85: Mahmut Bozkurt, the Founder of Divriği Iron Workers' Union and One of the Cofounders of the Turkish Mining Workers' Union

Personal Archives of Hayber Bozkurt

Mahmut Bozkurt was the founder of the union whom workers of the enterprise owed greatly till the privatisation of the enterprise in terms of the rights that they had acquired. After the foundation of the enterprise, he also struggled for the workers' rights as a representative entitled to convey the messages of the workers. Having established the union, he wasn't assigned a place to carry on with his works since he was labelled communist sympathiser following the foundation of the union believed to be also a communist association.

“While I was at secondary school, my father Mahmut Bozkurt occupied himself with the problems of the workers such as wages, supply of clothes, soap and shoes. In the mid-1940s, the union had not been established yet. The workers used to vote for a worker representative

defending their rights against the employer. My father set to work as a worker representative and he was one of the first unionists establishing the Turkish Mining Workers' Union. I was helping my father with correspondence while I was going to secondary school. My sister Kibriye Bozkurt was helping him, too. When the first union was established, 5 people came together, and Bekir Bıyık and Eyüp Durmaz were the ones I remember. Because it was a new movement, no one wanted to assign a place in Divriği as the administrative building of the union. Hikmet Sözen, the manager of the Divriği Iron Mines Operation at that time, did not give a place because it was an organisation against the employer. We used to live in a place called *Karşı Mahalle* (Opposite Neighbourhood) in Cürek, in the boarding houses belonging to the enterprise. My father allocated one room of the house as the administrative building of the trade union. They held their meetings there, then there was nothing including a typewriter in those years. The union was collecting dues from its members by hand under difficult conditions. It didn't have financial power, and my sister and I used to exchange correspondence by fastening the tip of the pen, which they called *divit* on the point of the pencil with a thread. My father used to write down his notes and then we would write them up. Thus, Mahmut Bozkurt established the first union in Turkey in 1950 under these conditions. At that time, there was not a trade union in Zonguldak, but there was the Labour Union (Amele Birliği). After the law on Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining Agreement had been enacted in 1950, the union was established. In addition, Mahmut Bozkurt's photo is still in the administrative building of the Turkish Mining Workers' Union in Ankara as one of its founders... Mahmut Bozkurt was the chairman of the union until the collective bargaining agreement law was enacted in 1963" (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

When Divriği Iron Workers' Union was believed not to be influential enough by some groups, another union was established on July 1, 1954 with the name of 'Eti Iron Development Union' (*Eti Demir Kalkınma Sendikası*) by İsmail Yalçın, İbrahim Aydoğan, Himmet Gürler, Ali Murat, Kamber Üstüner, Aziz Yılmaz, Sait Zihni, Sait Yozgat, İbrahim Aydınoglu, Veli Kalın, Nuri Koz, Yusuf Güneri, Cemal Özdemir, Halim Karataş, Hasan Koç, Gülali Erdoğan, Tahir Turhan and Hümmet Durak. The new attempt to supplant Mahmut Bozkurt never took effect and he was elected as the chairman in the general congress on both May 31, 1955 and May 27, 1956 respectively. In the congress held on May 17, 1957, the name of the union was changed as 'Divriği Iron Steel Development Union' (*Divriği Demir Çelik Kalkınma Sendikası*). Mahmut Bozkurt was re-elected as chairman in the Fourth General Congress held on May 31, 1958. On April 15, 1959, in the Fifth General Congress, Mahmut Bozkurt became the chairman again although he was dismissed from the enterprise:

"İnayetullah Kudeki was an authorised mechanical engineer in the company and because of work, he referred Mahmut Bozkurt to the disciplinary committee and his employment contract was terminated. However, he came back to work due to his party relations and was re-elected as the chairman of the union" (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

In the general congress held on June 9, 1961, the union merged with Divriği Iron Workers' Union in accordance with the decision taken in the previous congress and the name of the union was changed as 'Divriği Region Development Union' (*Divriği*

Bölge Kalkınma Sendikası). Through a new bylaw which was amended, the congress would have been convened every two years ⁵³³.

4.5.2 1963-1979: The Growth of Unionisation Among Workers

In the extraordinary general congress held in 1963, A. Hayber Bozkurt was elected as the chairman. The name of the union was changed as Union of Divriği Cevher İş (Divriği Cevher İş Sendikası).

“In the 1963 General Congress, I was the chairman of the council, and Mahmut Bozkurt and Hümmet Durak were candidates for the chairmanship of the union. At that time, workers would elect the chairman of the union, not the board of directors. The general congress came to a decision that not the workers who came to that congress, but all the workers could vote, so the election was postponed to the following day. Mahmut Bozkurt withdrew his candidacy and I became a candidate. A ballot box was placed in the workplace and almost 100% of the workers cast their votes. As a result, I was elected as the chairman of the union and I assumed this duty for a while. Between 1964 and 1973, I became the head of the organisation of the Mining Workers' Union in the Central Anatolia and Eastern Anatolia Regions” (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

For a while, especially, at *C Placer* most of the workers wanted to be organised under another union led by Haydar Engin, Hüseyin Üçyıldız and Mustafa Ardic. The reason why they founded another union was that Mahmut Bozkurt adhered to a different political party, the AP, whereas they took sides with the CHP.

“There were also yellow unions established by the employer in 1957-1963. The mining head supervisors led the yellow ones at the time. One of the head supervisors, a very valuable friend Haydar Engin at *C Placer* founded a union. Hüseyin Üçyıldız and Mustafa Ardic who were also head supervisors at *C Placer* supported him. We told them to unite with us against the employer and added that otherwise the employer would be stronger in that situation. They said "No". The other union sustained its activities for a while, and the union led by Mahmut Bozkurt was approved by TÜRK-İŞ. After a while, our friend Fahri Engin, Haydar Engin's son, who was from Zoğallı Village in Zara, became the head of that union and then when I became the chairman of the union in 1963, I personally went to *C Placer* where they were strong. I got on the top of the workers' pullman. I asked them to opt for the presence of either a single and united union or another union. They eventually went along with me and agreed on reuniting under a union so that the workers could be much stronger against the employer... Because there were 2 unions, the employer was stronger than us even though our union outnumbered the other union. He would try to discourage us by saying that they would sit around the table with the other yellow unions” (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

“When there was not a union and they fired you, you would not turn to any organisations. Everything changed thanks to the union. I also served in the union for a while. In 1960, TÜRK-İŞ (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu/ Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions*) came and we got certain rights through the collective bargaining agreement. The union couldn't fulfil its function beforehand. The workers wouldn't protest, make a contract and go on strike. They came out after the law in 1960... The enterprise did not allow us to benefit from our rights although they were written in the law on the collective bargaining agreement. The enterprise reduced the number of employers to 999 so as to prevent the worker representative from joining the meeting

⁵³³ **Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi**, Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı Yayını, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Numune Matbaacılık, 1996), 206.

of the board of directors even though it had more than 1000 employers. However, they counted only the permanent ones and they generally did not count the short-term workers working in construction during the summer period. We eventually could appoint a worker representative to the board of directors” (Ahmet Ertuğrul, Retired Worker, 1952-1980).

“After the collective bargaining, strike and lockout law was enacted, when Bülent Ecevit was the minister of labour, the unions became much stronger. Thus, we had a strike weapon against the employer, and then we had more time and social benefits. However, when I was the chairman of the union and organisation, I did not approve of the strike. During the term of Mustafa Solakoğlu, one of the managers, the union executive board decided to go on strike and we could not agree on 2 or 3 articles. We agreed on everything including wages and social benefits, but a strike was held. As the head of the organisation, I was against the strike decision. A strike must be used in the last resort. If it is not used properly, it will be to the detriment of the workers and the union when it backfires. One night, strike shirts, drums and shrill pipes were prepared. There would be a strike at 1 am but just before it took place, I talked to the governor of Sivas. I told him that the union had decided to go on strike due to 3 articles that would not bring many benefits to the workers and I requested him to convince the manager of the enterprise to come to terms with our demands. Then, he told me to hang up the phone and that he would call the manager. Our friends were fully prepared for the strike. After an hour passed by, Mustafa Özer, the manager of social services, came to the union building. He said that he had come there on behalf of the general manager and he was waiting for the union’s executives to talk to him, and added that he had approved the three articles we could not agree on. All our friends were looking forward to it and in spite of this decision, they wanted to go on strike. Afterwards, Hakkı Coşar, a friend from the union of Maden-İş came and I asked them why they insisted on the strike by adding that all our demands had already been accepted and they could celebrate the acquired rights in a feast atmosphere. In the end, they withdrew their insistence. In the late 1970s, a strike decision was made again and unfortunately, it was to the detriment of the workers” (Hayber Bozkurt, Journalist).

