

SEASONAL MIGRANT WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE:  
THE CASES OF ORDU AND POLATLI

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by

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Title: Seasonal Migrant Workers in Agriculture “The Cases of Ordu and Polatlı”

This thesis scrutinizes the working conditions and socio-economic status of seasonal migrant workers in agriculture. They are exposed to the inequalities in the labor market in terms of wages, accommodation and work conditions. To this extent, what are the exploitative relations, how the inequalities are constructed and what are the vulnerability levels of workers to the exploitation are the main questions of this study. In order to examine the relations in depth, the field surveys were conducted in Ordu and Polatlı. As much as broad sample of the study was chosen. The workers, labor intermediaries, land owners and representatives of the state enterprises and non-governmental organizations whom related to the issue were interviewed. The study under the lights of field research findings asserts that seasonal migrant workers are the poorest people who are exposed to the exploitation at the most in Turkey and the workers are experienced the exploitation with different vulnerability levels according to their ethnicity, age and gender.

Key words: seasonal migrant workers, waged agricultural labor, temporary agricultural workers, migrant workers

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Başlık: Tarımda Mevsimlik Göçmen İşçiler “Ordu ve Polatlı Örnekleri”

Bu tez tarımda mevsimlik göçmen işçilerinin çalışma koşulları ile sosyo-ekonomik durumlarını incelemektedir. İşçiler emek piyasasında ücretler, barınma ve çalışma koşulları açısından eşitsizliğe maruz kalmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, sömürü ilişkilerinin neler olduğu, eşitsizliklerin nasıl inşa edildiği ve işçilerin sömürüye karşı kırılganlık düzeylerinin neler olduğu bu çalışmanın temel sorularıdır. Bu ilişkileri derinden incelemek için Ordu ve Polatlı'da saha çalışması uygulanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini olabildiği kadar geniş seçilmiştir. İşçiler, iş aracıları, toprak sahipleri ve konuyla ilgili devlet kurumlarından ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarından temsilciler ile mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Saha araştırması bulgularının ışığında bu çalışma, mevsimlik göçmen işçilerin Türkiye'de sömürüye en çok maruz kalan en yoksul işçileri olduğunu ve işçilerin sömürüyü yaşlarına, cinsiyetlerine ve etnik kökenlerine göre farklı kırılganlık düzeylerinde deneyimlediklerini öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Mevsimlik göçmen işçiler, ücretli tarımsal emek, geçici tarım işçileri, gezici tarım işçileri

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*Anneanneme*

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction on the Issue of Seasonal Migrant Workers in Agriculture

Seasonal workers, who set off from Şanlı Urfa to earn the ‘cost of bread’, died in a traffic accident in Afyonkarahisar. Nine of 50 workers died and 35 of them were injured; they were in truck haulages and their daily wage was changing between 15-25 TL<sup>1</sup>.

23 seasonal workers, 12 of whom were children, died in Sivas in a traffic accident were buried in Adıyaman. A child seasonal worker died and 19 workers, 14 of whom were children, got injured in Niğde in a traffic accident. 2 young seasonal workers, who came from Adıyaman for picking nut, drowned in Giresun<sup>2</sup>.

Three child workers died and 30 workers were injured when they on their way to Malatya for working in peach orchards because the wheel of their car blew out. The capacity of their vehicle was 15 people, but there were 33 people<sup>3</sup>.

Seasonal workers have become one of the current issues on the public agenda as a result of such terrible accidents. Subsequently, their hazardous working and living conditions increasingly are discussed by people in news, books and articles.

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<sup>1</sup> *Haberler.com*, 12 April 2008, “Ekmek Parası İçin Şanlı Urfa’dan Kamyon Kasası’nda Yola Çıkan Mevsimlik İşçiler Kaza Yaptı,” Available [online]: <http://www.haberler.com/ekmek-parasi-icin-sanliurfa-dan-kamyon-kasasinda-haberi/>, “Ekmek parası için Şanlıurfa’dan yola çıkan mevsimlik işçiler, Afyonkarahisar’da geçirdikleri trafik kazasında hayatlarını kaybettiler. Kaza’da, günlüğü 15 ile 25 YTL arasında değişen ücretlerle ekme parası kazanmak için yola çıkan kamyon kasasındaki 50 civarındaki işçiden 9’u öldü, 35’i yaralandı.” [24 February 2010].

<sup>2</sup> *Bianet.org*, “Mevsimlik İşçiler Ölüyor Çoğu Çocuk,” 8 August 2007, Available [online]: <http://bianet.org/cocuk/emek/100904-mevsimlik-isciler-oluyor-cogu-cocuk>, “Sivasta trafik kazasında ölen 12si çocuk, 23 mevsimlik işçi Adıyamanda toprağa verildi. Niğdede trafik kazasında bir çocuk mevsimlik işçi öldü. 14ü çocuk 19 kişi yaralandı. Giresunda Adıyamandan fındık toplamaya gelen iki genç işçi denizde boğuldu.” [24 February 2010].

<sup>3</sup> *Tüm gazeteler.com*, “Malatya’da Kaza 3 Mevsimlik İşçi Çocuk Öldü,” 16 July 2008, Available [online]: <http://www.tumgazeteler.com/?a=3902998>, “Malatya’da kayısı bahçelerinde çalışmak üzere giderken 33 kişinin bulunduğu 15 kişilik minibüsün lastiği patlayınca gerçekleşen kazada üç çocuk öldü, 30 kişi de yaralandı.” [24 February 2010].

Attention on the issue is new but, in fact, the phenomenon of seasonal migration in agriculture is old in Turkey. “For example, in 1860 the British consul estimated that out of the 991, 700 people living in Aydın province, 110.000 were “migratory”. In 1869, another consul put the number of seasonal wage laborers who were employed throughout the Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman Empire at 200,000.”<sup>4</sup> This type of migration has continued up to the present, yet with an increasing importance compared to earlier phases. During the Ottoman Empire times, seasonal migration was limited to the Aegan and Mediterranean regions; especially concentrated around Aydın and Çukurova. However the migration areas have changed considerably in recent years. Today, Yozgat, Sivas, Elazığ, Edirne, Ordu, Çorum, Tokat, Konya, Erzincan, Amasya, Kayseri and many other cities receive seasonal migration in agriculture. Related to this case, workers fulfill new duties; specifically, picking hazelnuts, hoeing and ripping sugar beet, picking oranges, ripping gram and lentil.

Seasonal migrant workers became the social problem in terms of their hazardous working and living conditions. At this point, it is necessary to differentiate between workers seasonal local and migrant ones.<sup>5</sup> The former are people who usually have land in their village and work in nearby towns for extra income. The latter ones, in general, who migrate far away cities to work for about six months, are landless. Both groups of seasonal migrants are exposed to difficulties in terms of wages, sheltering and exclusion at different levels. Firstly, local workers earn more money than migrant ones for the same job. Secondly, while local workers stay at the employer’s home or in a building that the employer allocates for them, migrant

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<sup>4</sup> Reşat Kasaba, “Migrant Labor in Western Anatolia, 1750-1850,” in *Land Holding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, eds by Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (Albany: State of New York Press,1991), p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> For detailed information: Nurettin Yıldırak et al., *Türkiye’de Gezici ve Geçici Kadın Tarım İşçilerinin Çalışma ve Yaşam Koşulları ve Sorunları* (Ankara: TARIM-İŞ, 2003).

workers usually stay in tents. Finally, the inferior status of migrant workers causes economic and social exclusion. They are deprived of permanent jobs, social security and the accessibility of basic needs such as good education and health facilities. In other words, they are isolated from the access to basic standards for living. The definition of the migrant workers issue as a social problem arises from that distinctive picture; they are citizens but do not have the same opportunities as other people in society.

There were approximately 305,000 waged workers in agriculture for the year 2009.<sup>6</sup> They migrate as a whole family and they bring even their personal properties and animals with them. They migrate from east to west and their migration trajectory can be different depending on their initial work place. To illustrate, when a group of workers chooses sugar beet fields as the first job, they cannot go to the cotton fields because the harvest times of these crops coincide and workers must chose one of them beforehand.

The decision on the work place -city, crop, field or employer- is determined by social networks. Labor intermediaries play a crucial role in that case. In the winter months, they connect with employers and arrange workers for them during the harvest times. They receive a commission only from the workers. In fact, there is a subordination relationship between workers and labor intermediaries because the chance to get a job depends solely on this verbal arrangement. In this respect, workers are vulnerable to exploitation; they do not have any opportunity to find another job. In other words, their capital is their only relationships with the labor intermediaries.

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<sup>6</sup> According to Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), Labor Force Survey Results.

This brief picture of seasonal migrant workers continues with a discussion of the essential features of the issue from a macro, or global, perspective. To this extent, the presence of seasonal migrant workers plays an important role today.

Urbanization, which refers to the movement from rural to urban areas, has gained considerable speed especially since the 1980s. According to the Household Employment Survey, the share of agriculture in total employment in 1988 was 47%, which sharply decreased to 21.8% in 2009.<sup>7</sup>

There are two types of migration: Some of the families migrated to urban areas as a whole and in other case, the family members, who constitute an unpaid labor force, in rural areas migrate to big cities to work or study and the natural outcome is usually permanent settlement in those cities. The profit of the cultivating crop and the presence of relatives in urban can be reasons that affect this decision. In that case, the important role of seasonal (im)migrant workers in the dissolution of the rural population is an important point to be noted.<sup>8</sup> Seasonal workers substitute for this loss of unpaid family labor force in Turkey, as Jennifer Cavounidis states similarly for Greece in her article.<sup>9</sup>

In this new period, which has seen migrant workers become more important for agricultural production, the profile of workers exhibits significant differences from the that in the past. To illustrate, seasonal workers were mostly the ones who worked in their own fields or someone else's fields as sharecroppers and migrated to closer places in harvest times to earn extra income. Today's new worker profile is a landless person living in a country town in a house as a tenant. They migrate to

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<sup>7</sup> TUIK, The Household Employment Survey which was done in 1988 and 2009, Available [online].[http://www.tuik.gov.tr/istihdamYer.do?p\\_yer=0](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/istihdamYer.do?p_yer=0) [30 May, 2009].

<sup>8</sup> Jennifer Cavounidis, "Labor Market Impact of Migration: Employment Structures and the Case of Greece", *The International Migration Review* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2006), p. 636.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

distant areas in harvest times and, in winter months, they are usually unemployed. Their tie to the rural is only working in order to earn money. Forced migration, giving up the land due to the decrease in prices from the effects of the transition to a market economy and the considerable decline of the share-cropping system for several reasons such as tariff quotas and the disappearance of state supports are some of the causes why workers' place of residence has become urban centre rather than a rural one. In that case, the direction of migration has changed sharply; workers migrate from urban centers to rural areas to work. Undoubtedly, this difference creates and will continue to create changes in social relations in both urban and rural areas in the future.

To discover the exploitative relations in this job is the crucial problem for that study. To this extent, the research illustrates the unequal relationships between workers and labor intermediaries, between the migrants and local workers, between the women with the householders, between the children and their parents and workers and employers. Briefly, migrant workers are in a "weak" position in the bargaining process for wages, the location of housing and also working conditions against labor intermediaries and employers. However, there are other subordination relations among workers. Women and children constitute the "second" weak position in the whole process. In this framework, the aim of the thesis is to analyze the social and economic conditions of seasonal migrant workers taking all these exploitation relations in Ordu and Ankara-Polatlı into account.

All of these findings indicate the hypothesis that seasonal migrant workers are the poorest laborers. It should be emphasized that there is a hierarchy in their experience with vulnerability and poverty. At the bottom, women and children, who

are ethnically Kurds, take place; then come male workers of Kurdish origin, Georgians, and local workers subsequently.

Problematizing the role and function of seasonal migrant workers as a subject for enquiry is important for researchers who want to develop a broader perspective. Specifically, that case illustrates the role of seasonal workers in the transformation of the rural to the urban. This is a big project which has been implemented all over the world. Globalization has been liquidating small family farmers and the concentration of few enterprises in agriculture has been expanding rapidly. In this framework, seasonal migrant workers are the most important labor force because they represent the cheapest, the most mobile and obedient labor force at the global level. In other words, global employment means, at the same time, global exploitation for the workers.

Apart from the relations with neoliberal policies, seasonal migrant workers are worth studying in terms of labor-capital relations at the farm level. Indicating the changing patterns of agricultural structure enables conceiving the new order in agricultural life because the substitution of migrant workers brings not only economic, but also new social relations. In addition, intrinsic dynamics such as ethnicity and gender in labor relations are also important in evaluating the labor relations of seasonal migrant workers.

### Research Methodology

This study aims to analyze seasonal migrant workers in agriculture-related jobs with exploitative labor relations. In order to examine those workers in their relations both quantitative and qualitative methods are used.

As for the qualitative part, in-depth interviews were conducted with workers, labor intermediaries, agricultural entrepreneurs and many representatives from state enterprises and non-governmental organizations. The interviews which were done with workers enabled factual data on the opinions and perceptions of workers about their lives. In addition, their answers gave me the facts about the order of the working system. The interviews which were done with labor intermediaries and the owners of gardens also made important contributions in this respect.

The interviews which were conducted with 41 workers, seven labor intermediaries, seven agricultural entrepreneurs and many other people interested in the issue provided data. Sabahat Tuncel, a member of parliament, provided me with broad data about the protest of seasonal workers which had been organized by Democratic Society Party (DTP) in Polatlı the last year. A representative of *Tarım – İş* (Agriculture and Agricultural Industry Workers Union of Turkey) from the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (*Türk – İş*) told about the activities of the union about the issue. Prof. Murat Şeker, whose studies are about seasonal migrant workers in Çukurova, shared his worthy experiences with me. Gökhan Günaydın, the chairman of the Chamber of Agriculture Engineers, informed me about the studies of agriculture engineers on seasonal workers; Tuncay Çelen, a member of *Çapa-İş*, was an independent trade union, in the 1970s, explained unionization among seasonal workers in the 1970s. A representative of Turkish Employment Agency (*İş-Kur*) mentioned the role of that agency on the workers and labor intermediaries and the General Secretary of Fatsa Chamber of Agriculture described the situation of seasonal workers in Ordu.

Some answers in the interviews were very short and they are quite suitable for making graphics. They are about workers' regions, educational status, socio-

economic conditions and opinions about the working life. Moreover, that analysis enables one to see the differences in terms of gender, age and ethnicity. In the quantitative part, data obtained from these interviews were analyzed through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). In addition, the results of the Agricultural Holdings Wage Structure and Household Labor Force Surveys which were implemented by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) will be source of that study.

Furthermore, I closely observed the working and social life in my area survey. The relationships between the workers and the labor intermediaries, between the workers and the agricultural entrepreneurs were my main focus areas. I also paid attention to the solidarist and controversial elements in those relations. To sum up, all these provided me with reliable and concrete data and information about the seasonal migrant workers in agriculture.

### Outline of the Thesis

During area surveys and research on the issue, the different exploitation levels and their determinants have emerged as striking concepts. “What are the reasons for that differentiation” is a crucial question in this framework. Workers experience exploitation at different levels according to their ethnicity, age and physical capacity. First of all, the wage hierarchy is ranked from top to bottom as local workers, Georgians and Kurds, respectively. Secondly, child workers can earn less money in some areas, but they can earn equal amounts of money in other places. Thirdly, the wage for some jobs like carrying sacks is higher; but these jobs require strong physical capacity. If we take all these variables and concepts enabling the

sustainability of these exploitative relations into account, the informal structure of the order, unequal power relations and weakness of workers can be clearly observed. In this respect, the theory section of the thesis focuses on the following concepts.

Firstly, proleterianization indicates the dissolution of agriculture and the replacement of migrant workers with the unpaid family force and the changing status of workers from peasants to workers. Secondly, labor mobility, which is essential for the seasonal labor market in agriculture, is elaborated. These workers are the most mobile people throughout the world. They are on the move about six months a year. Their movement is the need for providing cheaper and docile labor to the employers. Thirdly, unequal power relations within the labor market for seasonal agriculture and also the relations among the workers such as men and women, child and parent are illustrated. Finally, the marginalization, which is a very common strategy all over the world, is explained. Its role on the keeping workers as inferior is emphasized in this section.

In the third chapter, the historical development of seasonal agricultural workers is represented. The roots of that job go back to Ottoman times when there were large amounts of workers. Today, they constitute still an important part for the labor source. The historical trajectory enables us to observe and evaluate the changes of those workers' life *vis-à-vis* the global changes in Turkey and in the world as well. The crucial point is the capitalization of agriculture for the usage of migrant workers. To illustrate the steps of commercialization and becoming proletariats of landless and small peasants is the main objection of this chapter. The changes, especially in the neo-liberal era, result in the significant shifts in the agricultural life in terms of production process, labor-capital and also social relations. In this framework, to

describe the role of seasonal migrant workers within this picture is the other target of this section.

In the fourth chapter, the phenomenon of seasonal migrant workers is analyzed at lengths according to the area survey findings. Firstly, the particular reasons for becoming migrant workers are represented in Turkey. Briefly, irrigation problem in the southeast region is an important determinant. Farmers who have big lands in their villages work in the fields as seasonal workers in other cities. Another significant reason is the Tobacco Quota, which was implemented in 1994 and later, with the introduction of contract farming, which reduced the demand for the semi-oriental tobacco produced in these areas. Before the quota, workers who had lands had cultivated their crops and landless workers had worked in tobacco fields as sharecroppers. After the quota a considerable number of farmers became seasonal workers in the distant cities.

Thirdly, forced migration in the 1990s forced people to migrate to cities and people who did not find jobs in urban areas began to live in cities and work as seasonal workers in villages in the summer time. Fourthly, there are seasonal workers who were dismissed from their jobs in urban areas due to economic crisis in 2009. They turned backs or became seasonal agricultural workers.

In the second part of that chapter, the actual working conditions are introduced in detail. Firstly, the legal status of workers and labor intermediaries are explained by the insufficiencies of these regulations. After that, the crucial function of the labor intermediaries is revealed by giving importance to the lack of legality. Subsequently, in real life, how workers travel, where they live and what are the living conditions in the host places, how much they earn by attracting importance to

the different earning groups and the levels of landlessness and poverty of workers and its reflection on the disempowered status of workers are illustrated.

In the fifth chapter, the unequal relations in those jobs are examined. The relations are observed clearly during the bargaining process. Workers are at a lower status; they have to accept terrible working conditions in terms of wages, security and sheltering. Their unequal positions are reproduced during the bargaining process. In those exploitative relations, ethnicity plays a crucial role. Workers lose the bargaining power depending upon their ethnicity. The Kurds are located at the bottom. In fact, ethnic antagonism is observed where seasonal migration exists. These examples are seen all over the world. However, the larger Kurdish problem brings new and deeper inequality dimensions for the workers in Turkey. They are exposed to exploitation owing to both the aim of providing cheap labor and their Kurdish identity. Thirdly, child workers have the lowest position among seasonal workers. They are forced to work because of poverty. In that case, they cannot have the same working conditions. They usually earn lower wages and give earnings to their families. In addition, disparities in the working life affect them more deeply because of their age; they are more vulnerable. Finally, a gender dimension is expressed. Women usually earn the same amount of money; however, they do not control that money because the payment of the women's earnings is usually made to their husbands and the women receive money from them. Moreover, they work in both the fields and in the tents. Their jobs during the period of seasonal migration are not equal with those of men and their wages are even less in most places. The thesis ends with the conclusion part, which the field results and theoretical concepts are discussed in relation with each other and shed lights on Turkish case at the lengths of

this discussion. The chapter concludes the lacuna in the literature and recommendations for the further research.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

In this chapter, the concepts of proletarianization, labor mobility, unequal power relations and marginalization will be discussed. This chapter will provide us theoretical tools which will contribute to the analysis of the case of seasonal migrant workers throughout the thesis.

#### Proletarianization

The proletarianization of the peasants is one of the fundamental steps of capitalist development, providing a labor force for sectors other than peasant farming. World history from the seventeenth century onwards has been marked by large scale and painful peasant movements towards cities. This has captured the attention of theorists and laid the core of the most important theories aiming to understand the world. However, in the era in which peasant proletarianization was normalized and, moreover, perceived as a necessary step for development, academic attention deviated from this very phenomenon. In the neoliberal age we are living through, I believe in the need to look back at proletarianization and reconsider in order to be able see the convergences as well as the divergences taking place in the context of peasant movements, more specifically, of seasonal migrant workers.

The concepts proletarian, proletarianization and semi-proletarianization for the issue of seasonal migrant workers have gained importance in the neo-liberal age. In order to evaluate these concepts, primary definitions must be stated.

A proletarian is a person whose only means of subsistence is to sell his labor power. Proletarians are wage laborers in the Marxist analogy, hence proletarianization is a process by which the status of a person in a society moves from employer or self-employed to wage or salaried laborers.

As the name implies, a semi-proletarian is a person who has his land and works for extra income. As Jansen writes, “The semi proletarian generally conceived as a transitional category which will disappear in a process of full proletarianization.”<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, according to some academics of peasant studies like Frank Ellis<sup>11</sup> a semi-proletarian also has to cope with income fluctuations resulting from the seasonality of his own farm production by the incorporation of wage income. This conceptualization is also important for the sake of analysis.

In the neo-liberal age, the crucial problematic is the re-emerging trend of the proletarianization of the peasantry after the decline of the regulative role of the state. Specifically, since 1980, the world has experienced a dramatic neo-liberal shift. Briefly, Neo-liberal policies have resulted in the shrinkage of the effectiveness of the nation state in that age. To this extent, agricultural activities have been affected by these new developments as well. The nation state has lost its superior role in the regulation of agriculture along with the rise of transnational corporations in the agribusiness industries and global governance agencies such as the World

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<sup>10</sup> Kees Jansen, “Structural Adjustment, Peasant Differentiation and the Environmet in the Central America,” in *Disappearing Peasantries?* eds. Deborah Bryceson, Cristobal Kay and Jos Mooij (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 2000), p. 208.

<sup>11</sup> Frank Ellis, “The Determinants of Rural Livelihood Diversification in Developing Countries,” *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 51, no. 2 (May 2000).

Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.<sup>12</sup>

The agricultural sector is no longer as an area which is subjected to the targets of the nation state and its preferences; economic activities in agriculture have been reshaped by domestic market actors whose preferences tend to achieve the integration with transnational retail and production sectors; in other words, the quantities, the sorts, the production and the costs of agricultural goods are determined in global market conditions as independent of the national economy.<sup>13</sup>

The national government has lost its dominant position and agricultural producers found themselves in the global market.<sup>14</sup> Under these conditions, small farmers, who cannot compete in the global market, have been disempowered dramatically. That situation has had a deep effect on the composition of the peasantry in agricultural areas. Kay explains the picture by dividing it into two parts.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, some peasants have been turned into “capitalized family farmers” or “capitalist peasant farms”; they hire workers from outside for a particular job- usually seasonal. It should be noted that despite their having small holdings, their incomes come from agri-business as in the case of waged rural labor. Kay adds that the essential shifts which agriculture has experienced have been achieved thanks to the perpetuation of temporary and seasonal wage labor. The dissolution of agriculture has put small peasants and landless workers in a position

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<sup>12</sup> Vaughan Higgins and Geoffrey Lawrence, “Globalization and Agricultural Governance,” in *Agricultural Governance: Globalization and the New Politics of Regulation*, eds. Vaughan Higgins and Geoffrey Lawrence (London: Routledge, 2005), p.1.

<sup>13</sup> Huricihan İslamoğlu (eds), *Türkiye’de Tarımda Dönüşüm ve Küresel Piyasalarla Bütünleşme Süreçleri*, forthcoming, (Ankara: TÜBİTAK, 2008), p. 5–6.

<sup>14</sup> Deborah Fahy Bryceson, “Disappearing Peasantries? Rural Labour Redundancy in the Neo-liberal Era and Beyon,” in *Disappearing Peasantries?* eds. Deborah Bryceson, Cristobal Kay and Jos Mooij (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 2000), pp. 304-305.

<sup>15</sup> Cristobal Kay, “Latin America’s Agrarian Transformation: Peasantization and Proleterianization,” in *Disappearing Peasantries?* eds. Deborah Bryceson, Cristobal Kay and Jos Mooij (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 2000), p. 130.

in which they have had at least two options: migrating to urban or agricultural areas for seasonal work. Each has increased proletarianization dramatically. According to Hauser, the work is necessary for their survival. The proletarian must work; the other option is hunger.<sup>16</sup> In the impoverishing conditions imposed by neo-liberalism it is fair to argue that the subjects of this thesis are the ones who are becoming proletarians out of the struggle for bare survival and subsistence. All in all, it can be said that there is a parallel duration: de-agrarian politics have resulted in de-peasantization and the outcome of that process is the rise of proletarianization in both rural and urban areas.

The neo-liberal age's most typical features, temporary work such as flexibility, piece-rate, piece, lack of social security and employment protection, have created an atmosphere in which workers are more easily controlled by their employers via reducing their rights.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, differences like gender, ethnicity and age are instrumentalized by the employers in order to pay lower and lower wages to the workers in the labor market with the fundamental aim of profit maximization. To illustrate, agricultural entrepreneurs usually prefer women workers because they are evaluated as being more available for seasonal work, they accept lower wages and they are more careful than men.<sup>18</sup>

A new dimension that Kay mentions is the new migration direction. Unlike in the past, workers migrated from urban to rural areas.<sup>19</sup> He conceptualizes this situation as the urbanization of the rural and the ruralization of the urban as well.

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<sup>16</sup> Sahajananda Saravasti, *Sahajanand on Agricultural Labour and the Rural Poor*, an edited translation of Khet Mazador/ with the original Hindi text and an introduction, notes and glossary by Walter Hauser (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 1994), p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> Kay, p. 130.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

The boundaries between rural and urban life have been blurring rapidly thanks to seasonal migrant workers. The constant movements of seasonal migrant workers between the rural and urban, deriving income from rural as well as urban sources, blur the traditional distinctions between these two realms. The disappearance of boundaries should be evaluated from a broad perspective because it brings not only geographical but also social novelties to societies; to this extent, social relations and concepts such as city-dweller and villager are to be redefined.

Landlessness is a crucial factor leading to the proletarianization process. Under the effect of neo-liberalization, the commercialization and commodification of agriculture have caused a considerable number of small peasants to become almost or totally landless.<sup>20</sup> One of the prevailing solutions for landless workers is migration to other agricultural areas, regardless of whether abroad or not. There is a strict relationship between the downward trend of small peasants and the rise of seasonal migrant workers. Breman explains the situation:

The decline of home industry made it necessary to reduce the household size. Peasant families began to expel some household members, either temporarily or indefinitely. These people had to find alternative sources of employment. The introduction of a new machine-based technology had a similar impact. At the same time, the remaining work force was insufficient to meet agricultural needs at peak times of agricultural calendar. This short fall was met by hiring seasonal workers, mostly from peasant families seeking supplementary incomes for the surplus of labor of adult members or children.<sup>21</sup>

To separate the case of Turkey is important at this point. In Turkey, a considerable number of landless workers migrate to agricultural areas as whole

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<sup>20</sup> Jan Breman, "Labour and Landlessness in South and South-East Asia," in *Disappearing Peasantries?* edited by Deborah Bryceson, Cristobal Kay and Jos Mooij (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 2000), p. 232.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

families. The attempts for survival compel these peasant-proletarians to a constant movement in search of work, which is a distinctive aspect of the phenomenon of seasonal migrant workers.

### Labor Mobility

Capitalist penetration into agriculture has resulted in the diversification of the rural economy. To this extent, the salient feature of that case is the remarkable increase of labor mobility and the casualization of the labor phenomenon.<sup>22</sup> The casualization of labor expresses the temporariness of work, which is very comfortable with the neo-liberalism in terms of flexibility, insecurity and duteousness. Breman states the relation with rural diversification and casualization:

Diversification of the rural economy and increased labour mobility are in turn connected to a third process which has significantly changed the experience of the landless, namely the casualization of employment. The peasant economy shows a tendency for permanent farm- hands to be replaced by daily wage earners and for indefinite employment to be replaced by short-term labour contracts based on the hire of outsiders, who are usually cheaper and more docile than local workers. Labour is now paid principally or exclusively in cash rather than in kind, and remunerated on a piecework or contracting out basis rather than on a time-rate basis as before.<sup>23</sup>

Rural diversification has generated many work types in the labor market.

The most common characteristic is temporariness in both the urban and rural labor markets. The dissolution of agriculture has resulted in migration mostly towards urban areas. Their job facilities have been usually limited to the informal sector.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

In this framework, to settle in urban areas has presented significant difficulties.

According to Breman, the separation of working and living places by the dichotomy of urban and rural has caused the phenomenon of “mobility” in the labor market.

The reason for moving to distant places is usually lack of permanent jobs in workers’ places of origin. Protective employment opportunities are not compatible with the neo-liberal politics. Briefly Breman states that:

A common factor among the heterogeneous mass of migrant workers rotating around this area is the lack of permanent jobs with protective employment conditions such as those that apply in the formal sector of the economy. The durability, regularity and security that mark working life in the dignified circuit of employment are given shape in the combination of at least some of the following contractual features: work which requires formal education; payment based on time; complete and standardized payment immediately or shortly after the actual performance; regular and not excessively long working hours; organized protection of workers’ interest; and institutionalized bargaining procedures for consolidation and expanding acknowledged rights. Informal sector employment is distinguished by low scores on all these points, individually and collectively.<sup>25</sup>

In this framework, labor mobility is essential in order to implement neo-liberal policies: workers can be dismissed in accordance with the need for the moment.<sup>26</sup> In other words, the casualization of labor represents a great opportunity for employers to enforce their own terms in the employment process.

Apart from the migration to urban areas, another important movement, which is discussed here, toward other agricultural areas, has been observed on a wide scale. Thanks to the circulation of workers, employers access the cheaper labor force and the employment of household members has lost its importance.<sup>27</sup> In

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<sup>25</sup> Jan Breman, *Footloose Labour Working in India’s Informal Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 224.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>27</sup> Breman, “Labour and Landlessness...” p. 242.

that case, there has been an interconnection with the migration of household members to cities and the migration of agricultural laborers. Furthermore, on the issue of labor mobility, labor intermediaries also play an important role.<sup>28</sup> They determine the migration circuits and mobilize workers.

Breman asserts that new labor bonds have been introduced in the casualization of labor period.<sup>29</sup> Although capitalist penetration is felt deeply in many dimensions, pre-capitalist elements have been adapted in accordance to meet the needs. To illustrate, contracting workers for a particular time period by giving payments after the harvest immobilizes labor power in a determined place.<sup>30</sup> To this extent, the concepts of “mobility” and “immobility” draw close each other. Of course, that bondage mechanism exhibits important differences from the past, especially the times of slavery. However, there is a reality in which workers, especially proletariats, experience coercive labor relation in their working lives. Breman calls this “neo-bondage”. It means the implementations which employers put into effect today in order to access a sufficient and cheap supply of labor.<sup>31</sup> He emphasizes that the restrictions on the freedom of workers do not reduce the capitalist character of the production process.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Breman, *Footloose Labour...* p. 224.

<sup>29</sup> Breman, “Labour and Landlessness...” p. 242.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Karin Kapadia, “Responsibility without Rights: Women Workers in Bonded Labour in Rural Industry in South India,” in *Disappearing Peasantries?* eds. Deborah Bryceson, Cristobal Kay and Jos Mooij (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 2000).

The fragmented structure of landless workers by accelerating mobility mechanisms affects their solidarity and class relations. Breman explains the effect of capitalism on the class formation of workers:

The need to be available for employment in diverse branches of industry rather than to specialize, the pressure towards spatial mobility which often takes on the character of circulation, and the casual mode of employment with its corresponding forms of wage payment, are all mechanisms which frustrate collective bargaining and the formation of a common front from this composite underclass.<sup>33</sup>

Reasons such as the lack of unionism in the informal sector and the low level of literacy among workers affects the fact that seasonal migrant workers' class cannot be struggle for their rights. In this framework, the vulnerability of workers<sup>34</sup> reaches extreme levels under the effect of neo-liberal politics.

To state different dimensions such as gender and age for labor mobility is not necessary. This is because, in Turkey, workers generally migrate as a whole family. However, there can be exceptions, Breman mentions examples for India: sometimes a householder may migrate to far areas and his wife and children stay at home; in that case, income should be sufficient in order to send for them.<sup>35</sup> It is exceptional because the wages are too low to send for families. The direct opposite case is very rare; if the husband is disabled or falls ill, the first occasion is usually to send the young children to work; married women rarely can work away from their villages.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Breman, "Labour and Landlessness ...", p. 243.

<sup>34</sup> This was explained above.

<sup>35</sup> Breman, *Footloose Labour...* p. 86.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

The landless migrant presence has accelerated the globalization process by providing a salaried, cheap, temporary, docile and yet mobile labor force. The incidence of poverty and deprivation severely contribute to the inferior position of seasonal migrant workers, not only in their actual lives, but also in the process of bargaining to find temporary employment and to set working conditions. The unequal power relations defined between the seasonal workers and employers must be evaluated to understand the docile position of these workers.

### Unequal Power Relations

Seasonal migrant workers represent the cheapest and the most obedient labor force in agriculture. This system depends upon the “weak” position of workers against employers, labor intermediaries and state officials.

Rogaly evaluates their weakness in related to poverty.<sup>37</sup> According to him, the poorest workers make the worst job arrangements because their bargaining power is not as strong as that of the other workers’. In other words, the relatively less poor agree with employers under better conditions than the poorest.<sup>38</sup> The arrangements which show differences in terms of wages, security, working and sheltering conditions depending on persons for the same job are done informally. In general, there is no legal regulation within those relations or laws and rules are not implemented in practice.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ben Rogaly, “Agricultural Growth and the Structure of ‘Casual’ Labor-Hiring in Rural West Bengal,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 23, no. 4 (July 1996), p. 143.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>39</sup> Johan Fredrik Rye, Joanna Andrzejewska, “The Structural Disempowerment of Eastern European Migrant Farm Workers in Norwegian Agriculture,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 26, no. 1 (April 2010), p. 47.

Informality is a prominent concept in this case. It appears not only in informal labor in agriculture, but also in the informal work arrangement system. Seasonal migration has been sustained via labor intermediaries for long years. There are many instances such as Turkey, South Africa, the US, Bengal, Norway and Spain throughout the world. Labor intermediaries connect with employers and employees verbally and their key role gives them superiority over workers. The personalized character of the work arrangements, based on social networks, perpetuates the workers' "weakness".<sup>40</sup> It should be noted that the aim of personalized labor arrangements is the employers' desire to obtain the cheapest and most docile labor force.<sup>41</sup> To this extent, social capital is an integral part of that job because all job arrangements depend on social networks between workers and labor intermediaries and employers. To lose social capital means to lose the job as well as the chance of living and working at the work place.<sup>42</sup> Within those relations, reciprocal "trust" is essential. That traditional form of relations results in the neglect of formal contracts (if there is an arrangement.)<sup>43</sup> Apart from informality, another essential feature of the relationship between employers and workers is indirectness.<sup>44</sup> The terms of the work arrangement are set indirectly, with the mediation of the labor intermediary or another worker. The indirectness leads to confusion, which disempowers the workers.

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<sup>40</sup> Linpung Liu, Chunni Zang, "Wages for Migrant Workers in the Pearl River Delta: Determining Factors," *Social Sciences in China* 29, no. 3 (August 2008), p.116.

<sup>41</sup> Rogaly, pp. 157-158.

<sup>42</sup> Arjan De Haan, "Migrants, Livelihoods and Rights: The Relevance of Migration in Development Policies," *Social Development Working Paper*, no. 4 (February 2000), p. 18.

<sup>43</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, "The Structural Disempowerment...", p. 47

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

The “weak” position of workers is obvious in the bargaining process. The unequal relations between workers and employers and labor intermediaries are reproduced at the encounter time. According to Rye and Andrzejewska, workers are aware of their inferior position, bringing their inferiority into the work arrangement. For instance, less desirable working conditions or insufficient job possibility in their place of origin is an important factor in that case.<sup>45</sup> To accept low wages is preferable to unemployment.<sup>46</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska call the concept of “frame of reference”, which refers to the comparison with relatively better conditions in the host country and insufficient job opportunities in the indigenous places.

Chris Bristol’s interview expresses the same idea that workers have an improvised life in the host countries; otherwise, they have the poorest life conditions in their places of origin.<sup>47</sup> As a conclusion migrants work in unacceptable conditions without noticing the unacceptability of working life.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, farmers claim that higher wages cause the closure of production and naturally seasonal employment opportunities.<sup>49</sup> That rhetoric empowers farmers while it weakens workers in the negotiating process.

Another important determinant in the unequal bargaining process is the language problem.<sup>50</sup> Seasonal migrant workers throughout the world usually work abroad and feel difficulties in the communication with the people in those working

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49.

<sup>47</sup> Chris Bristol, “The Seasonal Agricultural Work,” *Yakima-Herald Republic* (Yakima, Wash: April, 2009), p. 30.