Mustafa Koç was elected as the chairman of the union in the general congress which was convened in 1964. The name of the union was turned into Cevher-İş. Mustafa Koç led the union in accordance with the result of the election held in the following congresses till 1973.

“I had been on the union board of directors 3 times. We could reach a consensus with the employers through the collective bargaining agreements we made. You expected them to meet your demands and they had some offers to make. The dress was of coarse cloth, and we asked them for fine cloth. The coat was also of coarse cloth and we had it turned into leather. There were hunting vests, and they were made of green cloth, and we had them turn into leather. The shoes took place of the boots, we got them to increase the wood aid to 1 ton and the coal aid to 1 ton. The man who went to the army and came from there was automatically recruited without being unemployed. Finally, the family members whose fathers died would start working there. We had a summit meeting with the manager once a month. We insisted that there should be pullmans and we eventually had the right to commute by pullman” (Musa Ergün, Retired Worker, 1958-1978).

“I came back from İstanbul in 1968 and worked in the enterprise. I was elected to the union board of directors in the same year. After being elected, I made a considerable effort for the benefits to the workers without considering my own interests... Previously, not a penny was given when the enterprise was established on the borders of Kilisecik (Ekinbaşı) Village. When we took responsibility in the union, we said that they benefited from this land and we thereby told them to hire the young people who grew up in there. We provided such an opportunity for Kilisecik at that time” (Murtaza Özkan, Retired Grocer, 1968-1992).

In the following two congresses held on September 16, 1973 and September 18, 1976, Gazi Gündüz was put into the chair⁵³⁴.

“Union election would be held in 1976. Mustafa Koç and Gazi Gündüz both visited me as two candidates for the chairmanship of the union and they wanted me to take part in their lists which would constitute the board of directors. I refused their offer. Two days later Mehmet Cengiz Uğur from Sincan, a member of the Union of Sivas Demiryol-İş, requested me to join the board led by Gazi Gündüz. I eventually accepted his request to take sides with Gazi Gündüz and we won the election. I also joined the union's collective agreement for a while and I took the place of Vice Chairman Mehmet Deveci, Hakkı Kutlu and İbrahim Aslan at different times. I took charge in the union for a term and I didn't join it in the following duty term” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).

Table 57: Members of Executive Board of the Union, 1973-1976

Position	Name-Surname	Profession	Origin
Chairman	Gazi Gündüz	Construction Foreman	Dikmeçay
Vice Chairman	Mehmet Deveci	Mining Supervisor	Yalnızsöğüt
General Secretary	Murtaza Akbıyık	Mining Head Supervisor	Höbek
Bookkeeper	Hüsnü Tuncer	Lathe Department Foreman	Divriği
Member	İbrahim Eren	Cürek Chief Tallyman	Sincan
Member	Abidin Akça	Cinema Operator	Şahin
Member	Battal Özdemir	Coach Driver for Civil Servants	Kaledibi
Member	Tahsin Kahveci	Coach Driver for Civil Servants	Divriği
Member	Sait Işık	Coach Driver for Civil Servants	Susuzlar
Member	Ahmet Güler	Chief of Transportation	Ekinbaşı
Member	Cuma Karahalil	Excavator Driving Master	Ekinbaşı
Member	Mustafa Akyıldız	Excavator Operator	Kalebidi
Member	Yusuf Ergün	Auto Electric Maintenance Master	Akmeşe
Member	İbrahim aslan	Maintenance master at Enterprise Garage	Erikli
Member	Ali Kabadayı	Driver	Kayacık
Member	Hakkı Kutlu	Construction Master	Karakale
Member	Garip Aygün	Excavator Operator	Akmeşe
Member	Fevzi Yücel	Lorry Driver	Akmeşe

Personal Archives of Abidin Akça

⁵³⁴ **Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi**, Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfı Yayını, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Numune Matbaacılık, 1996), 206.

“In April 1972, an exam for employing security guards would be held. I took the written exam, and then we had an oral exam in July or August. I started working on September 4. At that time I started working as a civil servant in accordance with the law no. 657. It continued like this until 1976. There were 9 or 10 of us working under the same conditions. We all turned to the union to solve this problem. The union took this application into account, talked to the employer, and it was accepted for us to become a worker. Both the employer and the union made an agreement and so I went on working with worker status. However, our union activities were limited due to our duty because we were guards. Meanwile, our salary was increased to the level of the one paid to the workers based on the normal contract, and our economic situation also improved. It was certain that we were satisfied with our job, but we didn’t use to join the strikes and we had to go to work when the other workers went on strike. Collective bargaining agreements were well made at that time. Even if we were the members of TÜRK-İŞ, it benefited us, which continued until 1979” (Ali Çınar, Retired Worker, 1972-1996).

Table 58: Members of the Executive Board of the Union, 1976-1979

Position	Name-Surname	Profession	Origin
Chairman	Gazi Gündüz	Construction Foreman	Dikmeçay
Vice Chairman	Hasan Ergün	Waiter in the Boarding House	Akmeşe
General Secretary	Battal Özdemir	Coach Driver for Civil Servants	Kaledibi
Bookkeeper	Hüsnü Tuncer	Lathe Department Foreman	Divriği
Member	Nurettin Kaya	Chef in the Boarding House	Kırkgöz
Member	Reşit Özcan	Guard	Ömerhan
Member	Ali Özdemir	Hammer Gunner	Kaledibi
Member	Şükrü Özcan	Foreman	Ovacık
Member	Muharrem Elmas	Drilling Foreman	Karakale
Member	Kemal Gündoğan	Machinery Repairman	Demirdağ
Member	H. Gazi Metin	Charge Hand	Şahinköy
Member	Dursun Polat	Driver	Zeyve
Member	Muharrem Taş	Excavator Operator	Demirdağ
Member	Celal Kurt	Electrician	Günbahçe
Member	Veli Yıldırım	Guard	Güneyevler
Member	İsmail Karahalil	Worker	Ekinbaşı
Member	Mustafa Çapraz	Aerial Ropeway Foreman	Dumluca
Member	Hıdır Güldalı	Aerial Ropeway Operator	Yalnızsöğüt

Personal Archives of Abidin Akça

In 1979, many workers came together to bring the future of the union into question and believed that it couldn't live up to workers' expectations. In the end, following the process coming up for discussion, another union was called upon to take an active role in the unionist struggle.

4.5.3 1979-1980: The Emergence of Yeraltı Maden-İş (Yeraltı ve Yerüstü Devrimci Maden İşçileri Sendikası/Progressive Union of Under-and Overground Mine Workers of Turkey)

Left-right political tensions running high in the whole country in the late 1970s also spread in Divriği and raised the political awareness of the public, which found its base, especially among the youth and workers. The struggle in the unions thereby invigorated by these movements prepared the ground for a division within themselves.

In the mining sector, Yeraltı Maden-İş, the affiliated union of DİSK (*Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu/ Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey*), became influential in many factories and gained a place in Divriği.

“When I first started working, I went through a painful process. At that time, there were clashes between right and left groups in the streets. The revolutionary-left and public opposition, democratic freedom movements of the unions and parties in Turkey were more active. These movements also started to take effect in Divriği, especially in the union and youth movement. They were working effectively in their organisations. The union change ensued from these events. In fact, we focused on turning the workers' union into a structure that could meet the needs of the struggle rather than change the union. Otherwise, the name of the union was not important. Our aim was to reduce the unity, struggle and organisation of the workers to a structure that would respond to this struggle because at that time, there were various federations such as TÜRK-İŞ and DİSK. They were trying to form unions, in parallel with right-wing reactionary fascist principles of the MHP, which the power was trying to create. The aim was to neutralise the working class, keep it under their own control, and unionise in this direction. TÜRK-İŞ had already had a political position that came to this approach. That's why it was regarded as a right-wing union. It had moved away from protecting the unionist struggle and organisation to defend the rights and future of the workers, and to make them more effective, mostly under the guidance of capitalist forces. Along with that trend embedded in re-awakening and resurrection, democratic freedom movements that started with the 1968 wind in Turkey, the mining workers longed for a new union. In addition to the effective work of the youth, there were also pioneers in this change that shouldered this struggle among the working class. At that time, the effect of the struggle of Yeraltı Maden-İş in Yeni Çeltik and Hekimhan defending class unionism in a more consistent way was reflected in Divriği, and we aimed to change the union in order to take it to that point. Our aim was to transform Divriği into a point where the miners would act for their rights. This discussion was carried out and during this time there was a conflict on whether to retain the status of the union or leave it, which lasted until the congress. Although the majority in the congress said yes, a group took a very active stance against the dissociation of the union. They argued that dissociation or union change was not right. However, they were not able to present very good justifications while putting forward their thesis. Thus, that wind continued to take effect in the congress, and a large majority made the transition to Yeraltı Maden-İş” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

Kemal Özer, the chairman of Maden-İş, decided to take part in the general congress on September 16, 1979 to exert an influence on the workers a week after Yeraltı

Maden-İş was entitled to be the authorised union in Murgul Copper Operations. He even became a candidate for leading the congress as chairman, but the workers put up a candidate called Veli Yalçın receiving 700 votes and Kemal Özer felt himself obliged to leave the congress which 1350 members joined. Later, TÜRK-İŞ believed to have a passive attitude towards the employer instead of defending the workers' rights was replaced with a union affiliated to DİSK with the majority of the workers' votes. 850 workers against 500 workers were in favor of Yeraltı Maden-İş which had the right to represent them⁵³⁵. In this congress, the union management the workers voted for elected Veysel Sönmez as the chairman of the union.