<sup>48</sup> Rye, and Andrzejewska, p. 46.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

places. In that case, workers depend upon the labor intermediaries, who enable the connection with employers and workers. Specifically, working conditions are not a preference but a dictation to workers. As for Turkey, especially Kurd workers, who are the majority of seasonal migrant workers in agriculture, experience these language difficulties because the literacy rate among them is very low and a considerable number of them cannot communicate with Turkish people. That language problem causes the lack of knowledge about their payments and their rights. At that point, the lack of formal institutions that inform them and the lack of formal representation of those workers discourage workers' power in the bargaining process.<sup>51</sup>

All these variables result in the inferior status of workers in the bargaining process. In that case, the interesting point is the changing level of vulnerability according to the workers' age, gender and ethnicity. First of all, the payments may change depending upon the age. For example, in Turkey, there are children who younger than 12 earning half of other workers' wages. In addition, wage distribution with regard to piece-rate disempowers child and elderly workers, whose capabilities are not equal to the other workers'. Although they work in the same work conditions and earn less. That case results in discrimination among workers.<sup>52</sup> Secondly, gender affects wages directly.<sup>53</sup> In Turkey, there are also some instances<sup>54</sup> of lower wages because of gender discrimination. However, in Ordu and Polatli, women earn equal amounts of money to men; in that case, it should be

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<sup>51</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, p. 48.

<sup>52</sup> Rogaly, p. 151.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 151-152.

<sup>54</sup> Agricultural Business Fee Structure Survey indicates those price differences among men and women workers.

noted that women work in gardens, fields and in tents after the regular work day. They raise children, cook meals, clean clothes and household items. Their invisible labor in tents is not priced. Furthermore, children and women may give their earning to the householder.

Finally, ethnicity is a crucial determinant in the bargaining process by constituting different unequal power relations among workers. Bonacich problematizes the price differentials by stressing the concept “ethnic antagonism.”<sup>55</sup> She explains the fragmental structure of the labor market:

The central hypothesis is that ethnic antagonism first germinates in a labor market split along ethnic lines. To be split, a labor market must contain at least two groups of workers whose price of labor differs for the same work, or would differ if they did the same work. The concept "price of labor" refers to labor's total cost to the employer, including not only wages, but the cost of recruitment, transportation, room and board, education, health care (if the employer must bear these), and the costs of labor unrest.<sup>56</sup>

Bonacich expresses that the essential target of using migrant workers and employing them at different wages is to obtain a cheaper labor force. In her studying areas, wages are high due to the high level of unionization and acquired rights. In that case, to import migrants from overseas countries is the optimum solution<sup>57</sup> because their legal status is different and they are more vulnerable to worse working conditions. In Turkey, the separation of workers according to their ethnicity is seen clearly. Kurds earn 22 TL, Georgians 30 TL and local workers 35 TL for the same job. In addition, the housing conditions also differ. Specifically, the

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<sup>55</sup> Edna Bonacich, “A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market,” *American Sociological Review* 35, no. 5 (October, 1972), pp. 547-559.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 549.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 553.

Kurds usually stay in tents, which represent the worst situation in terms of unhealthiness and dirtiness; the Georgians may stay either in abandoned buildings or the employer's houses. As for local workers, they generally stay in the employer's home.

Bonacich asserts that this fragmented structure results in a caste system among workers.<sup>58</sup> Higher paid labor hold particular jobs and control others in order to prevent their entrance into that area. To this extent, everybody stays in a determined cycle. In that case, in addition to the exclusion from the state, employers and local population, a group of workers who gain more exclude migrants from the labor market. Bonacich states the relation with exclusion and caste:

In sum, exclusion and caste are similar reactions to a split labor market. They represent victories for higher paid labor. The victory of exclusion is more complete in that cheaper labor is less available to business. For this reason I would hypothesize that a higher paid group prefers exclusion to caste, even though exclusion means they have to do the dirty work.<sup>59</sup>

A split labor market and unequal power relations in the bargaining process result in the marginalization of seasonal migrant workers due to the inferiority explained above.

### Marginalization

The marginalization of workers is observed in different dimensions in the working environment. Geographical isolation is one of these dimensions to be analyzed initially. Migrant laborers work on a particular farm and they have no

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 555.

<sup>59</sup> Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic...", p. 557.

communication with other farms or workers.<sup>60</sup> Their limited communication facilities bring not only geographical, but also social isolation. To illustrate, in Ordu and Polatlı, workers usually stay in tents far from the centre of the cities and they are carried to and from the gardens or fields by vehicles. In the work places, they speak with only their friends who are co-workers in the garden. The exception is that they can connect with the employer if he is there. In conclusion, they live in a limited sphere in those work places in terms of both housing and working places.

Another dimension which affects the concept of workers' marginalization is social networks. Those networks play a crucial role in the process of that job.<sup>61</sup> In fact, the only connection with employer and employees is labor intermediaries. Workers are strangers in the work places. They learn many things about how to live in these new areas from intermediaries. For instance, questions about how to get food or where the hospital is or how the transportation system work are explained by the labor intermediaries. In addition, the workers' language problem<sup>62</sup> is a barrier in dealing with in these questions by themselves; in that case, the sole solution is the help to the labor intermediaries'.

To this extent, according to Rye and Andrzejewska, the situation affects the behavior of workers in those places. They do not have much knowledge about the job opportunities in the host country, they live within the particular limit which labor intermediaries determine; they are isolated from society.<sup>63</sup> The limited communication facilities affect the workers' time off periods. They spend their leisure time with their fellows and do not connect with the local people. In addition,

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<sup>60</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, p. 47.

<sup>61</sup> As discussed above.

<sup>62</sup> As explained above.

<sup>63</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, p. 48.

their lower wages prevent them from spending money in the centre of cities. That causes the migrants' isolation from domestic workers in terms of payments because they do not have the same consumer opportunities as the local workers.<sup>64</sup>

Nieswand asserts the concept of 'status of paradox' on the marginalization of migrant workers.<sup>65</sup> According to him, workers from the middle class in their original country pass to lower status by doing jobs that do not require high skills in the host country. He labels that situation "status of paradox". They are marginalized in order to prevent the incorporation with the labor market of the host country. It occurs in Turkey among especially Georgians. Although they have university degrees, their labor is deskilled; they work in agricultural areas or on construction sites.

Another dimension which affects the marginalization of workers is the lack of unionization.<sup>66</sup> Workers cannot get organized in order to raise their voice or their complaints. There are several reasons such as legal blocks and lacunas for that case. For instance, in Turkey, people who work in a place in which the number of workers is under 50 cannot unionize.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, trade unions do not much care about migrant workers because of their concern about authority. In addition, Rye states that the language problem has a negative effect on the expression of workers themselves and naturally the development of their organization.<sup>68</sup> That picture perpetuates the isolation and marginality of seasonal workers.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>65</sup> Boris Nieswand, "Methodological Transnationalism and the Paradox of Migration," *Conference Paper*, submitted to EASA Biennial Conference, 2006, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, pp. 47-48 and 50.

<sup>67</sup> Republic of Turkey, *İş Kanunu* (Labor Law). Law no. 4857, Ratified in 22 May 2003. Available [online]: <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kanunlar/k4857.html> [07 December 2009].

<sup>68</sup> Rye and Andrzejewska, p. 50.

The marginal figure of seasonal workers is evaluated the comparison with “pure” rurality and non-indigenous others.<sup>69</sup> According to Panelli et al., rurality is constructed with the rural imaginary which has important nationalistic features. Rural values are not compatible with “race” explicitly, but they display themselves in cultural practices.<sup>70</sup> That construction is expressed in many things such as conversations and every day discourse or vice versa. In that case, racial discrimination and harassment are “normal” events.<sup>71</sup> Evidence of the discrimination is determinant labor camps. Migrant workers are invisible and do not disturb the “pure” rural community in those places. Panelli’s et al. study emphasizes that the exclusion is not only against blacks, but also ethnic white minorities.<sup>72</sup> The common perception of them is that they are not “quite” people.

It is obvious that the construction of “other” in rural areas is fed by differences. The indigenous population evaluates migrants as people different in terms of language, ethnicity and also cultural practices. In that conception, to signify them as extraordinary is very important. In order to achieve this goal, migrants usually are called “illegal” or “potential criminals.” That perception is very clear in the media news. Bauder emphasizes the use of the media as a tool in order to exclude migrants from incorporation with society.<sup>73</sup> Seasonal workers are

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<sup>69</sup> Panelli et al., “De-centring White Ruralities: Ethnic Diversity, Racialization and Indigenous Countrysides,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, no. 3 (July, 2009), p. 356.

<sup>70</sup> Audrey Kobayashi and Linda Peak, “Racism out of Place: Thoughts on Whiteness and an Antiracist Geography in the New Millennium,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90, no.2 (June, 2000), p. 394.

<sup>71</sup> Panelli et al., p. 356.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 357.

<sup>73</sup> Harald Bauder, “Foreign Farm Workers in Ontario (Canada): Exclusionary Discourse in the Newsprint Media,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 35, no.1 (January, 2008), p. 104.

seen as potential thieves or drunks.<sup>74</sup> According to Bauder, the media is active in that process; it creates not only racist perception, but also legitimates unacceptable conditions for workers. Similarly Liliana Suarez-Navaz stresses the racial discrimination against African immigrant workers in Andalusia.<sup>75</sup> Navaz asserts that there is an “other” concept which evaluates those immigrants as a distinct and different people from “ordinary citizens.”<sup>76</sup> In Turkey, there is a similar evaluation and the perception of potential terrorist because of the Kurdish problem.<sup>77</sup>

In addition to the media, Trimikliniotis et al. point to racist elements in state institutions.<sup>78</sup> The objection of this claim is that the state institutions in South Africa hold racist relics from its apartheid period. They claim that there is continuity between the apartheid and the post-apartheid period, especially referring to the neo-liberal age, in terms of maximizing the profit for employers. To this extent, migrant labor is invaluable in the light of representing the cheapest and the most docile labor force. The reflection of that phenomenon on seasonal migrant workers is the exclusion and marginalization of them.<sup>79</sup> The main argument of the article is the indication of those workers as potential criminals. In fact, politicians’ speeches and the media are tools of that process.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>75</sup> Liliana Suarez Navaz, “Immigration and the Politics of Space Allocation in Rural Spain: The Case of Andalusia,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 34, no. 2 (April, 2007).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 224-225.

<sup>77</sup> This issue will be discussed below in Chapter 5.

<sup>78</sup> Nicos Trimikliniotis, Steven Gordon, Brian Zondo, “Globalisation and Migrant Labour in a ‘Rainbow Nation’: A Fortress South Africa?,” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 7 (October, 2008), p.1331.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.1330.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p.1331.

Keeping all the discussion provided above in mind, we reach a general picture of a seasonal migrant worker who is deprived of opportunities for survival in the place of origin, who needs to be in constant movement in order to find temporary employment and earns income from informal, unjust and insecure verbal contracts vulnerable to williness in the bargaining process and segregation as well as other types of otherization in the work place. This section provides us with the necessary tools to analyze of the situation of seasonal migrant workers in Turkey.

CHAPTER III  
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL  
WORKERS IN TURKEY

In this chapter, the brief history of seasonal agricultural workers in Turkey will be explained. To this extent, the number of workers, the events which affect the statistics and workers' lives will be analyzed. Specifically, the late Ottoman, the early Republic, Post-World War II and the Neo-liberal era will be discussed, respectively. This information will enable us make an evaluation of this job from the past to today taking both differences and similarities into account. In that case, the legacy and changes will be clearer.

The Late Ottoman Period

The issue of migrant workers became a subject when the commercialization of agriculture began in the Ottoman Empire. It was the time which corresponds to the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. By the decomposition of the *timar* system, the decentralization process began immensely in the Empire.<sup>81</sup> On the one hand, the military and political power of the state shrunk. On the other hand, the *ayan* (local notables) and *derebeys* (feudal lord) emerged as new powerful actors in the provinces. Their power was strengthened after taking the positions of provincial administrators, tax collectors, usurers, merchants and *de facto* owners of land tracts of *miri* (state) lands.<sup>82</sup> In addition, European demand on

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<sup>81</sup> Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism, 1820-1913: Trade, Investment and Production* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 86.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

agricultural products of the Levant as a consequence of the Commercial Revolution in the west during the period of 1760-1808 coincided with the rise of the Ayans.<sup>83</sup>

Reşat Kasaba investigates the relationship between the commercialization of agriculture and usage of migrant workers, and states that the rise of *ayans* was accompanied by an increase in the taxes and other revenues and it naturally brought together the obvious agricultural commercialization.<sup>84</sup>

As for the issue of how additional labor resources were sustained, Kasaba puts forward four main groups.<sup>85</sup> People who migrated to Anatolia from the Aegean Islands and Moreas due to political and economic reasons form one group. Nomads were another group important to the labor force. The third group was the migrants who came from eastern Anatolia and the Black Sea who went to work in western Anatolia. Finally, the immigrants who had come from the recently ceded territories in the Balkans, Crimera and Circassia constituted the labor force by settling in western Anatolia.

Ayans used the workers who came from the islands. They also hired the nomads and Kurds and Lazes from the east. Kasaba noted that the majority group of waged labor consisted of Kurds and Lazes. However, the final group, immigrants, was not the same source of labor as the other three groups of Ayans mentioned above because they were skilled technicians and therefore their employment areas were the construction of railways in western Anatolia and some of them, who had capital and

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<sup>83</sup> Halil İnalçık, "The Emergence of Big Farms, Çiftlik: State, Landlords and Tenants," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, eds. Faruk Tabak and Çağlar Keyder (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 24.

<sup>84</sup> Reşat Kasaba, "Migrant Labor in Western Anatolia 1750-1850," in *Landholding and Commercial Agriculture in the Middle East*, eds. Faruk Tabak and Çağlar Keyder (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991) p. 115.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

commercial expertise, engaged in trade. Therefore, the immigrants ought to be evaluated as having expanded the circle of small peasant farming instead of providing additional labor source to the owners of large estates.<sup>86</sup>

In this framework, the Ayans played an important role in the commercialization of agriculture; and naturally so did using the seasonal waged emigrant and immigrant workers as proletariats. However, Kasaba states that the Ayans had difficulties in continuing their agricultural life in this way. There were two reasons for this situation: firstly, their labor sources were not certain and secondly, they had desire to keep close relationships with the imperial centre. They found the remedy by opting for a sharecropping system and other forms of tenancy and so the peasants strengthened gradually as share croppers, owners and tenants. Blending into the background of the Ayans did not have adverse effects on the expansion of commercialization in agriculture. Conversely, the production of commercial crops and their trade doubled when the Ayans lost their power considerably in the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>87</sup>

On the other hand, the fact that the local merchants acquired a new and vital status caused the expansion of commercialization.<sup>88</sup> They benefited from the emptiness in western Anatolia, which derived from the forced withdrawal of the French from the eastern Mediterranean countries during the Napoleonic Wars. By the effects of interaction with these local traders and peasants, the crop diversification according to the need of industrial crops was sustained.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

Moreover, the peasants, who had the time left over from their harvest, did additional work in the uncultivated fields or belonging to their neighbors.<sup>89</sup> It means that seasonal workers were not entirely landless peasants. In addition, the mobility of labor was not a novel phenomenon for the eighteenth century. However, what makes the difference is that the essential target was to get involved in the commercialized activities, before that, the aim had been to protect themselves from the extreme demands of the state and its agents.<sup>90</sup>

During this period, cotton production was the important migration area due to its need for intensive labor. Zafer Toprak, who explains the brief history of labor and capital in Çukurova, emphasizes that it was a pressing problem for agricultural entrepreneurs during the late Ottoman Era.<sup>91</sup> Toprak states that there were about 60,000-80,000 temporary workers in the cotton fields of Çukurova and this labor force came from mostly the eastern provinces such as Van, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Musul, Antep, Maraş, Sivas, Niğde, Kayseri, Konya, Antakya and Lazkiye. It means that there was a considerable massive migration in the harvest times, especially for spading out the cotton, to Çukurova. The reason for the rise of this place as a migration area was surely related to its labor-intensive feature and the fact that its trade enabled the considerable profit for the land owners.

To sum up, the roots of seasonal migrant workers as we understand today go back to the eighteenth century. The initial point was the commercialization of agriculture. By this time, growing industrial crops was not the same main aim as it had been namely; the aim was not the provision of subsistence, but profit. Those factors obviously affected the seasonal migration. In this framework, providing

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Zafer Toprak, "Çukurova'da Emek ve Sermaye," *Toplumsal Tarih* 191 (November 2009).

additional labor force was quite important and migrants represented an optimum solution to the employers.

### The Early Republic

There were two important events that determined the characteristics of the early Republican period in terms of seasonal agricultural workers: the adverse effects of World War I on the peasantry and the objection of capitalization of the state. Briefly, World War I had negative effects on the economic and social conditions of the ordinary people. To this extent, landless peasants and small land owners, who constituted of the group of seasonal migrant workers, were affected directly by the consequences of the war. Their purchasing power and level of welfare declined significantly. Secondly, the target of capitalization was the characteristic of the period, which was manifested by the young republic. In this sense, agriculture was an area evaluated as to be commercialized. Actually, all these factors were same as the previous term in this respect.

By the politics of the state in accordance with the capitalization, in the 1920s, the prices of agricultural products began to be determined by the free market by leaving behind the purchasing protection politics of the Ministry of Livelihood (*İaşe Nezareti*), which had been active during the years of World War I.<sup>92</sup> Apart from the price politics, the abandonment of tithe (*Aşar*), implementing credit and support politics via Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*) and bringing into force the Civil

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<sup>92</sup> Zafer Toprak, "Türkiye Tarımı ve Yapısal Gelişmeler," *Türkiye'de Tarımsal Yapılar 1923-2000*, eds. Şevket Pamuk and Zafer Toprak (Ankara: Yurt Yayınevi, 1988), p. 22.

Code (*Medeni Kanun*) aimed at development of private ownership. All of these practices indicated the cores of capitalist development.<sup>93</sup>

Firstly, while the Aşar was being abandoning, the desires of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie were taken into consideration. A new code was designed in 1925 and began to be implemented instead of the Aşar. According to this code, the tax was to be taken when the agricultural products were sold and the crucial point was that the rate of tax was 10% for cereals and 8% for industrial plants. The attempt to encourage the growth of industrial crops is clear in this code. Secondly, agricultural credits were given to farmers in three ways. The first one was land mortgage. The big land owners could provide this option because it was given according to the size of land. The second one was a personal reassurance credit; usually given seasonally in order to support the expenditures of the harvest and the priority of this credit was given to the growth of export products. This was the credit which was enabled in exchange for charging goods and it was turned into credit which was given only to merchants after 1924.<sup>94</sup> Finally, the Civil Code enabled property ownership for land legally; it obviously accelerated the commoditization of land.

Another important feature of this period was an increase in the number of big land owners. The massive population exchange in the first years of the republic created great advantages to the land owners. About 1 million Greeks who had farmed in the fertile lands and engaged in the growth of industrial crops such as grapes and tobacco along the coasts of the western region immigrated to the Greece.<sup>95</sup> The big

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<sup>93</sup> Necdet Oral, *Türkiye Tarımında Kapitalizm ve Sınıflar* (Ankara: TMMOB Ziraat Mühendisleri Odası, Tarım Politikaları Yayın Dizisi No:6, 2006), pp. 19-21.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

land owners of this region took over these lands and the possessions of the Greeks. Furthermore, 250,000 Greek farmers in the Thrace region, one of the most commercialized agricultural areas and also a source for the market of İstanbul, left their lands owing to the obliged population exchange and the government confiscated these lands and sold them to the local people.<sup>96</sup> In this case, the big land owners increased their possessions once more.

The need for a proletarian labor force was an emergent problem for employers within those years.<sup>97</sup> Thus, the period of time when the weather was suitable for production and the prices were satisfying witnessed a scarcity of labor for the big land owners.<sup>98</sup> According to Toprak, temporary employment was prevalent in agriculture and a considerable number of workers within this group was migratory (*seyyar*). The migration destinations were Çukurova, which received labor from Konya, Niğde, Urfa, Gaziantep, Hatay and the Aegan provinces, which took the migration from Afyon and Kütahya. As for the jobs, spading out and picking the cotton in Çukurova, picking oils and spading out the grapes and spading out and broking the tobacco in the Aegan provinces were main duties for the migrant workers. Undoubtedly, Adana-Çukurova was the area most in demand; about 20-30,000 workers came from the other cities at harvest times.<sup>99</sup> According to Toprak, the reason for the migration of workers was the unfertilized lands of small land owners in other cities.

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Zafer Toprak, "Cumhuriyet'in İlk Yıllarında Adana'da Amele Buhranı ve Amele Talimatnamesi," *Toplumsal Tarih* 41 (May 1997), p. 7.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

In the places where small family farming was prevalent, unpaid family labor and the system of share-cropping were the source of labor. By contrast, in Çukurova, the migrant workers were the vital labor force during this time. It is significant to note that the mechanization of agriculture changed the jobs of the workers. To illustrate, the employment of workers turned from reaping to spading when the reaper machine began to be used in the cotton fields.<sup>100</sup>

In this framework, the labor force was significant to cultivate the commercialized agricultural products. According to Necdet Oral, during 1920-1930, the dispersion of waged labor was formed like this:

About 40% of lands were in hand of wealthy and middle farmers who employed waged labor. The poor people who owned the piece of land or landless constituted of 65-70% of the village population and were using 5-10% of the cultivated lands. There were 450 thousand landless household in the country, which constituted an important reserve worker army.<sup>101</sup>

During this period the migration to Çukurova continued, in other places, where small family farming was the prevalent, unpaid family labor and share-cropping was the source of labor.

Towards the ends of this period, the Great Depression surely was the most important event which affected the agricultural life deeply. The prices of agricultural products declined sharply. This decrease ranged between 30-70% in the period of 1927-1930 according to the official numbers.<sup>102</sup> In spite of the negative prize trends, there was a considerable expansion in the levels of agricultural production in the

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>101</sup> Oral, p. 21.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

second half of the 1930s.<sup>103</sup> Şevket Pamuk states the possible reasons for the situation as the demographic recovery after the World War I, the steady expansion of acreage under cultivation, more favorable weather conditions and the extension of the railroad network. In this respect, the picture of agricultural population was formed like below:

Table 1: Land Possession and the Number of Families

Groups According to Land Possession	The Number of Families
Landless	128,960
1-20	856,661
21-50	611,971
51-100	524,413
101-500	499,955
501-5000	5,764
5001+	418
TOTAL	2,499,182

Source: Oya Silier, *Türkiye’de Tarımsal Yapının Gelişimi (1923-1938)*, p. 67.

The table above indicates the significant number of landless peasants and small land owners who were the major source of seasonal migrant workers in the 1930s. In addition, the table signifies the unequal land distribution in rural areas. Very few land owners possessed big lands in rural. Its consequences were using migrant workers in those fields and the system of share-cropping on small family farms.

<sup>103</sup> Şevket Pamuk, “War, State Economic Policies, and Resistance in Turkey,” *Peasants & Politics in the Modern Middle East*, eds. by Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury (Miami: Florida International University Press, 1991), p. 128.

## Post World War II

The period of 1939-1945 was a catastrophic time for the rural population. Turkey did not participate in World War II and even keep its impartiality, yet the obligation of armament and getting ready for a possible war brought severe difficulties for people, especially peasants. Firstly, there was a scarce labor force in agricultural areas.<sup>104</sup> In fact, the government kept an army of more than one million out of a total population of around 18 million. This affected the agriculture deeply because 80% of the population lived in rural areas. The military service was four years during war time; many young male peasants and potential producers could not engage in agricultural activities.

After World War II, one of the important events for the landless was the land reform bill. The discontentment among the peasants was evaluated as a threat of decreasing votes in the upcoming elections for the Republican People's Party. Therefore, a land reform bill that targeted the redistribution of land to poor and landless peasants was prepared and confirmed by the parliament in June 1945.<sup>105</sup> The 17<sup>th</sup> article of the code allowed a restructuring that called for the distribution of more than 50 decares of the lands to the landless and to those who had less land. The prominent objection of this implementation was not only that it made peasants land owners, but also that it made them realize the essential capitalism by increasing the levels of production by these practices.<sup>106</sup> The law was heavily criticized by the

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>105</sup> Oral, p. 33.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

agricultural bourgeoisie. In the end, it was modified; thus, the redistribution of land under the law was kept strictly limited.<sup>107</sup>

As for the peasant numbers in those years, Necdet Oral stated that the half of 2.5 million people forming the total village population was landless or had very small amounts of land after World War II. Specifically, between of 1945-1946, 15% of this population was landless and 34% of them owned less than 20 decares of land.<sup>108</sup>

One of the biggest factors that affected this labor dispersion was the Marshall Aid Program. The basic principle of the program was to increase agricultural and industrial production within the participatory countries.<sup>109</sup> In Turkey, it began to be applied in 1948. From this date forward, the mechanization of agricultural accelerated to a highly considerable degree. To this extent, the growth in the number of machines in agriculture is striking. The number of tractors was 961 in 1936; it was 1,756 in 1948; 31,415 in 1952; and went beyond 40,000 in 1955.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, the number of harvesters was 104 in 1936, 994 in 1948 and passed 6,000 in 1956. According to Oral, in that period, half of the aid of the US was spent in the mechanization of agriculture, meaning that the mechanization of agriculture was sustained thanks to the US.

The major consequence of the mechanization of agriculture was the slow reduction of share cropping. In 1948-1952, every 10 tractors caused the

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 33- 34.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

disappearance of 34 share cropper families.<sup>111</sup> Oral emphasizes that the removal included not only share croppers, but also waged labor. In that case, one of the ways to survive for both removed share croppers and waged laborers was to migrate to the cities.

Especially, during 1950- 1960, there was a considerable flow of people from rural to urban areas. In those years, the population of the four largest cities raised by 75 per cent and the urban population (settlements of 10,000 or more inhabitants) from 19 per cent to 26 per cent of the total.<sup>112</sup> Karpat, who analyzes migration and urbanization by studying the socio-economic background of these phenomena,<sup>113</sup> asserts two important agents for the migration flow: “push” and “pull” factors. The former derives from economic reasons; the essential push factors are poverty and low income and lack of basic needs such as educational and health facilities in the places of origin.<sup>114</sup> The latter represents more jobs and better life opportunities in terms of education, health and similar needs.<sup>115</sup> Many unpaid family workers migrated to the urban centers for these reasons and their place was filled by migrant workers if some member(s) of the families continued the agricultural production.

As for the numbers of those workers, the ratio of landless household was 14.5%, 26% of rural household owned 1-20 decares and 27% of the households in the villages had 21-50 decares of land. There were 2 million landless peasants, which

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 40. See also Ahmet Makal, “Türkiye’de 1950-1965 Döneminde Tarım Kesiminde İşgücü ve Ücretli Emeğe İlişkin Gelişmeler,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi* 56, no. 3, p. 112.

<sup>112</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey* (London, New York: Verso, 1987), p. 137.

<sup>113</sup> Kemal Karpat, *The Gecekondu: Rural Migration and Urbanization* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

was about 67% of the total household population in the rural areas.<sup>116</sup> In the subsequent times, the general tendency was similar to the previous periods. In 1962-1969, the percentage of landless peasants was 30.7%.<sup>117</sup> Thus, dispossession was a pivotal phenomenon in the process of the mechanization and commercialization of agriculture.

In the 1970s, the most significant event for landless peasants was the Land and Agriculture Reform Law, which was enforced in 1973. The essential target of the reform was to eliminate feudal elements in southeastern regions and to realize capitalist development in regions like the south of Turkey.<sup>118</sup> Şanlı Urfa was chosen as a pilot province. However, the consequences of the reform were incompatible with the initial aims. After the implementation, 1.7 million decares of land were nationalized; however, only 177,000 decares of land was redistributed to 1.175 households, for redistribution rate was 1/10. According to Oral, the unredistributed lands were allocated to the big land owners (*agas*) and local merchants, who rented the land to the poor and landless peasants. The reason for this unfair implementation was the strong resistance of the big land owners to the governments.<sup>119</sup> To this extent, the seasonal migration was a way to survive for the landless peasants once more.

As for the migration areas, of the cotton production areas Çukurova was the most important because cotton production enabled considerable profit due to its value for trade. This process required an important labor force, which household members of any producer could not provide. The working conditions of Çukurova

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<sup>116</sup> Oral, p. 42.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

were so hard they inspired Orhan Kemal, in *Bereketli Topraklar Üzerinde* (On Fertile Lands),<sup>120</sup> to draw a picture of the exploitation of the workers in the hazardous working and living conditions there. He described how the workers were exposed to inhumane living conditions such as eating rice with stones, worms in breads on the orders of the big land owners.

In fact, the movement toward this location lasted after Ottoman times, but the need for labor increased in the 1970s owing to some developments in the production process. Nükhet Sirman writes about family farming in cotton production in her article, states that with the transition from close bolls to open bolls, which are more suitable for industrial production, time became more important.<sup>121</sup> In this sense, the need for labor force increased considerably due to the changing labor-intensive feature of the crop.

The big land owners and small family farmers experienced this process differently. The need for seasonal workers was essential to the former. The migration was sustained via the arrangements with the labor intermediaries for the big agricultural fields. In 1972, 90,000 migrants came to Adana. This number was 30-40,000 for Söke in 1978.<sup>122</sup> Small family farming was more prevalent in Söke than Adana. As for the small land owners, Sirman stresses the traditional forms of production, which were distinctive from the capitalist relations that existed in the labor usage on small family farms. The unpaid family force was a major source in these places.<sup>123</sup> All family members participated in the production by doing different

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<sup>120</sup> Orhan Kemal, *Bereketli Topraklar Üzerinde* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1976).

<sup>121</sup> Nükhet Sirman, "Pamuk Üretiminde Aile İşletmeleri," in *Türkiye'de Tarımsal Yapılar 1923-2000*, eds. Şevket Pamuk and Zafer Toprak (Ankara: Yurt Yayınevi, 1988), p. 211.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

tasks and helped their neighbors in exchange for their help without money; it was called “*döndürmece*” in these provinces. Solidarity was a system in especially the Aegan fields which prohibited the entrance of migrants.

All in all, the seasonal migration was crucial to agricultural production during between of 1945-1980. The unfair land distribution and its biting consequences for landless peasants continued as they had previous times. The steps taken for the capitalization of agriculture (e.g., using machines in production) added great importance to the seasonal migrant workers.

### The Neo-Liberal Era

Since the 1980s, Turkey and the rest of the world have entered a new age, the consequences of which have been tremendously crude, exploitative and dramatic for laborers. Instead of the state, the market has replaced the core of the working life. The free market has been the only determinant accompanied by deregulation of the economy. In this sense, the state has lost its superior role in the labor market. Instead of the state and its enterprises, transnational corporations have emerged as the main actors in the process affecting the market. Specifically, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been the prominent agencies in determining agricultural life. Transnational corporations collaborate with the mobility of capital, which has brought not only mobile profit to the employers, but also mobile labor all over the world.

The borders have blurred. There is no determinant place for the capital, for the employment or for the labor. Workers are compelled to migrate or immigrate in order to survive. In this framework, profit maximization, which is one of the key

features of the neo-liberal era, has been enabled via the cheap, docile and mobile labor force. In fact, the borderlessness has resulted in competition within the labor market among the local workers and (im)migrants and the employers have the ability to obtain the most profitable labor thanks to this competitive environment.

The phenomenon is reflected in agriculture via seasonal migrant workers. They are the most mobile labor force throughout the world, and this feature causes the reduction of wages. In addition, their (im)migrant status is used against the other workers in order to make them more docile. To this extent, the exploitative relations for workers enable profit maximization, which is the sole target of this period of time.

As for Turkey, the market economy has worsened labor conditions immensely. Unsecure, flexible and unhealthy jobs have become the general working conditions for laborers. In this framework, agriculture has been affected by these major changes, as well. Initially, many legislative, economic and political changes have been made since the 1980s.<sup>124</sup> The disappearance of the state's support for agricultural producers, the introduction of production quotas for specific crops and lower prices are some of the factors which have affected the significant decrease in the number of small peasants.

Along with the effects of neoliberal politics, agriculture has been exposed to dissolution. This is obvious as far as agricultural employment is concerned. While the share of agriculture in total employment was in 1988 was 47%, which sharply decreased to 21.8% in 2009. There are several reasons for this agrarian dissolution picture: lower prices of crops, deregulation of the economy and the abolition of state support are among them. Many small land owners, unable to compete with other

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<sup>124</sup> For detailed information, Abdullah Aysu, *1980-2002 Türkiye Tarımında Yapılanma(ma): Tarladan Sofraya Tarım* (İstanbul: Su Yayınları, 2002).

producers, have given up their jobs. In that case, one of the most common strategies is to migrate to cities.

Since the 1980s, urbanization has been a phenomenon that has affected the structure of agricultural employment directly. The job opportunities have kept their limits in certain cities. Work has come to be considered as synonymous migration to the cities in one sense. In this framework, the unpaid family workers were an important labor source for land owners have migrated to the big cities. . This mobility can derive from push factors, such as lack of job opportunities in the places of origin, and pull factors, such as better education and health facilities in urban, as mentioned above. In that case, the natural outcome of this urbanization process is the replacement of seasonal migrant workers of the unpaid family workers in rural areas. The statistics indicates the changes of these two groups:

Table 2: The Numbers of Waged Labor and Unpaid Family Workers

ANNUAL DATA	waged labor	unpaid family worker
1988	428	4795
1989	305,5	5141,5
1990	327	5017
1991	292	5644
1992	317,5	5076
1993	314	4456,5
1994	282,5	5063
1995	370,5	5194,5
1996	461	5298
1997	410,5	4822
1998	385	5006
1999	396,5	4968
2000	330	3982
2001	265	4182
2002	312	3748
2003	299	3500
2004	229	2594
2005	236	2127
2006	253	2000
2007	235	2003
2008	241	2057
2009	270	2130

*Notes:* thousand people, +15 ages

*Source:* TUIK, Household Labor Force Surveys

There is no strong indicator that there is a substitution of seasonal migrant workers for the unpaid family workers. However, the table signals the tendency of using migrant workers instead of unpaid family workers. While the latter were 4795 in 1988, this number declined to 2130 in 2009. The urbanization and the shrinkage of agriculture are the main reasons for the situation. As for the waged workers, their numbers vary considerably. There is no certain indicator for the increase in the number of those workers but, it did not decrease sharply like the unpaid family workers. At this point, it should be emphasized that while agriculture is shrinking dramatically and the unpaid family workers have been affected directly by

disappearing in production process, seasonal migrant workers resist and remain present.

Along with the effects of the dissolution of family farming, the concentration of agricultural enterprises owned by smaller groups and the consequences of urbanization affected both the expansion of migration areas<sup>125</sup> and the diversification of working crops for seasonal laborers. Workers were introduced to new crops and duties. Some examples are picking hazelnuts in Ordu, hoeing and ripping sugar beets in Yozgat, Tokat, Çorum, Konya, Erzincan, Amasya, Sivas, Kayseri and Elazığ, picking oranges in Adana, ripping gram and lentil in Sivas.<sup>126</sup>

The General Secretary of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ordu mentioned that this city had not received the migration from east 10 years ago.<sup>127</sup> The prevalent form of harvesting had been *imece*(collective work), in which one family worked for their neighbors in exchange for the work of the latter. This system was disrupted when the unpaid family workers migrated to the cities. The labor force remained insufficient and the production needed additional laborers. To this extent, the migration from the east began about 10 years ago.

Moreover, the forced migration in the 1990s, which will be discussed below, catalyzed the migration process. Hence a considerable number of Kurdish people have been forced to give up their fields and migrate to cities owing to the violence in the southeast. People who have a social network in metropolis migrate to these places with the support of their relatives. The rest of them migrate to city centers in the east and southeast region, few job opportunities forces them to work in

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<sup>125</sup> See the migration map of seasonal migrant workers in Appendix A.

<sup>126</sup> All of these information was acquired from interviews with workers in Ordu and Polatlı.

<sup>127</sup> The General Secretary of Chamber of Agriculture, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009.

agriculture as migrant workers seasonally. Only the 21.4% of the workers I interviewed expressed that they have relatives in the metropolis 71.4% of them have no relatives in the big cities and 7.1% of them have, but they do not know them.

Furthermore, there is a novel case in Turkey for this period. Georgians began to work as seasonal immigrant workers in agricultural fields of Ordu in the 2000s. The very few job opportunities oriented them to Turkey. They are illegal workers who come to Turkey on tourist visas. In that case, they are deprived of social security. This form of labor is very compatible with the neo-liberal politics because they are unregistered, insecure, and vulnerable to being dismissed and, considering the effects of all these variables, they are docile labor force.