“During this transition period, the collective agreement process also started and we had a positive start with the new union’s representatives. It was a matter of being able to carry out the activities around the views of the working class, starting from the workplace, that is, starting from the smallest unit. In other words, the demands would be expressed, discussed, formulated and drafted. This mission was carried out by workplace councils and organisations in the workplace. The first session of the collective agreement was held and then, the coup broke out. It could come to a certain stage, but it was not concluded. The junta administration canceled all collective agreements that were in progress at that time and closed our union, so it determined a salary rise, which was far from meeting the needs of the class at that time. The purchasing power of the working class began to decline, the rights gained were taken away and no democratic political rights demands could be brought to the agenda” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

“When I first got a job in 1976, TÜRK-İŞ was the authorised union. Before September 12, representatives of Yeraltı Maden-İş came and we tried to activate that union which later won the majority of the workers and had the authority to enter into a contract. We eventually left TÜRK-İŞ. However, the following year we had been deprived of all our union gains caused by the military coup before our contracts expired. After that, they outlawed Yeraltı Maden-İş” (Ali Asker Asil, Retired Worker, 1976- 2002).

4.5.4 1983-1989: Unionism in the Aftermath of the Coup

The 1980 coup undermined the trade union movement and deprived the working class of economic and democratic rights. The Trade Union Law no. 2821 and the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Strike and Lockout Law no. 2822 enacted in 1983 imposed bans and regulations reducing the unions to professional organisations and limiting their most basic functions⁵³⁶. Then, Cevher-İş, the affiliated organisation of TÜRK-İŞ, got the right to represent the workers because DİSK had been closed down and many of the workers regarding TÜRK-İŞ as a right-wing organisation serving the employer didn’t become members of the union for a while.

⁵³⁵ “İşçiler DİSK Saflarında Birleşiyor”, **Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu Aylık Yayını**, No.57 (Ankara: EM-AŞ Ofset, September 1957), 48.

⁵³⁶ “Sendikalar Kanunu (L.N. 2821)”, **Resmi Gazete**, 18040 (May 1983): 1-19. “Toplu İş Sözleşmesi, Grev ve Lokavt Kanunu (L.N. 2822)”, **Resmi Gazete**, 18040 (May 1983): 20-36.

“We had collective bargaining negotiations in 1980 before the military coup happened. At that time, Yeraltı Maden-İş was the authorised union and the negotiations were in the signing process. When the fascist junta led by Kenan Evren came to power, they terminated the collective bargaining negotiations and they did not give us any social rights. The wages of the mining workers fell below the minimum wage. In compliance with the law, when it falls below the minimum wage, it is automatically completed to the minimum wage in the public sector. In other words, we worked with the minimum wage for two years and from time to time they did not pay our salaries. I couldn't buy even milk for my 6-month-old child, so I bewailed the loss of earlier rights. There was not a union from 1980 to 1983” (Süleyman Erdoğan, Retired Worker, 1977-2003).

After TÜRK-İŞ came into action in 1983, Hüsnü Tuncer, who was in the union management led by Gazi Gündüz before the coup, was appointed as the chairman by the union itself, and he continued his duty for two consecutive terms until 1987.

“In 1983, with the normalisation process, TÜRK-İŞ was opened. It continued its activities and ended up as the authorised union by opening its own branch in Divriği. Since the lawsuits continued for a long time, approximately 70 percent of the employees did not become members of the union and we took such an attitude. When we realised that no other solutions could be found, we made up our mind to join the union again by taking a joint decision. They continued their union activities for two terms until 1987 under the chairmanship of Hüsnü Tuncer” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

“After the coup, they put TÜRK-İŞ into action one more again. We didn't join it, of course, and they labelled us as rightist or leftist workers. They employed right-wing people from outside and tried to break the resistance of our union, In the end, they subverted it and we had to join TÜRK-İŞ. We were the last two people from the other union, and so we became members of the yellow union” (Ali Asker Asil, Retired Worker, 1976- 2002).

In 1987, the members of the union pretended that the union was inactive and didn't have any power to represent their rights against the employer, so they aspired to reinstate Veysel Sönmez who was the chairman of Yeraltı Maden-İş in the union.

“When we became members of the union in the aftermath of two terms, we participated in an organised activity in the delegate elections held at the workplace, and we prepared for the elections by forming commissions of our own organisation among almost all people, at *A-Kafa*, *C Placer*, construction units and workshops. We entered the congress by preparing the delegate list and elected Veysel Sönmez, who was the chairman of Yeraltı Maden-İş before the coup, in the spirit of reappropriation as a reaction to the closure of the union at that time. We chose this path both to raise the spirit of organisation and struggle against closure, and to keep that dynamism alive” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

4.5.5 1989-1999: Unionist Struggle at its Peak

Some political organisations within the union came together in order to repel the rising pressure of the employer and put an end to the loss of rights of the workers. In the aftermath of the negotiations, a congress was held and Murtaza Yıldırım was elected as the chairman of the union in 1989.

“Veysel Sönmez broke off his ties with the workers and the organisation in his last years, and he didn't lean towards organised struggle. That's why, as a part of a political structure in collaboration with workers, we wanted to intervene in this process by carrying out joint

evaluations, and this is how our term started in 1989. We were going through a period in which our rights and gains could not be protected. In addition, we were subjected to pressure and attacks by employers, which was an unbearable situation. Setting in motion the workplace activities and collectivising political efforts, we incorporated them into a certain programme. Then, by a new congress to be held, we demanded that a structure favouring an effective class had to be systematised, and the workers and the oppressed had to come to power. As a matter of fact, this approach gained the workers' trust and by a large majority in the first congress, we established a new structure under the chairmanship of Murtaza Yıldırım, of which I was the general secretary. When the new structure was invigorated, we made much effort to revive the unit organisations and put them into practice. Visiting the workplaces and arranging meetings we drew up a new programme. We tried to re-establish the warm bond that had to exist between the union and the workers. Eventually, we tried to instil a sense of ownership of the union into the workers" (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

This period coincides with a period in which the unionist struggle reconsolidated itself after the coup. The new administration of the union played a key role in regaining the rights usurped by the coup. The strength of the workers' organisation also enabled workers to gain great opportunities in collective agreements.

"The union leaders appointed by the employers between 1983 and 1989 maintained the process of unionism. After ANAP came to power, although there was some minor progress, the effect of the military coup was still felt. Later, the congress was held in 1989 and the old administration was toppled in the branch congress. This is how we came to the union management. We sat at the collective bargaining table in 1989. Let's suppose that our wage which was 250 liras increased to 550 liras in a flash. Our wages in the second collective bargaining agreement rose over 1000 dollars and then the faces of the children started to smile. After that, children started to study at mining, medicine and law faculties. From 1990 onwards, when democratic rights got better, workers' rights also improved" (Süleyman Erdoğan, Retired Worker, 1977- 2003).



Figure 86: Chairman Murtaza Yıldırım with Other Union Members in a Meeting

Personal Archives of Dursun Yıldırım

“After we gained great rights thanks to the union, prosperity in the region increased, and the number of workers reached nearly 2000. The workers were satisfied with the union. They were also pleased with their unionist friends. In the town, the townspeople also experienced an improvement in a consumption-oriented economy. They could buy all consumer appliances such as tape player and refrigerator that had not entered their houses until that day, and they bought even a car after 1989. They had the opportunity to buy a car because the salary they received rose, so it resulted in great economic development in the town. Those who sold roasted chickpeas in their shops before September 12 started to open stores selling furniture, refrigerators and electronic devices, so the townspeople were very pleased with the union”⁵³⁷.