To sum up, the roots of seasonal migrant workers lay are in the beginning of capitalization of agriculture. The effects of commercialization on agriculture increased the importance of those workers. They are a cheaper labor force to the land owners. Therefore, their importance for the employers has never decreased. In fact, they have become more significant by the politics of capitalization. Actually, capitalization has had bilateral effects. On the one hand, it has created more job opportunities in urban areas and the natural outcome has been the migration of agricultural labor force to those centers; on the other hand, its penetration of agriculture has caused the replacement of migrant workers to unpaid family ones. At that point there is a dilemma. While the capitalization of agriculture has reduced the jobs in agriculture owing to reduction of the small family farms and also mechanization, the presence of those workers also has gained vital importance owing to the loss of unpaid family workers. Today, the tendency of using migrant workers is obvious in agriculture. In the light of the findings in this chapter, it can be asserted that seasonal migrant workers are crucial for agricultural production in Turkey, the

enlargement of migration, new migrant groups and the shrinkage of unpaid family workers are signs of this process.

## CHAPTER IV

### EXAMINING THE WORKING LIFE OF SEASONAL MIGRANT WORKERS

In this chapter the current situation of the seasonal migrant workers will be elaborated in the light of the field survey findings. This explanatory section of the thesis will provide the basic background of both the picture of laborers in Turkey and the ground for hypothesis, which will be discussed at length in Chapter V. To this extent, firstly, the particular reasons for becoming seasonal migrant workers in Turkey will be introduced with the explanations of the causes and examples of these cases. Subsequently, the general overview on the work and life in the seasonal agricultural area will be represented by accentuating the importance to the divergences among the workers, which indicate the basic hypothesis of this study.

#### The Particular Reasons for Entering the Seasonal Agricultural Labor Market

To become a seasonal migrant worker is very traditional as a job. All of the members of a family are engaged in this occupation and their children keep up with the tradition for the rest of their lives and so do their grandchildren and great-grand children. 67.9% of the laborers stated that their parents were or had been seasonal migrant workers in agriculture. Apart from this factor, the special cases for Turkey which affected becoming temporary agricultural workers resulted in the enlargement of this labor market. These were namely: the Irrigation Problem in the southeast region, the Tobacco Quota, the Forced Migration and the Economic Crisis.

## The Irrigation Problem in the Southeast Region

One of the fundamental reasons for entering the temporary agricultural labor market is the irrigation problem in the southeast region of the country. Irrigation has never been an effective system to support the production of cultivation. However, in the neo-liberal age, with the effects of the disempowerment of the state, small farmers became incapable of continuing agricultural activity in the arid places. At this point, looking at the development of this process is useful to comprehend the cases of farmers who choose to become migrant workers later.

Briefly, the State Hydraulic Works (*Devlet Su İşleri-DSI*-) is the main actor in irrigation. This state agency is responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of the large scale irrigation infrastructure in Turkey; however, the practices of DSI were not effective due to the lack of funding.<sup>128</sup> Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu, who writes about the irrigation problem in the southeast by problematizing the effects of the *Sulama Birlikleri* (Water User Associations) on the process of democratization, explains the historical development of DSI by presenting an instance of her interview:

The director of the DSI Operation and Maintenance Department asserts that the DSI Act of 1954, which modeled DSI based on the USA's Bureau of Reclamation, allowed for the transfer of management of state-owned infrastructure to local user associations. In 1964, only very small-scale irrigation systems were transferred to the users, and it was not until 1993 that any significant developments occurred on this front. (Cevikbas, 2001:98; GeneralInterview #10.)<sup>129</sup>

It is clear that the lack of funding and inadequacy of rising financial resources “voluntarily” or “involuntarily” perpetuated the irrigation problem. That picture has

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<sup>128</sup> Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu, “Decentralization and Democratization: The Case of Water User Associations in Turkey” (Ph.D.diss., Mc Gill University, 2008), p. 88.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

exhibited significant changes since the 1990s. The endeavors which have aimed to decrease the power of the state have had deep effects on the irrigation policies. Kudat states that the remarkable irrigation operation and maintenance transfer to Water User Associations (WUA) were initiated in 1993.<sup>130</sup> Briefly, WUAs are cooperatives whose responsibility is to distribute water, maintain canals and collect the fees within their zones. Moreover, the organizational structure of the WUA is consisted with that of a council, an executive committee, a chair, a general secretary (who is an agricultural engineer), a treasurer and other association personnel. It should be noted that beside that formal establishment, irrigators participated in the decision making process actively.<sup>131</sup> As for legal framework, there is no specific law which regulates the rules of the WUAs; in that case, these transfers to the WUAs were sustained via the *Köy Kanunu* (Village Act), law no. 442,<sup>132</sup> *Belediye Kanunu* (the Local Government Act), law no. 1580<sup>133</sup> and *İl İdaresi Kanunu* (the Provincial Governance Act), law no. 5442.<sup>134</sup> 1.5 million hectares were delivered to the WUAs in between 1993 to 2002.<sup>135</sup> Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu calls this process the “decentralization of irrigation.”<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Ayşe Kundat and Mümtaz Bayram, "Sanliurfa-Harran Plains On-Farm and Village Development Project," in *Social Assessment and Agricultural Reform in Central Asia and Turkey*, eds. A. Kudat, S. Peabody and C. Keyder (Washington DC: World Bank, 2000), p. 260.

<sup>131</sup> Kadirbeyoğlu, pp. 93, 96 and 99.

<sup>132</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Köy Kanunu* (Village Act.) Law no.442, Ratified in 18 March 1924, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 68. Available [online]: <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/368.html> [03 April 2010].

<sup>133</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Belediye Kanunu* (Local Government Act.) Law no. 1580, Ratified in 03 April 1930, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 1471. Available [online]: <http://www.khgm.gov.tr/mevzuat/kanun/belediyekanunu.htm> [03 April 2010].

<sup>134</sup> Republic of Turkey, *İl İdaresi Kanunu* (Provincial Governance Act.) Law no. 5442, Ratified in 10 June 1949, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 7236. Available [online]: [http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/7236\\_5442.html](http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/7236_5442.html) [03 April 2010].

<sup>135</sup> Kadirbeyoğlu, p. 89

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

However, that irrigation system has not been implemented effectively. While some canals have distributed water; others which are close to the end of canal system have not received enough water to distribute and thus caused severe difficulties.<sup>137</sup> The problem stems from the inequalities in the land distribution. Kadirbeyoğlu illustrates this phenomenon by attracting attention to the land distribution between the small farmers and the big landowners;

A more specific example from the Harran Plain in Urfa illustrates the severity of inequalities in land distribution in this Southeastern province. The land distribution within the irrigation zone of WUA #14 in Urfa shows that farmers who own more than 500 donums make up only 3.5 percent of the population while controlling 32.7 percent of the total land. Small farmers own up to 50 donums constitute 51.6 percent of the population but control only 11.9 percent of total land.<sup>138</sup>

In this framework, access to the irrigation facilities has been given to the big landowners and farmers who had their own land, but cannot find opportunity to cultivate the land due to insufficient irrigation and also those who worked as share croppers became seasonal migrant workers in different regions. 25#, a worker from Urfa where irrigation is a major problem,<sup>139</sup> explained his case as follows:

We have land in our village but there is no water. Our land is not the best land in the world but it is in Turkey. 5 dönüm<sup>140</sup> land in our village is equal to 50 dönüm in Ordu. Our land is not only a smooth place, but also is our place of origin. You can produce your own crops and can subsist with these.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 98

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., pp. 115-116.

<sup>139</sup> Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu emphasizes the irrigation problem in Urfa in her dissertation

<sup>140</sup> *Dönüm* is a land measure of about 920 square metres

<sup>141</sup> Worker # 25, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. *“Bizim köyde toprağımız var ama su yok. Bizim toprağımız dünyanın değilse bile Türkiye nin en güzel I. Toprağıdır. orada 5 dönümün olsa buranın 50 dönümüne bedel. Hem düz hem kendi memleketindedin. Yapabileceğin şeyleri kendin üretirsin herhalde bununla geçinebilirsin.”*

The strong desire to cultivate one's own land is obvious. It represents better working and living conditions as well as more money for the workers. One of the leading obstacles is insufficient irrigation. Although some rural areas have a considerable amount of land, they cannot cultivate it. This is the case of #28, a worker from Diyarbakır. He told me: "We have 150 dönüm worth of lands in our village but it is without water. Only if there is enough rain, can we cultivate it; otherwise it is impossible."<sup>142</sup> The fact that farmers use rain water for growing crops seems a deplorable situation in the twenty first century. In another interview, #29, a worker, mentions that they have 80-90 dönüm land in their places of origin, but they cannot cultivate it due to the irrigation problem in Diyarbakır. These are not exceptional cases. Consequently, irrigation facilities, which have not been developed by the state or the WUA, put farmers into a situation in which that they are compelled to quit cultivating their original land in spite of owing the land as property. Regardless of the size of the land, they have become dispossed; as a result, they all have turned into proletariats in urban or rural areas.

### The Tobacco Quota

The workers who come from Adıyaman and who were interviewed, constituted the major group as far as the places of origins are concerned. Exactly 32.4% of the workers come from Adıyaman, as the graph below indicates. Certainly it is not a coincidence. In fact, two particular reasons cause the increase of seasonal migrant workers in Adıyaman: the tobacco quota and the construction of the Çamgazi Dam.

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<sup>142</sup> Worker #28, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. "150 dönüm toprağımız var ama susuz. Ekiyoruz yağmur yağsa olur olmazsa olmuyor."

Table 3: The Places of Origin of Migrant Workers

Where are you from?	Percent (%)
Adiyaman	32.4
Şanlı Urfa	16.2
Diyarbakır	21.6
Malatya	5.4
Batman	2.7
Gaziantep	5.4
Georgia	10.8
Ordu-Aybastı	5.4
Total	100.0

The situation of the small farmers exhibited dramatic features in terms of the tobacco quotation brought about by the effects of neo-liberal politics. The limitations on the production of tobacco began in 1994. Specifically, this brought together the implementation that allowed the farmers to cultivate 200 kilograms of tobacco. Actually, it is almost impossible, considering how much the income earned from 200 kilograms of tobacco could contribute to the household budget, yet it could only pay for the costs of production. With the practice of the production quotas, a considerable number of the small farmers gave up producing tobacco. To illustrate, the number of peasant farmers, which was around 622,000 in 1998, declined sharply to the level of 80,000 in 2009, according to TAPDK statistics. It means that 542,000 rural people gave up tobacco farming in the period of 11 years. Especially, landless peasants who worked as share croppers quit production as a first reaction because they could not find any fields in which to plant tobacco. It can be asserted that primarily the landless peasants who plant tobacco as share croppers had migrated from the villages with the introduction of the production quotas; for them, one of the ways to find a solution was to become seasonal migrant workers.

Another important factor was the Çamgazi dam, which was built in 1995. It caused the loss of a great deal of cultivating area and stopped the production in agricultural fields. Here are some examples of people who quit tobacco production and entered the seasonal agricultural life.

We used to engage in the production of tobacco before. We did not have our land but we were hiring the land, working as share-croppers, it is called “icare” and this was our way of life. The state hindered the production of tobacco. Everything was under the water of the dam and Adıyaman has shrunk significantly. Actually, there is no place called Adıyaman anymore. The periphery, all places are under the water due to the construction of the dam.<sup>143</sup>

We had our land in the village but we lost it due to the construction of the dam. We used to produce tobacco before the quota and it was satisfying for us. We began to come to these places after the quota. Why? In the past, 1-2 ton tobacco was cultivated per house; the quota is now between 100-200 kilos. What can this small amount do? Additionally, it disappeared due to the dam. It was also gone.<sup>144</sup>

We have been working in this job for five years. Before, we used to work in tobacco production. We did not have the land, but we used to work in the fields of others. We worked for them. The seasonal migration began when the tobacco quota was implemented. We began to work in hazel-nut and sugar beet fields.<sup>145</sup>

To sum up, the politics aiming at the alienation of small farmers put them in a competitive labor market within an unprotected sphere. In that case, the small producers, who could not stand these changes, entered into the seasonal migrant

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<sup>143</sup> Worker #9, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 8 August 2009. “Önceden hep tütün yapıyorduk. Toprağımız yoktu ama bazı sene kiralyorduk. Ortaklık yapıyorduk, icare yapıyorduk geçimimiz oluyordu. Devlet tütünü kesti. Her şey barajın altında kaldı. Adıyaman şimdi ufacık bir yer kaldı. Adıyaman diye bir yer kalmamış ki. Çevresi hepsi suyun altında barajın altında kaldı.”

<sup>144</sup> Worker #10, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 8 August 2009. “Köyde toprağımız vardı. Hep baraja gitti. Kota gelmeden önce toprağımız vardı. O bize yetiyordu. Kota geldikten sonra düştük buralara. Peki neden? 1 ton 2 ton ekerlerdi bir evde. Şimdi kota düştü 100 ile 200 kilo arasında. Neye yarar ki? O da baraja gitti o da gitti.”

<sup>145</sup> Worker #12, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 8 August 2009. “5 yıldır bu işi yapıyoruz. Daha önceden tütünde çalışıyorduk. Kendi toprağımız yoktu, elin toprağında çalışıyorduk, elin işçiliğini yapıyorduk. Tütün yasaklanınca göçe başladık. Fındığa, şeker pancarına gidiyoruz.”

market. Besides the tobacco producers, landless workers emerged as the most vulnerable group to become seasonal migrant workers.

### The Forced Migration

Forced migration is a pivotal phenomenon which affects the lives of Kurdish citizens deeply. Actually it is not a novel practice. It goes back as far as 1924. In this year, the assembly passed a law which enabled Turkish citizens who wanted to reside in eastern Turkey to manage Kurdish citizens' lands.<sup>146</sup> The migration of Kurds due to the law was observed during the period 1926 and 1939; specifically, 1931, 1932, 1937 and 1939 witnessed the migration greatest levels.<sup>147</sup> The essential target of this law was the assimilation of Kurds. To illustrate, the law of forced migration, passed in 1932, allowed Kurds to settle only in a place where more than one-tenth of the overall population was not constituted of Kurds.<sup>148</sup> The aim of this practice was to separate the Kurdish people from their unique life areas and so, to devastate their identity.

However, an intensified migration which concerned many Kurdish citizens was experienced after the 1980s with the resurgence of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). After the military coup in 1980, the oppressive activities against Kurds had become more observable. The military government formed Law 8/2543, which had

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<sup>146</sup> Robert W. Alson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880-1925* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), p. 91.

<sup>147</sup> Mehrdad R. Izady, *The Kurds: A Concise Handbook* (Washington, DC: Crane Russak, 1992), p. 106.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

the main aim of preventing support from Syrian and Iraq Kurdish factions to the PKK by forcing the Kurdish people who live in bordering villages to migrate.<sup>149</sup>

In addition, the implementation of the State of Emergency Rule in 1987 due to the close combat in the southeastern provinces accelerated the process of forced migration. At this time, the forced migration expanded dramatically. The state targeted the eradication of any form of “support,” among them money, shelter and food, to the PKK.<sup>150</sup> In this framework, a considerable number of people were deported to other cities. The exact number is unknown.<sup>151</sup>

With the effects of forced migration, many Kurdish citizens migrated to the urban centers. They had two options: either to migrate to metropolis such as İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir, or to migrate to the center of the eastern cities in which they has been born or other neighboring cities. For the former option, the social network was the main determinant. People who had relatives or friends in metropolis, usually migrated there with their help. Others settled in the urban centers in the eastern province of Turkey. However, the job opportunities were not sufficient there. Thereby, they had to work in their traditional jobs, in the agricultural sector. In fact, the biggest difference between the past and the present was working temporarily.

Worker #34 is an instance of this process:

We have our land in the village, but our village was evacuated in 1991 by the state. After that, everybody dispersed to cities. We are an example of those disposed people. Before this implementation, we used to engage in animal husbandry. They took away our lands. After the evacuation, we migrated to the centre of Diyarbakır and we have been trying to sustain our life since then.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Seda Kartal, “Ethnic Identity and Turkey’s Migrant Kurds in Urban Provinces” (Ph. D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 2008), p. 38.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Worker #34, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 17 August 2009. “Bizim köyde toprağımız vardı ama bizim köy 1991’de devlet tarafından boşaltıldı. Ondan sonra

In conclusion, the evacuation of the villages catalyzed the dispersion of the seasonal migrant workers as dispossed. In this way, Kurdish citizens were left alone and vulnerable to exploitation. They became cheap, docile and marginal workers in the eyes of employers thanks to the politics of the state.

### The Economic Crisis

The global capitalist economy has experienced a deep economic crisis, which emerged obviously with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in 2007. It began in the US, but like the domino effect, it spread quickly to other countries. Beginning in the finance sector, it took the form of great turbulence and subsequently jumped to the reel sector. In the beginning, the developed countries were affected deeply and the crisis penetrated other countries promptly. In this framework, Turkey was one of the countries which was affected by the global crisis at most.

Turkey's insufficient economic infrastructure and unequal income distribution led the financial fragility to the crisis.<sup>153</sup> According to İzzettin Önder, who discusses the reasons and possible consequences of the economic crisis for Turkey, this fragile structure of the economy has resulted in the deep poverty and unemployment. Actually, his assumption is justified by the statistics. In 2007, non-agricultural unemployment rate was 12.6%. It increased considerably in the last quarter of 2008, and reached 16.8% in December. The annual rate for this year was

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*herkes metropollere dağıldı. İşte örneği biziz. Önceden toprağımız vardı. Topraklarımızı aldılar. Bizim orada gelirimiz hayvancılıktı. Köy boşaltıldıktan sonra şehirlere göç ettik, geçinmeye çalışıyoruz orada."*

<sup>153</sup> İzzettin Önder, "Küresel Kriz ve Türkiye Ekonomisi," *Muhasebe ve Finansman Dergisi* 42 (2009), p. 19.

13.6%. The insufficient crisis policies led to an increase in unemployment rates in dramatic numbers for laborers. In 2009, the unemployment rate was 17.4%, meaning an increase of 4.8%.

To this extent, one of the survival strategies for the unemployed is to return to their hometowns because they represent a cheaper life for them. On the other hand, agriculture has experienced a deep crisis, too. The commercialization of agriculture has led the decrease in the number of small farmers. It seems paradoxical. However, to live in villages is anyway more plausible for unemployed people due to the lower expenses. One of the ways to get by in their village is to work in other farmers' fields seasonally. Here are some instances:

I lived in İstanbul 4 months ago. I used to live in Silivri there. I migrated with my family. I will live here from now on. I used to work in the construction sector in İstanbul. The effect of the crisis is felt mostly this year. The jobs were suspended in the construction site. And then, we found ourselves to be unemployed.<sup>154</sup>

The reason for turning to seasonal agricultural jobs is the economic crisis. I used to work in a sport shoes factory. The firm came to the brink of bankruptcy and began to fire workers due to the crisis. These unemployed workers were directed towards to do some other jobs. By the effects of these bearings, we also were directed towards the Black Sea Region.<sup>155</sup>

As a conclusion, the economic crisis has functioned as the accelerator for temporary agricultural workers. People who cannot find jobs, and lost their jobs due to the crisis find a remedy in the migration of the villages. Owing to the difficulties of producing crops, they become proletariats in rural areas in this way. The water

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<sup>154</sup> Worker #20, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 10 August 2009. “Ben İstanbul’da yaşıyordum 4 ay önceye kadar. Silivride oturuyordum. Göçümü getirdim buraya. Artık burada yaşayacağım. Ben İstanbul’da inşaatta çalışıyordum. Krizin etkisi en çok bu yıl hissedildi. İşler durdu inşaatta. Bizde işsiz kaldık.”

<sup>155</sup> Worker #32, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. “Mevsimlik işçiliğe geçmemizin nedeni kriz dolayısıyla. Spor ayakkabısı işinde çalışıyordum. Firma batma durumuna geldi. Kriz dolayısıyla işçi çıkarmaya başladı. Çıkarılan işçiler mecbur boşta kalınca bazı başka işler yapmaya yönlendi. Bu yönelmeler neticesinde biz de Karadeniz bölgesine yöneldik.”

problem, the tobacco quota, the forced migration and the economic crisis have resulted in these people becoming waged labor in agriculture. The interesting point among all these situations is that people who do not have any opportunity to change their lives “prefer” this way. In other words, becoming migrant workers is the last option for them.

### General Characteristics of Work and Workers

In the previous section, the special causes for seasonal work in Turkey were explained by presenting the essential points. After highlighting the reasons for becoming seasonal workers, it is necessary to draw a general picture of workers. To this extent, their legal status of workers and labor intermediaries, the factor of labor intermediaries in taking up employment and the actual life of workers; transportation to the working areas, the life in tents, wages, landlessness and poverty will be studied in depth by attracting attention on the divergences among workers in terms of ethnicity, gender, physical capacity and age.

### The Legal Status of Workers

In this part, the legal conditions of workers will be elaborated by exhibiting the (non)practices of these laws. Firstly, I would like to emphasize that there is no law which orders and protects seasonal migrant workers in agriculture specifically; thus those workers’ legal status can only be determined by general laws.<sup>156</sup> Most of

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<sup>156</sup> Nurettin Yıldırak et al., *Türkiye’de Gezici ve Geçici Kadın Tarım İşçilerinin Çalışma ve Yaşam Koşulları ve Sorunları* (Ankara: TARIM-İŞ, 2003), p. 26

them are excluded by *İş Kanunu* (Labor Law), law no. 4857,<sup>157</sup> which regulates mostly working conditions in Turkey. That is why; law does not encompass agricultural workers who are employed in agricultural and forest enterprises which have less than 50 workers and the workers who have jobs lasting more than 30 days. In that case, the temporary workers in agriculture do not have the same working advantages (e.g., wages, holidays, health and security conditions and worker inspections) as the other workers who are included to the Labor Law. In addition, to declare the number of workers is the employer's responsibility and it may result in the wrong information about the profit of the employers. Law makers sought to close this with *Borçlar Kanunu* (the Code of Obligations).<sup>158</sup> According to the law, "a person accepts performing a service to someone for a determined or undetermined period of time against remuneration."<sup>159</sup> In this arrangement, the basic obligation of the employers is to pay remuneration to workers. This amount is determined by the both sides freely. Therefore, there is no protective provision for temporary workers in agriculture.

A similar exclusion is followed in the 1964, *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law), law no 506, which orders the social protection of agricultural workers. According to the law, Article 3, while temporary workers who were employed in agricultural and forestry enterprises owned by the public sector were insured those who worked in private enterprises are outside of this social

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<sup>157</sup> Republic of Turkey, *İş Kanunu* (Labor Law.) Law no. 4857, Ratified in 22 May 2003, Available [online]: <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/kanunlar/k4857.html> [07 December 2009].

<sup>158</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Borçlar Kanunu* (The Code of Obligations.) Law no. 818, Ratified in 22 April 1926, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 359, Available [online]: <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/407.html> [07 December 2009].

<sup>159</sup> Mehmet Kılıç, "4857 Sayılı Yeni İş Kanunu Kapsamında Tarım İşçilerinin Hukuki Durumu," *Tarım Ekonomisi Dergisi* 12, no. 2 (2006), p. 45.

protection.<sup>160</sup> This unfair situation was changed a little bit by Agricultural Workers Social Insurance Law No. 2925, passed in 1983, which aimed to provide social insurance to agricultural workers as a whole. However, this law required premiums which are paid by workers optionally.<sup>161</sup> While Law No. 506 contained obligatory premiums which were paid by employers, Law No. 2925 was based on workers' initiative to make payments for 180 days per year and it did not make insurance possible for seasonal laborers.

Apart from this inclusion problem, there were other important differences between Law No. 2925 and Law No. 506.<sup>162</sup> To illustrate, workers who are under the auspices of the former one were unable to take temporary incapacity reports while those of the latter could take this advantage. In addition, there were calculation differences about the permanent incapacity report between those laws. Specifically, old age and disability assistances are calculated differently. While Law No. 2925<sup>163</sup> figures out this insurance according to the premium average income in last five years, Law No. 506<sup>164</sup> based the average income on the previous year, which was the highest year. Another difference involved burial insurance. The latter provides social assistances to the parents, spouse and children of deceased insured. However, only the spouse and children of the deceased insured could receive income in the scope of the former. Furthermore, whilst the expenditures of treatment which required health

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<sup>160</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law.) Law no 506, Ratified in 17 July 1964, Announced in the Official Gazette no.11776- 11779, Available [online]: <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/377.html> [07 December 2009].

<sup>161</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law.) Law no 2925, Ratified in 17 October 1983, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 18197, Available [online]: [http://www.zmo.org.tr/mevzuat/mevzuat\\_detay.php?kod=43](http://www.zmo.org.tr/mevzuat/mevzuat_detay.php?kod=43) [07 December 2009].

<sup>162</sup> *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law), Law no 506.

<sup>163</sup> *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law), Law no 2925.

<sup>164</sup> *Sosyal Sigortalar Kanunu* (Social Insurance Law), Law no 506.

care in foreign countries were paid to workers who were employed with Law No. 506; the same right was not entitled to those in Law No. 2925.

In 24 March 2010, the prime minister put into action a memorandum which brought more plausible accommodation, working and transportation conditions to workers.<sup>165</sup> However, as stated above, there were many requirements in the law, but the control mechanisms in Turkey are so weak, especially in agriculture. We will see the feasibility of the memorandum this summer.

In addition, this fragmented structure which is disadvantageous for the seasonal migrant workers has been pursued in unionization. The temporality feature of this type of work forbids unionization; hence, there are no trade union members among these workers in agriculture.<sup>166</sup> Two unions in the agricultural sector are active in Turkey, *Tarım-İş* (Agriculture and Agricultural Industry Workers Union of Turkey) from the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (*Türk – İş*) and *Tarım Orkam - Sen* (Agriculture, Forest and Livestock Service Branch of the Public Workers Union) from the Confederation of Public Sector Trade Unions (*KESK*). However, the members of these unions usually consist of permanent workers in the agricultural and/or forestry enterprises of the state. On the one hand, the seasonal workers cannot get organized in order to gain better working conditions. On the other hand, trade unions cannot provide sufficient protection to this big working population.

All in all, lack of legality has put workers in an unprotected, insecure and disadvantaged position. In this sense, their transportation, accommodation places and

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<sup>165</sup>Republic of Turkey, *Genelge: Mevsimlik Gezici Tarım İşçilerinin Çalışma ve Sosyal Hayatlarının İyileştirilmesi* (A Memorandum for the Recovering the Social and Working Conditions of Seasonal Migrant Workers.) Ratified in 24 March 2010, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 27531, Available [online]: <http://rega.basbakanlik.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/03/20100324-15.htm> [30 March 2010].

<sup>166</sup>Nihat Akbıyık, "Türkiye'de Tarım Kesiminde İş Gücü Piyasaların Yapısı," *Elektronik Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 7, No.4 (Spring, 2008), p. 234.

working conditions are designed with rather unhealthy conditions. Their wages are too low to live on and this poverty makes it almost impossible to change their status in life. In addition, the employers and labor intermediaries are not willing to enforce any laws because they can act freely without legal control and obligations. One of the factors responsible of these adverse situations is surely insufficient legality and lack of control of the legal obligations.

### The Legal Status of Labor Intermediaries

After highlighting the insufficient legality for workers in the previous subsection, the legal status of labor intermediaries will be explained in this part by indicating the ineffectiveness of the existing laws similar to those of seasonal workers.

In the beginning, it should be noted that sometimes the state provides workers with employment via the Turkish Employment Institution according to *İş Kanunu* (Labor Law), law no 1457.<sup>167</sup> However, agriculture is an exception in this case. The Turkish Employment Institution gives permission to intermediaries in order to do that duty. If there is no institution and it is difficult to access the institution for employment, due to the transportation or communication problems, individual intermediaries can take up that duty from the state.<sup>168</sup>

*Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Hakkında Tüzük* (The Regulation about Agricultural Employment Intermediation) that passed on March, 31 1978 – No. 7/15271 in the

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<sup>167</sup> Republic of Turkey, *İş Kanunu* (Labor Law.) Law no. 1457, Ratified in 25 August 1971, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 13943, Available [online]: [http://www.isguvenligi.net/mevzuat/1475\\_sayili\\_is\\_kanunu\\_tuzuk\\_ve\\_yonetmelikler/1475.pdf](http://www.isguvenligi.net/mevzuat/1475_sayili_is_kanunu_tuzuk_ve_yonetmelikler/1475.pdf) [30 May 2009].

<sup>168</sup> Nurettin Yıldırak et al., p. 53.

agricultural sector was legitimized in 1978.<sup>169</sup> According to the law, only intermediaries who obtained permission from the Turkish Employment Institution could become intermediaries. In order to obtain that permission, the intermediaries had to obtain a letter authority (*aracı sicili*).<sup>170</sup> Requirements includes being a Turkish citizen, being 18 or more, not being deprived of public rights, not having been in prison more than six months due to an infamous crime, and being literate. However, in practice, the labor intermediaries whom I interviewed said that they had not acquired a letter of authority and there was no person to control it.

The Turkish Employment Agency does not control the labor intermediaries and does not monitor whether the working conditions are suitable for the proper law or not. I interviewed the bureaus of that Agency in both Ordu and Ankara and the bureaus of the Chamber of Agriculture in Fatsa, Ordu and Ankara, which is another responsible agent for issuing a letter authority. A representative in Fatsa said “There has not been any application for the letter of authority this year; there were about five last year.”<sup>171</sup> As for the bureau in Ordu, he had no idea about the responsibility of the bureau for giving this authority, which was written in the law. He stated that “We are giving the letter of authority to *dayıbaşı* if there is an application. Yet we do not control them in the working areas because we do not have any control over the

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<sup>169</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Hakkında Tüzük* (The Regulation about Agricultural Employment Intermediation.) Ratified in 31 March 1978, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 16288, Available [online]: <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/5123.html> [5 June 2009].

<sup>170</sup> See the samples of *Aracı Sicili* (a letter authority) in Appendix C and D.

<sup>171</sup> A representative of the Chamber of Agriculture in Fatsa, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009. “*Bu yıl aracı sicili almak için henüz hiçbir başvuru olmadı. Geçen yıl da 5-6 civarı verilmişti.*”

agriculture.”<sup>172</sup> Although this duty was the responsibility of the bureau, it is obvious that this control does not exist in reality and nobody cares about this negligence.

Moreover, the letter of authority is valid for only one year, and must be renewed according to the records reported by the Turkish Employment Agency. Furthermore, the intermediary should make a written contract with the employer that contains information about his own wages received from the employer and his working conditions, and should give a report semi-annually to the Employment Agency.<sup>173</sup> Surely, these requirements generally are not performed.

The other important issue concerning the matter is that taking money from the agricultural workers is prohibited for the intermediaries according to the law. Again, this rule is definitely invalid. The labor intermediaries earn money only from the commission of the wages of the workers.

This regulation was changed on March, 14, 2004. However it did not bring about significant changes. The new regulation introduced three main changes: First, the intermediaries who did not have a letter of authority would pay an administrative fine equal to 1,255 TL. Second, the literacy obligation was changed; the obligation to be literate was changed to a new rule requiring candidates to be at least a primary school graduates. Finally, the obligations, the contractual arrangements, reporting and the annulment of the intermediary’s letter of authority were explicitly defined in

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<sup>172</sup> A representative of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ordu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. “ *Biz eğer başvuru olursa dayıbaşlarına aracılık sicilini veriyoruz ama bir daha onları kontrol etmiyoruz çünkü tarımla ilgili denetimi biz yapmıyoruz.*”

<sup>173</sup> *Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Hakkında Tüzük* (The Regulation about Agricultural Employment Intermediation).

Articles 12, 13, 14 and 15.<sup>174</sup> After these changes, there was no significant difference from the old practices of the actual agricultural life.

In the summer months of 2009 two members of parliament, Mustafa Elitaş and İlhan Evcin, proposed a new regulation, called Labor Law No. 5920. Article No.1 would enable workers to be hired by employers for a period of time via “private employment bureaus”. However, the president vetoed the first article and sent it back to the Assembly to be revised.<sup>175</sup> The reason for that refusal was given as the consequences of that change could be dangerous in terms of the exploitation of labor and the disturbance of work comfort. We will see the changes about that issue future.

### The Labor Intermediary

The previous sub-sections draw a (none) legal picture about the seasonal agricultural labor market. The effects of insufficient legality give vital power to the labor intermediaries. In this part of the thesis, the role of labor intermediaries in this market, who are called “*dayıbaşı*” (a head of uncle) in Ordu and “*elçi*” (legate) in Polatlı, will be analyzed in depth.

The labor intermediary is a key figure between the farm owners and the migrant workers. The farm owners demand workers usually in the winter months from the labor intermediaries via face to face or telephone conversations. They specify the number of workers they need. By this time, the labor intermediaries have

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<sup>174</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Aracılığına İzin Verilmesi ve Aracıların Denetimi Hakkındaki Yönetmelik*. Ratified in 14 May 2004, Announced in the Official Gazette no. 25402, Available [online]: <http://www.mevzuat.adalet.gov.tr/html/21782.html> .[5 June 2009].

<sup>175</sup> See the further information, [cnnturk.com](http://www.cnnturk.com), 10 July 2009, “Özel İstihdam Büroları Yasası’na Veto,” Available [online]: <http://www.cnnturk.com/2009/ekonomi/genel/07/09/ozel.istihdam.burolari.yasasina.veto/534358.0/index.html> [09 September 2009].

begun to look for workers. There is no special criterion, but they usually choose from among their relatives and people who are familiar to them.

Table 4: The Circumstance of Being a Relative of the Labor Intermediary

Is the labor intermediary a relative of yours?	Percent (%)
Yes	53.1
No	3.1
Someone we have known for a long time	25
We don't have a labor intermediary	18.8

It is a very striking fact that only 3.1% of the workers stated that the labor intermediary was not a relative or friend. Actually, one of the denominations of the labor intermediary, “*dayıbaşı*” means uncle. It probably derives from these family relations. This feature of the labor intermediary implicitly creates some coercive relations. Worker #8 stated that “We cannot quit the job. If we give up the job, everybody in our village will hear about it and this will be a serious problem for us.”<sup>176</sup> In the villages, social relations are more important than they are in the cities. If people quit the job, they could be seen as unreliable. In this case, to find another job via social relations would become almost impossible.

As for the selection process, Nevzat, who is a labor intermediary, described his case: “In my hometown, people come and say that they have financial problems

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<sup>176</sup> Worker #8, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 8 August 2009. “*İşi bırakamayız. Eğer işi bırakırsak köydeki herkes duyar. Çok büyük sorun olur.*”

and ask for a job so I arrange the job after interviewing the employers.”<sup>177</sup> It is clear that there is no special criterion; the labor intermediary can determine the workers freely. Similarly, the selection of a Çavuş (sergeant) is under the responsibility of the labor intermediaries and Nevzat said that he chooses a Çavuş randomly among workers. Çavuş is a person whose obligation is to control the other workers. A Çavuş usually is responsible of about 10-15 workers. He earns double-wage. His name is meaningful like dayıbaşı. He observes and controls workers.

As for the selection of dayıbaşıs, they are usually people whose relations with the farm owners are good. There are no certain key criteria for this choice. An employer told me an anecdote about this process:

We wanted to get rid of the dayıbaşı. It seemed wrong to us when we saw the situation of the workers. The dayıbaşı walks into the bazaar and gets money for choosing workers; the amount is 10% of the earnings of the workers daily. This situation disturbed us greatly. We told the workers: “Call me directly the next year and do not pay 10% of your wage; spend all of your money for yourself and your children.” However, the following year, we saw that the guy, with whom we had talked about this issue, called us and he had become the commissioner (dayıbaşı). It is probably the system in the southeastern region. It is strange but it probably is a politic of southeast. Agricultural or labor politics, I could not know. If we tell the workers: “Come directly without giving commission next year,” they will bring 50-60 people and dayıbaşı will sit and walk into the bazaar, determine a fake çavuş for workers and receive 10% commission from these people. They accept giving this commission even though they are so poor. It means that they are supposedly in need of a person’s domination.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Nevzat, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. “*Millet geliyor bana diyor ki bizim maddi durumumuz düşük, bize iş bulun. Bende patronlarla görüşüyorum iş onlara ayarlıyorum.*”

<sup>178</sup> Employer #6, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009. “*Biz önceki yıllarda dayıbaşını devre dışı bırakmak istedik. Bizim pek aklımıza yatmadı, çalışanların halini görünce adamda çarşıda pazarda geziyor. Bunlardan havadan günlük %10 alıyor. Bu bizim vicdanımıza el vermedi. Biz işçilere dedik ki, kardeşim “sen beni direkt ara bir daha ki yıl %10 komisyon verme, benden alacağın ücretin tamamını kendi cebine, çocuğunun cebine sok.” Ama baktık ki ertesi yıl, bu güneydoğunun herhalde sistemi, bizim bunu dediğimiz adam bizi aradı, o komisyoncu olmuş. Böyle bir garip, herhalde bu güneydoğunun bir politikası. Tarım politikası, işçilik politikası, bilemiyorum. Şimdi buradaki işçilere önümüzdeki yıl, komisyon vermeyin direkt gelin desek, bunlar önümüzdeki yıl 50-60 kişiyi getirecek, bu dayıbaşı da gidip kenarda oturacak çarşıda pazarda gezecek, bir tane de yalancı çavuş koyacak, %10 komisyonunu yine bu insanlardan alacak. Bu insanlar buna vermeye de razı o kadar zavallı. Yani birinin başkanlığı altında çalışmaya sanki muhtaçlar.*”

As he describes his experience, it enlightens the process of being a dayıbaşı. The contact person can acquire the status of dayıbaşı. However, in his statement, it is striking that the employer evaluates the case by seeing it as the people's preference. He puts the issue forward by associating with the special features of the southeastern region. He can imply conventions. His perception is rather biased in terms of ethnic discrimination. However, he is wrong because other groups such as local workers and Georgian workers have dayıbaşıs too. It is not related to traditions, but lack of legality. In the case of a non-bureaucratic and lawless area, the working conditions are naturally determined by personal relations. In this framework, the fact that social capital has gained vital importance is a direct result.