In addition to the issues concerning workers, the union played an active role by collaborating with other mass organisations to come up with solutions to the problems of the town. They also held a mediatory position when locals had some disagreements and asked them for help to put an end to all problems.

“Locally, the people living in the region had feudal features and they were predominantly Alevis. They did not understand the leftist political ideology, but they took sides with the left. They didn’t need to worry about grasping the left so much. However, they trusted it. Because they knew us, they thought we would do justice to them. When they got into trouble, they would come to the union so that their problems could be solved although they were not workers. As a result, we would not differentiate between the problems of the workers and the ones of the locals. Above all, the Alevi people would come and tell us about their problems. If two people in the village had a disagreement, we would arbitrate between them. Likewise, in workplaces, we would intervene when there was a problem among the workers”⁵³⁸.

“We took a very active role in the local government. We wanted a participatory democracy and established a platform. We wanted this platform to determine the management and the path to be followed and to proceed accordingly. We came together with all mass organisations and issued a combined declaration. I was in charge of the spreading of the propaganda campaigns and I took a month off from the workplace. We were very effective and we acted together against ANAP which used the state power against us” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).

On November 27, 1993, the union members with other non-governmental organisations went to İstanbul to visit 340 workers fired by Kağıthane Municipality on January 8, 1993. They provided 72 million liras and 2 sacks of rice to the resisting workers. Murtaza Yıldırım stated that 340 workers had been fighting against hunger and poverty for about a year and that they had come from a thousand kilometres away to show their solidarity with Kağıthane workers on behalf of the people from Divriği⁵³⁹.

⁵³⁷ Based on the interview done with Murtaza Yıldırım: Uygur Dursun Yıldırım, “Kırsal Toplumda Dönüşüm: Eskibeyli (Norşun) Köyü Örneği” (Master’s Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2006), 128.

⁵³⁸ Based on the interview done with Murtaza Yıldırım: Uygur Dursun Yıldırım, “Kırsal Toplumda Dönüşüm: Eskibeyli (Norşun) Köyü Örneği” (Master’s Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2006), 127.

⁵³⁹ “Direnen İşçilere Divriği’den Yardım Geldi”, **Cumhuriyet Gazetesi**, November 28, 1993, 4. See figures 87 and 88.



Figure 87: People from Divriği in Solidarity with 340 Workers Fired by Kağıthane Municipality

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım



Figure 88: Chairman of Union Murtaza Yıldırım Issuing a Press Statement In Support of Workers Fired in Kağıthane

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım

The decrease in the number of workers from Divriği, with the effect of those who started working before the 1980s and left the job as a result of compulsory retirement, and the increase in right-wing workers after the 1980s caused the balance of power in the union to change. The method put forward by the unionists adhering to two different

left parties caused a clash of ideas within the union, and this situation enabled the rightist members of the union who made up the majority of the workers in the following years, to keep the union under control.

“Some of my unionist friends acted wrongly that day. They could not choose the way of uniting with people who were in favor of labour. Murtaza Yıldırım acted in a different way, whereas Dursun Yıldırım took a much more constructive attitude. In other words, a group said that they had to ensure the unity of the workers, but the other group insisted on the unity of the leftists.” This created a controversial situation, so right-wing unionists took advantage of this opportunity and eventually took over the union” (Hüseyin Özkan, Retired Worker, 1999-2002).

“While participating in the action as many women from the Selavattepe Settlement, we were putting forward an anti-privatisation discourse. We were marching against privatisation with the rightists. We persuaded them to protest with us and drew them to our side. Some ÖDP members criticised us and said that the EMEP members were with the rightists. On the contrary, I said that we were with the workers, not the rightists... They criticised us a lot on this issue” (Sevim Özkan, Retired Civil Servant, 1999-2002).

The reason why the chairman wanted to achieve the unity of the leftists was that in the election held in 1995, it was decided that the branch chairman would be Murtaza Yıldırım from the left and the secretary of the branch would be Nazmi Deniz from the right. However, Murtaza Yıldırım stated that this partnership could not work out and that they would enter the election alone and either win or lose. He claimed that while he was in favor of gaining rights and benefits through struggle, the secretary and workplace representatives sought solutions by going to political parties. In addition, he was not in favor of the fact that many rightist workers had been recruited in the late 1980s, which caused them to coordinate with rightist representatives of the union. When the right-wing members of the union held an election in 1999, leftists didn't join it. Murtaza Yıldırım thought that they constituted the majority of the workers and the result of the election would be cancelled after they conveyed the unfair election to the top management of the union. In contrast, they didn't cancel it⁵⁴⁰. In the end, lots of workers resigned from the union by stating that one-sided delegate elections held on July 7, 1999 did not reflect the will of the workers because the branch managers, Nazmi Deniz, Zekeriya Gültekin and Süleyman Erdoğan announced the election of delegates without informing them⁵⁴¹. Zekeriya Gültekin has been the chairman of the union since 1999. The right-wing union has no members working for the privatised enterprise in

⁵⁴⁰ Retrieved from information based on personal interview done with Hasan Sazak working as a worker from 1996 to 2019.

⁵⁴¹ “Divriği’de Maden-İş’ten İstifa Kampanyası”, Evrensel Gazetesi, <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/117028/divrigi-de-maden-is-ten-istifa-kampanyasi> [July 30, 1999].

Divriği, but it has union members working for some private companies operating in the region⁵⁴².

4.5.6 General Strikes

4.5.6.1 The 1977 Strike: Awakening to Class Consciousness

After the collective bargaining negotiations had resulted in disagreement, the union decided to strike. However, the employer appealed to the court for a stay of execution and the strike was annulled in accordance with the court decision. Cevher-İş objected to the judgement that stopped the strike and the Second Labour Court of Ankara quashed the first decision stating that the strike was illegal. On June 4, 1977, approximately 1200 workers went on strike for the second time in accordance with the court decision. Union officials explained that this attitude of the employer made the workers more conscious, and they entered the second strike more strongly and determinedly⁵⁴³.



Figure 89: The 1977 Strike

Personal Archives of Gökçe Çiçek Köseadağı

⁵⁴² Retrieved from information based on personal interview done with Sadık Güller working as an employee in the union building.

⁵⁴³ “Divriği’de 1200 Maden İşçisinin Grevi”, www.mining.org.tr/tr/download/issue-file/7399. “Divriği’de 1200 Maden İşçisi Yeniden Greve Başladı”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, June 5, 1977, 5.

The long duration of the strike created unrest among the workers and it came to a deadlock. As a result, a delegation in the union went to Ankara to talk to Bülent Ecevit. He ensured that all commitments would be fulfilled, so workers appreciated his contribution and efforts to put an end to the strike.

“The court decided to stop the strike and it was appealed. After that, the decision to strike was made again and we went on strike for the second time. The first strike lasted for about 33 days. The employer promised to fulfil the commitments, but they did not fulfil them and the second strike lasted for a month. In the meantime, we formed a committee as a union and went to Ankara. At that time, Ecevit had won the election and he would face a vote of confidence the following day. Gazi Gündüz, Battal Özdemir, Tahsin Kahveci and I were in the delegation that went to the meeting while the strike was going on. First, we went to TÜRK-İŞ and talked to the union authorities. We asked Ahmet Durakoğlu, who was the secretary of Ecevit, for an appointment and Ecevit said that we could meet in his room in the parliament. We went to Ecevit with 3 Sivas deputies, Azimet Köylüoğlu, Mahmut Özdemir and Mustafa Yılankıran. When he greeted us at the door, he expressed that he had a special interest in Divriği. Sivas deputies said that the vote of confidence would be held the following day and that if Ecevit lost, the strike would escalate. He told us to talk to the minister of industry and settle this problem right away that night. Thus, we went to the minister of industry and he said that there was an Alevi-Sunni issue. Tahsin, our friend of Sunni origin, who was with us, expressed that there was no such problem and what our demands were. Then, the minister added that he would sign the document in which all the demands were written on condition that everyone started working in the morning. We were also very happy because the workers were in such a difficult situation that they were on the verge of breaking the strike, but there was a lot of support from the villages. On the same day, we reported to the directorate that we had ended the strike” (Şükrü Özcan, Retired Worker, 1974-1992).

On the other hand, that the strike lasted for about two months created a sense of solidarity and promoted the union movement. Awareness among workers increased and this union consciousness enabled them to organise under a new union 2 years later. This movement inspired also the peasantry to give support to their struggle. Moreover, during the 1977 strike they provided refreshments for the workers waiting in front of the enterprise and claiming their rights.

4.5.6.2 The 1989 Strike: In Pursuit of Prosperity

The 1980 military coup was a major blow to the rising working-class movement in Turkey before the 1980s. Trade unions and mass organisations were closed down, strikes were banned, democratic and social rights were taken away, laws were changed, and the right to collective bargaining was not recognised. The turning point that put an end to the oppressive conditions of the coup was the 1989 Spring Demonstrations which paved the way for a great struggle and solidarity among workers after September 12. These actions, initiated by public sector workers in March, April and May 1989, played an important role in the rise of struggle for rights. No results could be obtained from the collective agreement in Divriği, like in other public enterprises at that time. Thus, workers decided to go on strike.

The 1989 strike was carried out to realise our collective bargaining demand. For example, giving out coal as fuel aid, a right gained by previous union administrations, was removed from the contract from the 1980 coup onwards. This right was regained with the item included in the contract (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).



Figure 90: The 1989 Strike on Newspaper Headline

Cumhuriyet, May 15, 1989, 1.

The strike which lasted for about 50 days ended on July 7, 1989. At the press conference, Minister of State Cemil Çiçek remarked that as a result of the reconciliation with Maden-İş, a 180% increase in workers' salaries was achieved⁵⁴⁴.

4.5.7 Working Conditions and Social Rights

For one thing, there were 3 shifts in the enterprise. Workers used to start work at 5 o'clock in the morning and leave at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. When they started working at 1 pm, they would stop working at 9 pm. In the last shift, they used to work from 9 pm to 5 am. Shifts were changing every 15 days. On the other hand, they would reduce the premium, not the salary, of the ones who didn't work hard⁵⁴⁵. According to the agreement made by the union, they would get bonuses. A bonus would be given at

⁵⁴⁴ “İsdemir’de Miting”, *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, July 8, 1989, 8.

⁵⁴⁵ Based on the interview done with Ahmet Gedik, Retired Worker, 1959-1983.

the discretion of the foreman or chief. When they worked overtime, they would get paid. On the days of the feast, they would earn more than they did⁵⁴⁶.

The enterprise had a hospital with 20 beds in the Cürekk Settlement. There was one internal medicine and an external medicine doctor. They were not only taking care of the health of the enterprise, but also the health of the entire neighbourhood. There was a dentist who responded to the needs of the public two days a week and a head nurse who was also a midwife⁵⁴⁷. When the enterprise moved to Selavattepe, a doctor from the Divriği Hospital came to examine only civil servants. As to the workers, they would go to the Divriği Hospital in the town centre⁵⁴⁸.

“The enterprise had a hospital and doctors with ambulances in its garage. We were provided with social security benefits. Occupational accidents happened from time to time. In these situations, you would immediately call the field supervisor and an ambulance would come. Depending on the situation of the accident, if it was something that the hospital could handle, the hospital used to deal with it. If not, they would send the workers to Sivas” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 91: Hospital in the Cürekk Settlement

Eti Bank 1935-1945, Ed. Aslan Tufan Yazman, Ankara, 1945.

⁵⁴⁶ Retrieved from information based on personal interview done with Şükrü Öztürk working as a worker from 1975 to 1997.

⁵⁴⁷ **Eti Bank 1935-1945**, Ed. Aslan Tufan Yazman (Ankara, 1945), 42.

⁵⁴⁸ Retrieved from information based on personal interview done with Sayit Özcan working as a worker from 1979 to 2002.

The transportation of the workers from their homes to the workplace was carried out by the enterprise in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement. While the enterprise was performing this service with its own means, in the 1980s it was carrying out this service with the pullmans it hired.

“There were pullmans operated or rented by the enterprise. At the beginning of each shift, the pullman would depart from the places where it would transport workers, depending on the region. I was living in the neighbourhood 200 metres away from the enterprise. The pullman would go past the neighbourhood where I was living, and take us to our workplaces. Otherwise, we would go there on foot for 10-15 minutes. In some places, there was a pullman every 8 hours... There were also shuttles to Divriği and Ziniski which is not far from the enterprise. The pullman also came to Sincan Village, 10 kilometres away from our village, Ovacık, yet it operated once a week. Based on the number of people working in Sincan and the surrounding villages, the people of this region were given a day off on a certain day of the week. Then, this service was extended to seven days through the collective agreement, so every day the pullman would come in the morning and leave the employees in the evening” (Ali Çınar, Retired Worker, 1972-1996).



Figure 92: Pullmans for Employees

Anonymous

Every day workers had the right to buy a loaf of bread from the bakery. When workers didn't prefer eating in the dining hall, they would get paid. They also had the possibility to eat and drink in the boarding house⁵⁴⁹.

Fuel needs of the workers were met free of charge. However, in the first years of the enterprise, they were not provided with any coals, and then in line with the decision of Supreme Board of Arbitration for the settlement of labour disputes, it was stated that

⁵⁴⁹ Retrieved from information based on personal interview done with Murtaza Özkan working as a grocer in the Cürekk Settlement from 1968 to 1992.

the enterprise should take into consideration the workers' needs and they should be supplied with coals through Ekonoma for a certain sum of money⁵⁵⁰. Finally, summer and winter clothes, shoes, towels and soap were given every 6 months⁵⁵¹.

4.5.8 Struggle Against Privatisation

When the privatisation in Turkey started in the late 1980s, some units were also privatised in the enterprise. The department of transportation was transferred to the private sector in the first instance. An important milestone took place when the Divriği Iron Mines Enterprise and Hekimhan Iron Mines Enterprise merged under the name of 'General Directorate of Divriği-Hekimhan Mines Industry and Trade Inc. in accordance with the decision dated September 10, 1993 taken by the High Planning Council⁵⁵². Hence, they aimed at accelerating the privatisation process by dismantling the General Directorate of the Turkish Iron and Steel Enterprise and establishing new directorates under different companies.



Figure 93: Privatisation of Transportation

Cumhuriyet, August 5, 1985, 6.

⁵⁵⁰ "İş Uyuşmazlıkları Yüksek Hakem Kurulu Kararı", **Resmi Gazete**, 8516 (September 1953): 7254-7256.

⁵⁵¹ Retrieved from information based on personal interviews.

⁵⁵² Rekabet Kurumu Başkanlığı, "Divriği Hekimhan Madenleri Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş.'nin Blok Satış Yöntemiyle Özelleştirilmesi İşlemine İzin Verilmesi Talebi", Decree No: 04-22/ 247-52 (March 25, 2004), 2.

In the early 1990s, the governor of Sivas and the district governor of Divriği brought together the employers standing out in the marketplace and the mayor in Divriği and suggested that the enterprise should be sold to a company to be established by these people. Even though some initiatives were taken in this regard, the union did its best to prevent this attempt by explaining the social and economic disadvantages to the workers and the public. Then, during the Erbakan Government, the takeover of the enterprise to KARDEMİR came to the fore. KARDEMİR's desire to acquire shares over the operating license of the iron mines in Divriği made the residents of the district uneasy. In addition, Ciner Group also had initiative for the enterprise, yet the union repelled all these initiatives and it did not allow the private sector to manage the enterprise for a while⁵⁵³.



Figure 94: Anti-Privatisation March in Divriği in the 1990s

Personal Archives of Dursun Yıldırım

The state's attitude towards privatisation caused the people of the district and the workers working in the mines to react sternly. Various demonstrations were held to

⁵⁵³ Uygur Dursun Yıldırım, “Kırsal Toplumda Dönüşüm: Eskibeyli (Norşun) Köyü Örneği” (Master’s Thesis, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2006), 127.

prevent privatisation, panels were organised to raise awareness of the public and workers and to involve them in the organised struggle.

“We started our anti-privatisation actions around the workplace, and in one of these actions, the police and gendarmerie blocked our way with barricades in Selavattepe. We tried to get through the barricade and there was a short-term conflict. Even my head was injured. 84 people were detained and we stayed in custody for 2 days. This news was also reflected in the press. Of course, we did not make any concessions and continued our walks. The right front in Divriği also supported privatisation and they thought it would be beneficial for Divriği. We were saying that Divriği would get smaller and smaller and it would lose its district character” (Dursun Yıldırım, Retired Worker, 1973-1998/ General Secretary of the Union, 1989-1995).