Another issue about the labor intermediaries is that they use the strategy of giving loans in the winter months. In this way, the workers are guaranteed to work in the harvest times in exchange for these loans. 48% of workers said that they had borrowed money from the labor intermediary and they would pay it back by working in the summer with this intermediary. In this case, to quit the job is impossible because the workers usually do not have another way to pay their debts apart from working in the summer. Worker #25 told about this compelling loan factor:

A Dayıbaşı brings me to Ordu to work in the hazel-nut gardens. He pays the transportation fee. You do not know any place in this new city and he comes and says that you will stay here and you stay there. He arranges everything and says that 10 workers will work in that garden and the others will work in the other garden...If you do not go to work, you will stay here alone. He gets you under his thumb. You should do whatever he says. If you do not do that, he can dismiss you. If that happens, where can you go? There is no place to go. You must obey what he says. You stay out of desperation. You come with your children. If you do not obey the dayıbaşı, how can you provide a life for them? You must obey the rules. If you want to go back, there is no the transportation fee, how will you go? You borrowed 500 TL or 1000 TL from the dayıbaşı. You must work here and pay back this loan. If dayıbaşı is

dishonorable, there will be a lot of trouble for you. In general, they also are dishonorable.<sup>179</sup>

From the above quotation, it is seen that the fact that the only chance to work is to develop good relations with the labor intermediary compels workers to do what he commands or says. In fact, financial difficulties constitute the basis for this deviousness. Within these unequal power relations, workers are in danger of being indebted and are exposed to its possible sanctions. In this framework, to work under the authority of the labor intermediary is not an option, but an obligation.

The essential responsibility of the labor intermediaries is to be in contact with workers and the employers. Moreover, they arrange a settlement place; it can be a tent or a building. In addition, they are responsible for workers and they have to solve the problem between the employers and workers. Apart from these, they have no obligation, the workers emphasize that the labor intermediaries usually walk into the bazaar and go to the café houses during the day.

In exchange for these responsibilities, they receive a commission that is about 10% of the wage of the workers for a day. However, in some cases the money to be paid to the labor intermediaries can be more. To illustrate, I witnessed an additional dayıbaşı, who is from Ordu, arranged by an easterner labor intermediary. In other words, there is a collateral person, who is the dayıbaşı of the other dayıbaşı. In this case, the pay for the commission naturally increases.

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<sup>179</sup> Worker #25, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. *“Dayıbaşı beni orduya getirdi fındıka getirdi, yol paramı verdi. bir yer tanımıyorsun geliyorsun sana diyor burada kalacaksın burada kalıyorsun. Ben bahçeyi aldım onun bahçesini 10 kişi buraya 20 kişi buraya 5 kişi oraya sen işe mi gitmiyorsun sen burada kaldın, kimsesiz kalırsın. Seni avucunun içine almış ya burada onun dediğini yapmadığın zaman; seni sepetleyebilir. O zaman nereye gideceksin gidecek yer yok onun dediğine uymak zorunda kalıyorsun. Çaresizlikten dolayı kalıyorsun. Çoluk çocukla beraber gelmişsin dayıbaşının dediğini yapmadığın zaman bu sefer çoluk çocuk bekası nerden gelecek. Uymak zorundasın geri gitmek istesen yol parası da yok nasıl gideceksin. Dayıbaşından almışsın 500 tl , 1 milyar borç etmişsin burada çalışıp o borcu ödeyeceksin. Dayıbaşı da namussuz biri çıkarsa al sana bela. Genelde hepsi namussuz çıkıyor.”*

To sum up, social capital plays a vital role in the labor market of seasonal agriculture. All prominent relations are sustained via social networks. In addition, lack of legality increases the consolidation of these networks. This complete illegality causes the disempowerment of workers *vis-à-vis* the labor intermediaries. There is no protective agency for the inequalities. Moreover, the factor of being relative and the problem of loans received from the labor intermediaries put the workers in such a situation that they have to obey all the rules of the labor intermediaries.

### Transportation

The seasonal migrant workers usually come to the working areas after the necessary arrangements are carried out by the labor intermediaries. They decide together on the issue of the transportation. In fact, there is no one way to transport workers. These options will be described briefly.

One of the most common ways is to transport workers by truck. This type of transportation is very old school. It is known that workers have been moved to agricultural areas by trucks for many years. Today, unfortunately, this inhuman way which many people get on truck like sardines is still being used. On the one hand, it has caused many traffic accidents and its consequences have been terrible. On the other hand, these accidents have yielded seasonal migrant workers visibility in the media, which has created direct public awareness on the issue. To illustrate, after the many news reports<sup>180</sup> which horrifyingly manifest the number of dead workers due to

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<sup>180</sup> See one of the instances:  
*Tumgazeteler.com*, 15 July 2009, "Mevsimlik İşçiler İnsanca Yol Alacak," Available [online]: <http://www.tumgazeteler.com/?a=5314174> [12 September 2009].

the traffic accidents, the Ministry of Internal Affairs started coordination between gendarme and police departments, which aimed to keep the transportation of workers under the control. In this framework, transporting workers by truck is strictly banned. However, the main reason for transporting by trucks is poverty. Workers cannot afford to pay traveling by bus. Therefore to ban transporting by truck is meaningless if there is no additional attempt for alleviating the poverty.

Secondly, workers travel by train. This form of transportation is the most secure way. Abdullah Aysu, an activist and the president of Farmer Unions Confederation , tries to make call for an responsivity on the issue of adverse work conditions of migrant workers, recommends that the government support this type of travel by making it free to workers in the harvest season.<sup>181</sup> However, there are some problems in the transportation of workers by train. For instance, the railway infrastructure of Turkey is insufficient. There are very few travel directions; you cannot find an available train which goes at the place you want to go. In most cases you get off the train at the nearest place and take another vehicle in order to arrive at the final destination and therefore workers evaluate this type of transportation as expensive and inconvenient. In that case, they usually rent or buy a car with many other fellow co-workers.

They expressed that the only thing which they possess is the car. In this transportation form, the crucial point is the number of people who get in the car. For example, it is very common that they travel with 12 people who are all family members, but the capacity of the car is four. It is very common. Furthermore, they use the car in order to go to the gardens in Ordu and Polatlı because the employers do

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<sup>181</sup> Abdullah Aysu, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, 25July 2009. “Bizim önerimiz işçilerin trenle güvenli bir şekilde taşınması. Bunun için mücadele veriyoruz. Devlet hasat zamanlarında trenleri işçiler için bedava yapabilir.”

not provide the transportation facilities to workers although in the proper code it is written that this is their obligation.

## Tents

The most common type of accommodation is tents, which are seen as the symbol of seasonal migrant workers. Only a few employers provide rooms in their house or a building for the workers. The rooms of the employers' houses are usually situated on the ground floor; in this case, the number of workers should be less. The employer may arrange a building, which is called *amele evi* (meaning the house of workers) and is usually located near the home of the farm owner. However, I witnessed in one case that the building that the workers stayed in was without electricity and water facilities, the windows were without glass and the floor did not have a vinyl floor covering. In spite of these difficulties, the conditions of that building was better than those of tents.

Tents represent inhuman conditions for workers. The inhabitants are deprived of clean water, toilet, shower, cooking and the other basic needs. The location of the tent-area, which is called "*toplanma istasyonu*" (assembly station) in Ordu, is far from the centre of the county, Fatsa, about 3 km. The name of this labor camp is *Elekçi Havzası* (Elekçi Basin). In Ordu, the location of the labor camp is a problematic issue. The gendarme always checks workers and if there is a complaint from the local people, the police or gendarmes abolish the camp. In this sense, the location of the camp changes; it is mobile like the workers. As for Polatlı, the labor camp is located in a very distant place. It is 70 km from the centre of Ankara, and 25 km from the centre of Polatlı, which is the nearest county town. To this extent,

workers are isolated from society, which was discussed in Chapter II. The decision of the labor camp to stay in is usually taken by the labor intermediaries. Apart from this, workers who come without labor intermediary can stay in these labor camps.

The placement of the tent area is near the creek in Elekçi Havzası. This causes a lot of danger for the workers. When the weather is rainy, the water can flood the camp. Despite this important threat of death, they must settle in these areas because they could not find any area apart from this location. In that case, the workers' only option is to settle near the creek because to have access to the water is essential for those living in the tents. However, the water is not hygienic and causes some diseases, especially among children.<sup>182</sup> A similar problem is valid for Polatlı. There is no creek and the labor camp is very far away from the centre and the water is brought by tanker. The workers stated that it is not hygienic and insufficient for them. Moreover, the toilet and bath facilities are one of the crucial problems in the labor camps. They use the same area for both toilet and bath needs and the place is situated near the creek in Ordu. The dirty water flows into the creek. It is covered by calash and there are two rooms for women and men. As for Polatlı, all the conditions are the same as in Ordu, but the exception is that there are no creeks and waste leaks in the primitive infrastructure which is composed of pipes.

The attributes of tents are different for Ordu and Polatlı. In fact, for the latter, the tents are relatively better. The tents are larger and the protection facilities are better because they are covered by thicker materials. Tents are more durable for the cool weather. The reason for having relatively better tent conditions is due to the longer the workers' time of season in Polatlı, actually the time is shorter in Ordu; in Polatlı they come in May and go back to home in October.

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<sup>182</sup> Worker #5, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. "Çocuklar hep hastalık kapıyor sudan."

In Ordu, tents usually are made of rags, which are insufficient to protect from rain. In the small space of tents, quilts are kept at one end. Apart from these quilts, there are not a lot of necessary things in tents. Fire is outside of the tent and women cook the meals here. The members of families usually drink tea and have meals in the tents when the weather is rainy; otherwise their preference is to be outside of the tents.

The tents are located in accordance with the workers' places of origin. In other words, workers who come from the same city such as Diyarbakır, Urfa and Adıyaman, settle in tents near each other. In that case, the solidarity is present within the relations of social networks. For instance, there is a firm solidarity between workers in the cases of health problems. 100% of workers do not have any social security, but the very considerable amount of workers, 86.67%, have green cards, which provide the health services at very little cost or for free. To this extent, the cost of treatment is not an important problem but the transportation of workers to hospitals is an emergent and vital issue to deal with due to the distant location of the labor camps. Workers take each other with their cars. In that case, they develop mutual relationships and express that the only solution is solidarity among workers.

Table 5: The Solutions for Problems

How do you deal with when there is a problem?	Percent (%)
with workers	64.3
with labor intermediaries	35.7
Total	100

64.3% of the laborers said that they overcome problems with other workers. The strong helping mechanism is an essential phenomenon in the labor camps. They said that if the patient worker or his/her family had a car, they would take the patient to hospital; otherwise, near neighbors helps them by taking them to hospital with their cars.<sup>183</sup>

Apart from these necessary relations, social ties are very strong in these places. Workers share their meals with each other and spend their time together. In this framework, many social events occur when they settle in the labor camps. For instance, I witnessed a case of the asking of a family to give their daughter as a bride from one tent to another. Marriage relations exist among workers; it is not a case that a worker may marry a person who lives in the host places as the below graph indicates obviously:

Table 6: The Circumstance of Marrying Someone who Lives in the Host Place

Is there anybody who has settled in that region by finding another job or marrying someone in here?	Percent (%)
No	100
Total	100

As for the issue of the people staying in the tents, the factor of ethnicity is an important determinant again in that case. The general pattern is that Kurdish workers

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<sup>183</sup> Worker 1, #4 and #22, interviews by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 6, 7 and 10 August 2009. “Eğer ailenin arabası varsa o aile hastayı hastaneye götürür; yoksa komşuların arabalarıyla götürülür.”

are the temporary denizens of tents mostly. The local workers usually stay in the rooms of the employers' homes. Georgian workers mostly stay in abandoned buildings because they are illegal workers and the probability of arrest is high in the tents. Once more, it should be noted that it is a generalization, if the employer provides a building or room in the house, all three groups stay there.

### Wages

Wages are determined by a commission in Ordu and Polatlı. The commission includes the Vice Governor in Ordu (*Ordu Vali Yardımcısı*), the Labor Market Chief of the Turkish Employment Agency (*Türkiye İş Kurumu İşgücü Piyasası Şefi*), the Vice Director of the Ministry of Agriculture (*Tarım İl Müdür Yardımcısı*), the Director of Social Security in Ordu (*Ordu Sigorta İl Müdürü*), the Chairman of the Board Nut Agriculture Sale Cooperative (*Fındık Tarım Satış Kooperatifi*), the Director of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Başkanı*), the Board Chairmen of Chambers of Agriculture from Both Towns and the Provinces (*İl ve İlçe Tarım Ziraat Odaları Yönetim Kurulu Başkanları*), the member of Chairman Board of Village Headmen Association (*Muhtarlar Derneği Yönetim Kurulu Üyesi*), the Representative of the Chamber of Agricultural Engineers in Ordu (*Ordu Ziraat Mühendisleri Odası İl Temsilcisi*) and the Representative of Türk-İş in Ordu (*Ordu Türk-İş İl Temsilcisi*). A similar commission met in Polatlı.

After the commission's decision,<sup>184</sup> for gathering hazel-nuts in 2009, the net wages were determined as 12 TL for workers who were 14-15 years old and 20.50 TL for workers who were older than 16 under the conditions that employers provide them meal and if the cost of meal was not enabled by the farm owners, the net wage

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<sup>184</sup> See the commission report in Appendix B.

was 23 TL. That amount was 22 in 2008. In fact, the rise is only 1 TL per year for the period of 2008-2009. In addition, the commission determined higher wages for particular jobs, like cooks and sack carriers. It was the normal wage, plus 50% of that amount. This amount is valid for Kurdish workers, Georgian workers receive 30 TL and local workers earn 30-35 TL for the same job. The reasons for these inequalities will be analyzed at the length in Chapter V.

Although the numbers are declared officially by the governor, in practice, these wages are not paid in the labor market. Workers expressed different wages for the same job in Ordu. Many workers stated different wages: 25 TL, 22, 5 TL, 20 TL, and 23 TL. There are several reasons for this. First of all, state representatives decide the amount, but there is no official control of the labor market. Secondly, the commission of workers, which they give a labor intermediary, changes from one group of workers to another. Specifically, some intermediaries can determine their share higher or less and it reflects the wages of workers directly because the intermediaries receive their pay from the workers, although it is officially banned. Finally, the amount of loan which workers receive from the labor intermediaries in the winter months affects the total amount of money of workers. This amount is paid in exchange for the money earned from work in summer. In conclusion, the price which is determined officially loses its importance because it is not the same amount in reality.

In Polatlı, wages depend on piece rate. The number of onion sacks is the only criteria for the wages. General earning for a day is usually 20 TL. In addition, workers who are under 12 do not receive money for the job. This type of wage distribution creates inequalities among workers. Child, elderly and disabled workers' labor are not priced and to this extent, human capital has an essential role

In both Ordu and Polatlı, wages are too low to sustain a good way of life with the necessary subsistence. It contributes only to subsistence for workers. The major issue of complaint is the wages among workers. As the graph indicates, 36.6% of workers declare low wages as the first problem in their working life.

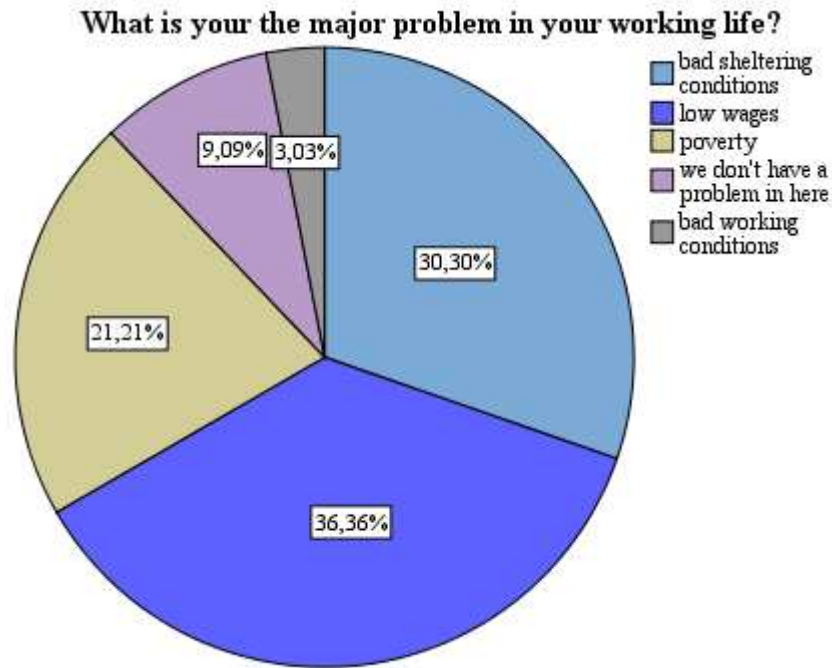


Fig 1. The major problems of workers

In both places, wages are paid after the work is over. In the cases of the loans which were borrowed in winter months from labor intermediaries and extra expenditures such as the fee of transportation or the health care costs cuts, the total costs of workers diminishes. Moreover, the off-days which are usually spent due to sickness are taken into account and a certain amount of money is taken away from the total earnings of workers.

As for the chain of the distribution of the money, first the farm owners give the money to the labor intermediaries after the harvest and the latter calculate the earnings. They separate their own commission and transfer the money to the çavuş

and the *çavuşs* give the total earnings to fathers of families and they distribute the money in the family. To this extent, the amount of money which each members of the families receive is the under the initiative of only fathers. In that case, women and children, especially, workers, young girls, have the most vulnerable positions in the distribution process. In most cases, they cannot get their money from the fathers. A young girl worker, #3 in Ordu, expressed the situation as follows: “Çavuşs give the money to our elders; after that, they do not give any money to us.”<sup>185</sup> The similar case is told by worker #5: “I do not know the amount of money. My father knows.”<sup>186</sup> Worker #32, who is the father of the family, mentioned his authority when I asked the question “Will the wages of each family member be paid to you? “Of course, they give the money to me, including those of my wife and children; they cannot be involved, and I spend the money.”<sup>187</sup>

As a conclusion whole process, including the determining, (none) controlling and distributing the wages illustrates unfairness. The actual poor situation of workers forces them to work or accept these inequalities because they have no alternative.