Figure 95: Anti-Privatisation Struggle on the Front Page of a Local Newspaper

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım

TÜRKİYE MADEN İŞÇİLERİ SENDİKASI
KONFERANS-PANEL
"Yeni Liberal Politikalar, Türkiye
Uygulamaları ve Sendikal Stratejiler"

KONUŞMACILAR
Prof.Dr.Oğuz Oyan (Gazi Üniversitesi, İktisat Fakültesi)
Yeni Liberal Politikalar ve Türkiye Uygulamaları
Mehmet BEŞELİ (Ankara Üniversitesi, Siyasal Bilgiler
Fakültesi) Sendikal Stratejiler

Tarih: 15 Eylül 1996 Saat: 10.30 - 16.30
Yer: Belediye Dükân Salonu - DIVRIĞI

Figure 96: A Panel Discussion Held by Turkish Mining Workers' Union

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım



Figure 97: Anti-Privatisation March in Ankara on May 1, 1997

Personal Archives of Murtaza Yıldırım

“Between 1989 and 1995, we contributed to the organisation of subcontractor companies, and the number of members of the ore branch of the union was about 5500. After the union management fell into the hands of the rightists and especially after OYAK acquired the enterprise, most of the workers went to other public institutions in accordance with the 4C Law. The new company didn’t allow workers to join the union. In other words, the employer said that workers would not be a member of the union, even the unionists were unable to enter the workplace” (Sadık Güller, Former Union Employee, 1992-2012/ City Councilor in Sivas Municipality, 2009-&).

At the end of 1993, the first concrete step of privatisation was taken with the merger of two enterprises in both Divriği and Hekimhan. Obligatory retirement was the result of this attempt and the state pensioned off lots of workers even if they wanted to go on working. The number of employees thereby continued to decline each year and the slight increase in the number in 1994 occurred when two enterprises merged into one.

Table 59: Change in the number of Employees in the 1990s

Year	Number of Employees
1992	1823
1993	1702
1994	1828
1998	1307
1999	1270

Divriği Hekimhan Madenleri Ticaret ve Sanayi A.Ş. Genel Müdürlüğü, 1993-1994-1998-1999 Yılları Bilanço ve Faaliyet Raporları, 19, 11, 1, 5.

In 2004, the enterprise with its 14 mining sites was transferred to Ereğli Iron and Steel Works Incorporation within the scope of privatisation and the title of the enterprise was changed to Erdemir Mining Industry and Trade Incorporation. In March, 708 employees composed of 551 workers and 157 civil servants were working, but in the aftermath of the transfer, the number was reduced to 136 civil servants and 398 workers, that is to say, 534 employees. The process of privatisation was completed when the public shares of ERDEMİR were acquired by OYAK Group in 2006, and the number of employees dropped to 436, 274 of whom were workers⁵⁵⁴.

4.6 Mining Settlements: Emergence of a New Cultural Space and Social Transformation

4.6.1 Construction of a Modern Identity in the Mining Settlements

From the establishment of the site onwards, the Cürekk Settlement reflecting the extension of the modernisation of the country made a great impact on the employees' way of life. As far as industrial enterprises were concerned, not only the buildings where production took place but also the means of introducing and spreading a new lifestyle and culture to the society at large through them was at the core of policies⁵⁵⁵. Accordingly, the new architectural buildings representing modernisation can also be regarded as the space of social transformation in line with the modernisation movement in the region they are realised. In Cürekk, apart from the spatial needs of the

⁵⁵⁴ "Madencilik ve Özelleştirme Paneli Divriği'de Yapıldı", https://eski.jmo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=973&tipi=2&sube=0.

⁵⁵⁵ Çağatay Emre Doğan, "Nazilli Basma Fabrikası Yerleşimi: Tarihçe ve Yaşantı", **Fabrika'da Barınmak: Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nde Türkiye'de İşçi Konutları: Yaşam, Mekan ve Kent**, Ed. Ali Cengizkan (Ankara: Arkadaş Yayınevi, 2009): 77.

employees, an architectural concept that took into account their social-cultural needs was adopted. There were also social facilities such as children's playgrounds, a movie theatre along with sports facilities such as a swimming pool, a tennis court and basketball, football and volleyball fields, which enabled residents and the ones living in Divriği and surrounding villages to improve their social and cultural relations. In Selavattepe, there were also sports facilities, including an indoor sports hall, outdoor basketball court and a football pitch.

(a)



(b)



**Figure 98: Outdoor Facilities in Cüre. (a) Tennis Court-Swimming Pool
(b) Basketball Field**

Eti Bank 1935-1945, Ed. Aslan Tufan Yazman, Ankara, 1945; Anonymous

The facilities offered by the enterprise caused changes not only in the habits and identities of employees but also made a huge impact on the residents living in the vicinity of the settlements. In particular, based on the workforce requirements of the enterprise, the people coming from other cities, especially educated managers, engineers and civil servants, who were not from Divriği changed and diversified the social and cultural atmosphere of the settlements. These administrators who were civil servants acted as representatives of modernisation and contributed to the propaganda of the Republican regime. Through the education they got, they played a key role in instilling new habits and a modern lifestyle in the settlements⁵⁵⁶. It can be said that a cosmopolitan atmosphere was established. The experience of living together with

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, 92.

different identities affected the social structure and enabled the formation of an institutional structure along with the regulations made in the new social order.

4.6.2 Poolside: A Common Meeting Point for All Classes

The first outstanding place where people from each class used to come together was the poolside. In the evenings, regardless of class distinction both civil servants and workers would have the opportunity to eat or drink something with their families at the restaurant next to the pool, but they didn't use to sit together, in other words each group belonging to the same class would spend time together. Moreover, they used to go swimming without seeing each other at different times. When viewed from this aspect, class distinction was noticeable even though both the poolside restaurant and the swimming pool were open to everybody.



Figure 99: The Manager's Wife with Senior Civil Servants and Their Families, and Workers with Their Families in the Background by the Poolside in the Late 1950s

Anonymous

“You could go to the poolside, sit comfortably with your family, have dinner and spend an evening. My family didn't use to benefit from some activities like tennis. However, I personally used to play tennis and basketball, and I would swim in the pool. They couldn't speak out against me because I was working in the grocery store, I was in the union for a while, and then I was in touch with the managers and senior civil servants” (Murtaza Özkan, Retired Grocer, 1968-1992).

“We faced some minor discrimination, but we benefited from the facilities. There were some rules in the settlement. For example, as far as I remember, the civil servants on Monday and Tuesday, women on Wednesday and Thursday, the young people would go to the pool on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In addition, when we went there, we could easily buy a portion of meatball and we were drinking a small bottle of *rakı* even if the manager of the enterprise was sitting in front of us and having fun” (İhsan Aydoğan, Former Worker, 1979-1988).

“We were going to the poolside in the summer, and it was open to everyone. The distinction between workers and civil servants was clearly visible. The workers and the civil servants did not sit together very often. It was very rare that a unit manager could sit with his workers and civil servants. Everyone's sitting area was different. The managers and civil servants were sitting in separate groups among themselves. The poolside would only be open in the evenings for 3-4 months in summer and lunch service was not available. We were having dinner there as single in the evening. Also, those who wanted to come from home with their families could have dinner together there. Food service would start around 5-6 pm and be open until 11 pm. Sometimes, live music was also performed, and it was banned in parallel with the view of the political power. In addition, families would come together and special entertainments were held on New Year's Eve, but from 1980 onwards, they banned them as well. There were even concerts and theatres in the movie theatre. We even gave plays when I was in secondary school” (Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985).

In this respect, the settlement also featured the characteristics of a closed community that mostly served the employees of the enterprise. Parallel to the project of forming individuals of a modernised nation, there was an atmosphere of an isolated settlement from the rest of the town.

4.6.3 Movie Theatre: Penetration of a New Modern Lifestyle

Types of modernisation projects put into practice directly by the state portrayed a totalising understanding of modernisation⁵⁵⁷. The existence of social and residential spaces that contributed to the continuation of production more effectively in the mines made the employees more visible in the social space. Women who were recluses in their homes or farms had also the possibility to join the activities with their families. They all learned new modern patterns while benefiting from cultural activities. For instance, the movie theatre played a prominent role in the transformation of their daily routine and it was operated as a cultural centre. The matinées were intended separately for families, workers and students.

“The movies would be at both 8 am and 5 pm on Mondays and Thursdays, according to the shift hours of the workers. They were intended for civil servants and families on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. If not, they would also come on Fridays and Saturdays. On Monday mornings students would come, but if the school was in demand, they could watch films on Sundays... We showed lots of Yılmaz Güney's films. People would pour in and we would make sacrifices as movie theatre operators. For example, we would show the same film 3 times instead of 2 times and tell the people coming from Divriği by bus and peasants coming from their villages by tractor

⁵⁵⁷ Özlem Arıtan, “Modernleşme ve Cumhuriyet'in Kamusal Mekân Modelleri”, *Mimarlık*, No. 342 (July-August 2008): 49-56.

to wait so that they could not return home without watching the film” (Abidin Akça, Retired Movie Theatre Operator, 1958-1981).



Figure 100: Movie Theatre in Cüre

Anonymous

In these films, the modern lifestyle and new habits that the Republic wanted to convey to the people were shown. The films they watched left traces in the memory of people living until the movie theatre was shut down in the 1980s.

“While I was going to secondary school in Divriği in 1965, I was staying in my aunt’s house in Cüre. I saw the cinema for the first time there. I went there to watch a film once and when I got home, I told my aunt about what I had seen. She said that it was good for me to have seen a lot of cars for the first time” (Şükrü Öztürk, Retired Worker, 1975-1997).

In this regard, the movie theatre serving not only the employees but also the residents of the town and surrounding villages helped transform the town and the settlement of the enterprise where it was constructed as a spatial structure in which the modern lifestyle was depicted. The movie theatre and the workers’ boarding house also hosted various entertainment or cultural events such as plays and concerts. These events would be organised by the enterprise or workers, and they became a means of socialisation for them.

“From time to time, the enterprise would invite some folk singers. For example, Aşık Veysel came and gave a concert for us. I never forget some others such as Nurettin Dadaloğlu, Daimi, Ali Akber Çiçek and Zaralı Halil. These concerts used to be arranged in both workers’ boarding house and the movie theatre, and they would sing folk songs to the civil servants and workers” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).



Figure 101: A concert held by Celal Yıldız in the Movie Theatre

Anonymous

4.6.4 Workers' Boarding House: The Rise of A More Disciplined Class

In the Cürekk Settlement, the difference in status reflected in the construction of the houses also stood out in the separate social facilities for workers and civil servants. Workers' boarding house was a place where workers used to accommodate, eat in the cafeteria and socialise with each other. It was also a place where different ways of disciplining them were implemented so as to change their way of life. The attempt to transform the settled daily life and working habits of the people coming from the village is directly proportional to the modernisation efforts of the Republican state trying to form a more civilised and modern identity. This effort to discipline the workers who used to live in their villages by subsisting on agriculture and husbandry was made to create a new working class which is an indispensable element of modern industrial society and a settled life.

“At first, there were strict rules. For example, those who first got a job in the mines had to be clean-shaven. The authorities of the enterprise would have their dress taken off and would give them a uniform. Then, they used to throw the worn clothes into the big iron cauldrons. The people were poor and there was no medicine against lice, and they used to do so to secure cleanliness. There was such a rule during the first years, but after a few years, when vaccines and drugs were gradually released, these practices were abolished. Now that people learned about the world, their own cleanliness became their own responsibility, hence the rules were stretched and finally removed. They were right. There would be no long hair and beard. Moreover, the enterprise would give summer and winter clothes with shoes just like in the military. However, this practice changed over time because the nation developed and became modern. In the end, the workers did not talk about lice anymore” (Mustafa Gürsoy, Retired Worker, 1953-1982).

In Selavattepe, there was not a boarding house for single workers, but they had detached houses with only one room. Unlike the boarding house where they used to

stay in Cüre , they seemed to keep up with the pace of modern life by severing their own ties with rural identity.

4.6.5 Civil Servants' Club: The Unity of Senior Employees

In Cüre , the meeting centre where the civil servants came together when they knocked off work was the club. They used to play games, drink something and chat together when they finished up work. They also used to hold a feast for the ones who went into retirement and were appointed to other state enterprises. In this respect, it was a social space where white-collar employees isolated and distinguished themselves from other low-status workers.

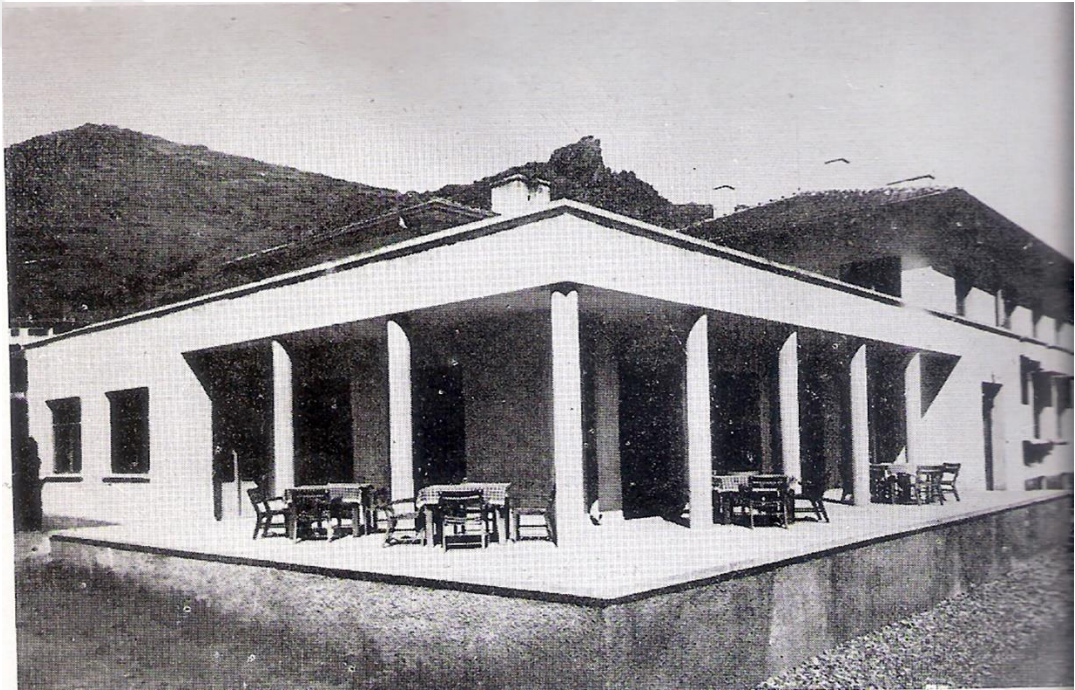


Figure 102: Guesthouse with the Civil Servants' Club in Cüre 

Eti Bank 1935-1945, Ed. Aslan Tufan Yazman, Ankara, 1945.

“It was the place where the civil servants, whose shifts were over, drank tea and coffee in the evening, rested their minds, and sat down at the weekends, playing various games of cards and backgammon, chatting. All kinds of drinks were also consumed. It had both an indoor and an outdoor area with a front balcony. It was active in summer and winter. Since it was equipped with a heater, it was possible to sit outside in the summer and inside in the winter. There were also a separate TV room and a reading room” (Haydar Erkan, Unit Manager, 1979-1985).

“We had a very nice guesthouse. All kinds of drinks were available. They used to drink either alcohol or tea. It was a place where the civil servants met and chatted. The manager of the enterprise would go there with vice managers three or four days a week. Everyone certainly used to respect him. Special events used to be organised. For example, when someone was appointed to another state enterprise, we would have a farewell night with civil servants and engineers. It

used to be a very nice atmosphere and everyone including the manager of the enterprise would come there. A list of the participants used to be made during the day and tables used to be arranged. In the evening the entertainment accompanied by live music used to take place” (Abdurrahman Ömerbeyoğlu, Retired Manager, 29.6.1984- 17.6.1985).

As far as the club located in Selavattepe is concerned, workers could enter the club like other civil servants. They could spend time together playing games or having a drink regardless of class distinction. In addition, since it was cheap to eat at the restaurant in the club’s restaurant, the workers could dine with their families.



Figure 103: Guesthouse with the Civil Servants’ Club in Selavattepe

Personal Archives of Göksel Kaya

The Divriği Iron Mines Operation served as a spatial and social model in the context of the first steps taken toward modernisation and nationalisation of the newly-established state. In parallel with efforts made to create a modern society, the enterprise epitomised the gradual transformation from peasantry to labour. The mechanisation in agriculture caused peasants to evaluate the job opportunities offered in the mines. Starting to work in the enterprise, peasants were bound to adopt the habits and lifestyle of the urban life through regulations at workplace and spatial characteristics of the settlements even though they did not completely sever their ties with agricultural activities. The unionist struggle also accelerated their integration into urban network. However, the privatisation exacerbated the workers’ living conditions of the state-owned enterprise.

5. CONCLUSION

The state was the centre of political and social revolutions in Turkey in the 1920s, yet the industrial policies related to economic development were implemented by private entrepreneurs. The state gave incentives to private entrepreneurs in many fields, especially in agriculture. Although the country turned into an important agricultural centre, the economic collapse that shook the whole world at the end of the 1920s also affected Turkey. Since economic policies based on the private sector were not successful, the state decided to take industrialisation, which is considered one of the main conditions of modernisation and nationalisation, under its own control. The 1930s were the years when industrial facilities were established by the state throughout the country. These facilities were not only planned as industrial buildings, but also the spaces of modernisation project of the country. Within this framework, it was aimed at transforming the whole country and cities to create a modern society with the construction of a modern space and the Divriği Iron Mines Operation was thereby one of the enterprises established based on this ideology.

The purpose of its construction, and its economic and social function are also directly related to Turkey's nationalisation efforts. Therefore, the enterprise with its settlements around contributed not only to the development of the region but also to the formation of a modern nation-state that was tried to be created at that time. The state connected various backward cities of the country through railways to construct a national industry and so in 1937, Divriği was also connected to the railway network. The opening of the railway led to the discovery of iron ore deposits in 1937 and the opening of the mining enterprise in 1938 laid the foundation of the new economic life of the town. It also pioneered the formation of a modern settlement creating an urban culture from a small piece of land, parallel to the modern industrial policy developed by the state. The Cürekk Settlement constructed after the establishment of the enterprise was a spatial

reflection of the modernisation goal in total aspects of life, as set by the Republican state. The new architectural buildings standing for modernisation can also be conceived of as the space of social transformation in compliance with the modernisation movement in the region they are realised. In particular, in Cüreğ, in addition to the spatial needs of the employees, an architectural concept that took account of their social-cultural needs was embraced. Parallel to the formation of a new urban space, various social practices helped change the social structure. Compared with the rest of the spatial and social structures found in Divriği, the facilities and services offered in especially both Cüreğ and Selavattepe differed in all aspects. The spatial and social standard of life offered by the enterprise provided an alternative and introduced to new generations a new horizon in working and living conditions, and a way of collective life as a new experience in work and recreation. In so doing, they set an example for communities and local residents outside the settlements per se, hence influencing a wider scale of geographical transformation. Hence, those who settled around the settlements over time benefited from school, cinema, sports facilities and shopping units. In this respect, especially the Cüreğ Settlement led the cultural and social life of the town.

The enterprise attracted many workers and civil servants from both villages and town centre as well as other districts of Sivas and various parts of the country. Thus, parallel to the increasing population in the town, it enabled the spatial and social aspects of urban renewal. This is one of the essential characteristics sought by the urbanisation policy that the modern republic aimed for from the very beginning of the foundation of the enterprise onwards. Above all, educated managers, engineers and civil servants coming to Divriği from different cities of the country created a new human profile by merging with the locals of the town. Through the education they received, they inculcated new habits and a modern lifestyle into not only the workers but also the residents of Divriği. This cosmopolitan atmosphere reflected in the settlements, especially in Cüreğ had a major impact on the social structure and contributed to the formation of an institutional structure based on the regulations made in the new social order. The attempt to transform the settled daily life and working habits of the peasants starting to work in the enterprise depended on this new order, which lives up to the expectations of modernity of the Republican state trying to form a more civilised and modern identity. In so doing, it was aimed at disciplining the workers who used to live

in their villages, and creating a new working class which is part and parcel of modern industrial society and a settled life.

The cosmopolitan atmosphere created in the settlements coexisted with traditional values. Workers from rural areas who lived in the settlements of the enterprise made gardens to meet their personal needs and grew vegetables and fruits. This situation can be considered a transitional act in the adaptation of many workers' families from the village to the city and modern life when they lived in all mining settlements. Moreover, especially workers living in the vicinity of the enterprise had more time off to help their parents with agriculture and husbandry. The ones not living in their villages used to go there at the weekend. Thus, those who lived there didn't sever their ties to rural life despite living in more comfortable houses. They retained their peasant identity and failed to have a sense of working-class consciousness to a certain extent even though the workers living in nearby neighbourhoods or staying in workers' dormitory incorporated their class identity into the urban area.

From the first years of the foundation of the enterprise onwards, the first workers who were employed were predominantly Alevi peasants. The mobility of Alevi population living in rural areas and starting to work in the enterprise gave rise to an increasing social interaction with Sunni dwellers of the town centre. The ones living in the Taşbaşı Settlement in the centre had much closer interaction with them whereas the ones living in the boarding house of the Cürekk Settlement and in the neighbouring areas would mostly meet their needs on site. However, the Selavattepe Settlement could integrate them into the town centre, especially after the early 1980s when workers moved out of Cürekk. In addition, there were hardly any Alevi craftsmen before the foundation of the enterprise but especially after the 1970s, they were integrated into the urban life in spite of some denominational and political tension escalating in the town. Nevertheless, the craftsmen were made up of overwhelmingly Sunnis and they were not in financial difficulties. Some of them who were tinsmiths, coppersmiths and blacksmiths keeping in close contact with peasants were obliged to close down their shops due to the decline in the number of population in rural areas. The farmers who could also maintain their life without problems were badly affected by mechanisation. These two groups underestimated the work process of the newly-established enterprise based on manpower so as to retain their class identity, yet they felt themselves obliged to work there after losing their jobs. Both tailors and

shoemakers providing clothes and shoes respectively for the workers of the enterprise were a bit luckier than other craftsmen but they also went through the same ending in the aftermath of the privatisation of the enterprise.

There were also a group of workers coming from other districts of Sivas and cities, and not integrating into the town. Parallel to what the workers from Divriği stated, they were mostly hired by the managers from Kahramanmaraş appointed to the enterprise from 1987 onwards. They didn't make any contributions to the development of the town and they didn't even do the shopping in Divriği, but in their hometowns. Besides, when they retired, they left Divriği. In fact, they are believed to have been employed for political reasons. The majority of the residents of the town, especially the ones living in rural areas were Alevis and left-wing. Consequently, it was aimed at undermining leftist ideology, in other words, seizing the mayor's office in the elections and keeping the union under control by interfering with the unionist struggle.

Parallel to the escalating political tension between the left and the right, the growth of the trade union in the late 1970s through the increased number of strikes indicates the potential for worker resistance to the employer. Awareness of the workers enabled them to be integrated into urban life, which is regarded as a requirement for a modern industrial society. However, the employment of the rightist workers coming to the enterprise from the other parts of the country substantially affected the balance in the union management. Finally, the political exacerbated by two leftist factions in the union caused the rightists to take over the union in 1999. The same attitude also caused right-wing parties to win both the 1999 and 2004 elections held in the district where the tradition of the leftist movement prevails in the town.

The Cürekk Settlement lost its spirit in the late 1980s when the Divriği Iron Mines Operation moved to Selavattepe. After the evacuation of the settlement by the civil servants, only workers were allocated houses in Cürekk and then it was abandoned to its fate. Although a protection order was made as a registered cultural asset by the Sivas Regional Conservation Council in 2007, Erdemir Group, an economic enterprise specializing in mining gained the property of the area in the aftermath of the wide-scale privatization flows of this era and objected to the protection status. In the aftermath of the privatisation of the enterprise, the employees left the settlement, and since then it has been idle. This matter has come up for discussion to create a new life opportunity by refunctioning of the settlement. Some associations accordingly brought

up some proposals for preservation and transformation of this heritage but all to no avail.

The state-owned enterprise was a great work that contributed greatly to the iron and steel industry since it was inaugurated in 1938. Prior to the establishment of the enterprise, Turkey would import iron ores from other countries but the discovery of iron ore deposits made Turkey one of the leading exporting countries of iron ore. It also made outstanding contributions to the industrial growth and urbanisation process of both Karabük and İskenderun where iron and steel plants were opened up. Although they were small and backward places before the foundation of the factories, they appealed to people throughout the country. As to Divriği, the foundation of the enterprise made possible to a great extent both the transformation and integration of rural life into urban life. The enterprise's move to Cüreğ in 1941 caused the population to be concentrated in the vicinity of Cüreğ. The process of centralisation of the town has thereby been observed in the last few decades because of the distance to the enterprise and in the course of time, the settlement area has extended to other parts of Divriği through the construction of squatter houses and multi-storey buildings around the town since the enterprise moved to Selavattepe. Even though the town made a cultural, social and economic breakthrough, it lost its former vitality with the privatization of some units of the enterprise in the late 80s and the entire enterprise in 2006 in accordance with the neoliberal political and economic approach all governments adhered to. In particular, the privatisation of the enterprise thereby played a significant role in the decline in the population of the town and since then the growth rate has remained constant in spite of fluctuations in population numbers. Above all, lack of factory producing iron from ore exacerbated the population loss whereas both Karabük and İskenderun have benefited from factories and they have grown rapidly in direct proportion to the increase in population.

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