### Landlessness

The number of landless workers is very high in Turkey. 81.82% of the workers whom I interviewed in Ordu and Polatlı are totally landless. At that point, there is a need to emphasize the differences in terms of regions.

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<sup>185</sup> Worker #3, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. “Çavuşlar paraları büyüklerimize veriyorlar, büyüklerimizde bize göstermiyorlar.”

<sup>186</sup> Worker #5, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. “Parayı ben bilmem, babam bilir.”

<sup>187</sup> Worker #32, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. “Tabiki bana veriyorlar parayı, karımın ve çocuklarıminkileri, onlar karışamazlar. Ben de harcıyorum o parayı.”

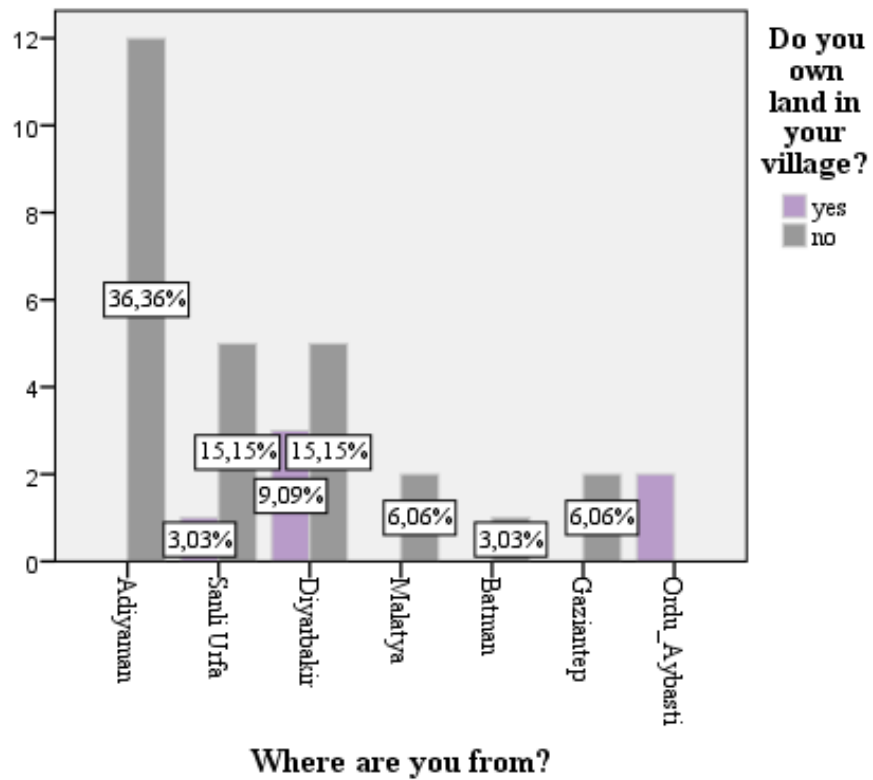


Fig. 2 The Places of Origin and the Possession of Land

As the graph indicates above, local workers have their own lands in their places of origin. Landlessness is an issue for Kurdish workers. In this sense, the local workers continue the traditional seasonal labor form; in short, they have their own land in their places of origin and migrate to nearby areas for extra income.

However, the seasonal migrant workers represent a different and novel profile. They are dispossed; they do not have the land and cannot work as sharecropper because these facilities do not occur today owing to such reasons as the shrinkage of agriculture in especially the southeast region, the tobacco quota, the violent atmosphere in the southeast and irrigation problem. In this framework, to stay in the village is not preferred and workers live in the areas around the cities as tenants. In the winter months, they cannot find jobs due to the few job opportunities

in these places. 76.92% of the workers do not work in the winter months and again the separation of local and migrant workers plays an important role in this range.

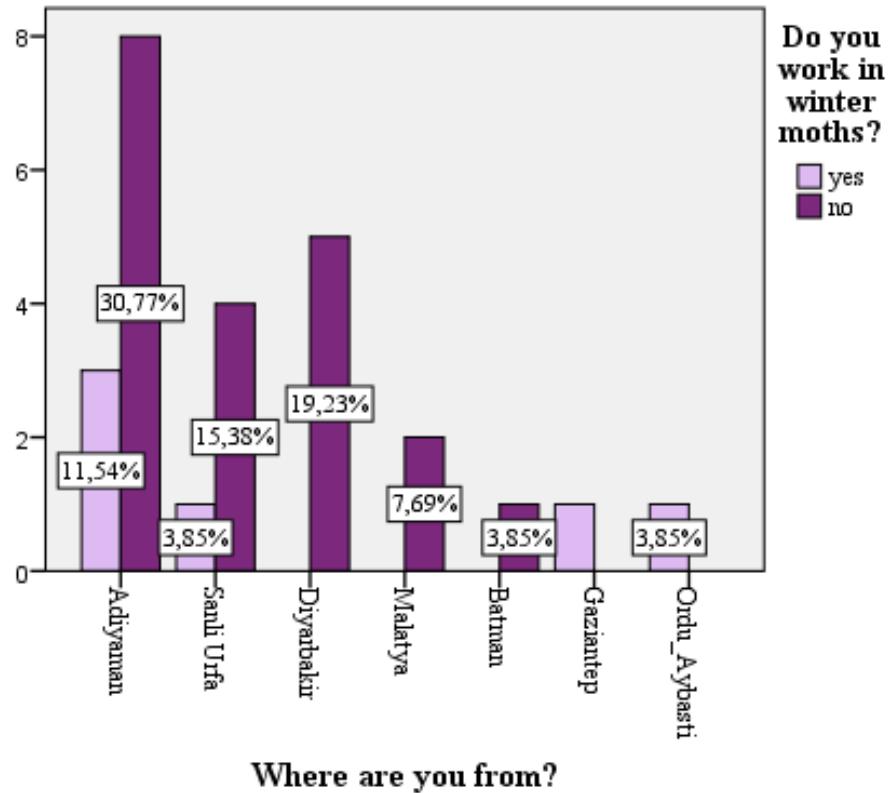


Fig. 3 The places of origin and working in the winter months

It is seen that the local workers split up the general picture by their advantageous position. They can find jobs for the winter months in their cities. In fact, they work in the centre of the city and stay in their villages. This situation changes for migrants. They are usually unemployed in the winter months because the job facilities are so few in southeastern cities. However, there is a seasonal agricultural job opportunity in the winter, which is to pick oranges. Some workers prefer this, but it is not common because their children go to school in these months and migration as a whole family is difficult in that case.

Migrants who do find jobs in cities usually work in the construction or dyeing. These jobs are done for only limited time and they are still in need of seasonal migration. In this situation, usually one member of the family (usually the father) works and supplies the needs of the household; in this case the majority of the family stays at home and the children go to school. Generally they work in summer and spend the savings in winter; the total income is not sufficient to cover these months. Thus, they usually borrow money from the labor intermediaries if they cannot find jobs during these months, and it should be said that this case is very common. In this circle, to save money is almost impossible. A #23 worker said: “In the winter months, the money which we earn in summer pays for the rent of the home, and the rest of the money is spent on food and there is no money left. In the harvest times, we work again. We have no extra money.”<sup>188</sup>

It should be noted that this form of labor is very compatible with the neo-liberal politics, I stated in Chapter III: they are insecure, mobile and work on contract. In this framework, dispossession sustains the continuity of this picture. Landlessness is common for the seasonal migrants. Many workers said that “If we had land in our hometowns, we would never migrate to these areas.”<sup>189</sup> In other words, the huge seasonal migration in agriculture is realized thanks to the landlessness. They have no chance to find other jobs, or to become producers. They have no capital. They have not got any land. In conclusion, they are always in the same circle in which escape is almost impossible because of reasons such as

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<sup>188</sup> Worker #23, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 11 August 2009. “*Kışın bu çalıştığımız paranın yarısını kiraya veriyok diğeriyle yiyecek miyecek alıyoruz o da bitiyor. Tekrar iş mevsimi oldu mu tekrar çalışıyoruz. Bize hiçbir şey kalmıyor.*”

<sup>189</sup> “*Köyde toprağımız olsaydı, buralara asla gelmezdik.*”

landlessness, the lack of the accumulation of money and the absence of relatives in the cities.

## Poverty

Seasonal migrant workers live below the limits of poverty and hunger. To defend that assertion, I would like to give an instance; worker #4's statement displays the level of poverty clearly and dramatically: "Of course, we want to give up this job. If we find a job which pays 250-300 TL per month, we will give up this job willingly."<sup>190</sup> That striking statement indicates that the total earning for a month is less than 250 TL. Therefore, the workers' major complaint is about poverty. Worker 9# stated that they can be hungry some times, especially, during the transportation period until the wages are paid. In addition, worker #10 mentioned the hunger in winter months: "We do not work in the winter months. This money is not sufficient to cover the expenses of the winter months. Should we buy wood or coal or sugar or flour or clothes? How should we spend this money? This money is not sufficient to cover the life expenses. Believe me, we are without food and water for days."<sup>191</sup>

Apart from income, there is an important factor for their poverty, which is the lack of social networks in the cities. The majority of workers have no relatives in İstanbul or in the other cities, as the graph exhibits below. It makes migration to the big cities and the chance of finding another job and also to settling in the metropolis impossible. In this case, they are deprived of any chance to change their life cycle.

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<sup>190</sup> Worker #4, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. "*Biz bu işi bırakmayı tabii ki istiyoruz, iş elimize geçse hemen bırakırız. İş elimize geçse, mesela benim aylığım 250-300 milyona gelse seve seve bırakırım.*"

<sup>191</sup> Worker #10, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 8 August 2009. "*Kışın boş boş oturuyoruz. Bu para kesinlikle yetmiyor. Odun mu alcaz kömür mü şeker mi un mu giyim mi sen bunu neye harcayacaksın? Buradan götürdüğün para ne kadar hiçbir şeye yetmiyor. İnan bazı günler aç susuz kalıyoruz.*"

**Do you have any relatives who live in Istanbul or other metropolis?**

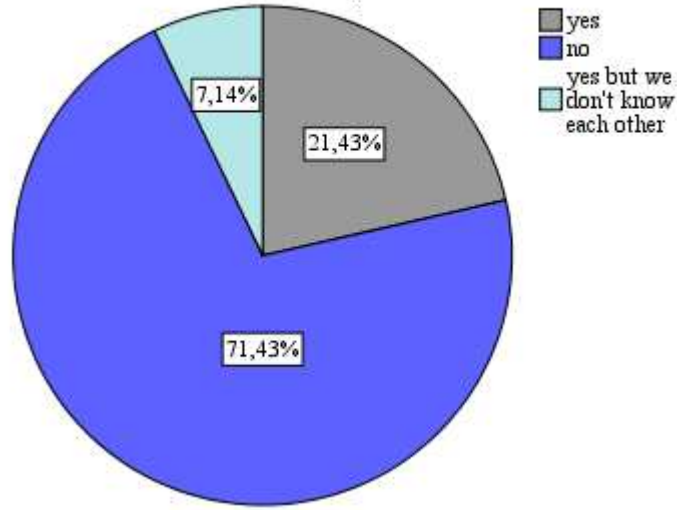


Fig. 4 The circumstance of having a relative in Istanbul or other metropolis

It should be indicated that the local and migrant workers differ. All of the local workers whom I interviewed have relatives in İstanbul or in the other cities. The rest of the workers- immigrants- have very few relatives there or they have but they do not know each other. In this situation, they have no other job opportunities apart from the seasonal agricultural work

Within this poverty framework, hunger is a pivotal phenomenon, which workers express frequently. They said that “if we give up this job, we will die of hunger.”<sup>192</sup> Hunger and to giving up the job are equal for workers and the only option to survive is to work in agricultural areas as seasonal migrant workers. To this extent, their priority is to survive. In this sense, the place where they work is not emotionally important to them: they said: “if we find a job, we will settle in these

<sup>192</sup> Workers #1, #3, #4, #8, #9, #10, #14, #15, #16, #27, #29, #33, #35, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu and Ankara, Turkey, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15 and 17 August 2009. “Eğer işi bırakırsak açlıktan ölüyoruz”.

areas: the place where we can feed ourselves can replace our original places.”<sup>193</sup> The key point is to feed for the sustainment of labor mobility. In other words, hunger brings about the circulation of workers throughout the country.

Their poverty reaches extreme levels many times. On the one occasion, I saw a baby who was 15 days old in the tents. Her mother interrupted me when I was interviewing with another worker and said angrily: “Our disgracefulness is our children; you see this baby, do you understand? There is no need for your questions. Everything is obvious here.”<sup>194</sup>

As expressed above, the lack of social security is another indicator of poverty. The workers have no social security. Surely, the majority of them have green cards and these enable the workers to have health care for free or at very low costs. However, they are deprived of retirement facilities. In that case, laborers must work in order to sustain both their family and grandmother and fathers’ expenses.

In this sense, to accumulate money in various ways is important for workers in order to alleviate the poverty. To illustrate, women make bread in the tents. It provides capital accumulation for the household. In addition, workers come with basic foods such as oils, tomato pastes, pickles and also animals to the labor camps and do not spend money for these needs in these places. This carefulness enables them to accumulate money for the winter months.

To sum up, this chapter illustrates that the specific reasons in Turkey that have accelerated the process of becoming a migrant worker in agriculture. Namely, the lack of sufficient water infrastructure in the fields of the southeast, refusing to give up the lands, tobacco quota implementation resulting in a huge disengagement

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<sup>193</sup> Workers #1 and #4, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 6 and 7 August 2009. “Eğer iş bulabilirsek, hemen oraya yerleşiriz. Karnımızın doyduğu yer memleketimizdir.”

<sup>194</sup> “Bizim rezilliğimiz ah işte bu çocuklarımız(elinde 20 günlük bebeği gösterdi) anladınız mı? Hiçbir şey sormanıza da gerek yok. Her şey göz önünde burada.”

with tobacco production, the forced migration, causing the big abandonment of the places of origin for Kurdish citizens in rural, and the economic crisis, which brought about the return to agricultural jobs for unemployed people, ending up with the enlargement of seasonal migrant workers for various reasons.

As for the actual conditions of workers, they remain far from the legality in the related codes are so crude. The lack of legality and insufficient control over the requirements cause the informal ordering in this labor market. Therefore, the social network gains vital importance thanks to the informality. Labor intermediaries are the key figures in the work arrangements. This duty gives them an important authority over the workers. In this framework, the lives of workers are very distant from humane conditions.

Briefly, there is no particular way of transportation designed for workers. They usually prefer the cheapest way, trucks or cars, which leaves them vulnerable to traffic accidents. Accommodation facilities are also painful especially for the ones who live in the tents. The main point in that issue is the separation of workers according to their ethnicity. Kurdish workers usually stay in tents and live in the worst conditions in terms of sheltering. A similar decomposition occurs for the issue of wages. Kurdish workers earn the least amount of money while local and Georgian workers receive more. The differences in terms of property conditions of workers affect this picture directly. On the one hand, local workers have their own land in their hometowns, which for them represents a different job for living. On the other hand, the Kurdish workers are almost totally landless. In that case, the only chance for survival depends on the seasonal agricultural jobs and thus, establishing their subordination in this way. Finally, poverty is an important factor for describing the material conditions of the workers. They live beneath the poverty and hunger line.

This fact directly affects the acceptance of worse working conditions. In addition the deprivation of improving life and working conditions by migrating to cities results in being trapped in the same poverty circle.

As a conclusion, the lack of legality causes the informal work order in terms of accommodation and transportation, which in return, disembowels workers directly. Dispossession and poverty accelerate the process. In this non-legal framework, each worker can experience the worse conditions differently. The changing vulnerability levels are established via economic and social inequalities.

## CHAPTER V

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN THE LABOR MARKET

In this chapter, the inequalities among workers in the lights of field survey findings will be analyzed. To this extent, the different vulnerability levels according to age, gender and ethnicity will be emphasized by the indicators of wages, accommodation places and working conditions. In the second part of this chapter, the exclusion of workers, especially Kurdish laborers, will be explained by indicating the marginalization of workers.

#### Inequalities among Workers

In the previous chapter, I have drawn a general picture was drawn introducing the specific reasons for becoming seasonal migrant workers and their current living conditions. The main groups which are exposed to unfairness in different ways will be represented in this chapter. First, the informal bargaining process and the disempowerment of workers in this process will be analyzed. In the subsequent parts, ethnicity, age and gender categories will be explained. Second, the phenomenon of exclusion will be studied in depth. Exclusionist attempts from local workers, the employers and state officers will be analyzed with the reasons and effects on the seasonal migrant workers.

## Informal Bargaining Process

The bargaining process in the labor market for seasonal agriculture activity carries highly individual, informal and traditional features. In fact, there is no certain contract type which all parts of this process implement. The actors of the process are qualified as workers, labor intermediaries and employers. As stated above, the legal framework does not define a viable system for the seasonal agricultural labor market. In addition, the existing laws are not implemented by such reasons as the lack of control of working areas.

Consequently, the bargaining process is realized via informal and personal arrangements. This process can be summarized as follows. First, labor intermediaries and employers meet in the winter months, face to face or talk by telephone and arrange the number of workers. At this stage, wages are not certain. Then, labor intermediaries choose the workers by their own initiative. At this point, the social networks play a vital role. However, this arrangement can be disputed freely. A labor intermediary, Nevzat, mentions how easily the arrangement can be terminated: “Sometimes the garden owners may negate the arrangements. We do not have any legal document.”<sup>195</sup>

Obviously, verbal arrangements can be easily broken by the employers. In the first day of my field research, I saw about 40-50 workers sitting on the seacoast. I asked them why they were there instead of staying in their tents or working in the gardens. They told me that the employer wanted them to work in both picking the hazel-nuts and carrying sacks but that their arrangement had been only for picking hazel-nuts. In fact, picking and carrying are two distinct jobs. Sackers can earn up to

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<sup>195</sup> Nevzat, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. “*Bahçe sahipleri anlaşmayı bozabiliyorlar. Elimizde senet sepet yok ki.*”

twice as much as pickers. If we turn back to the case of the sitting workers, after the arrangement between the employers and labor intermediaries had been concluded, the employer commanded two jobs for only the price of picking and the workers were resisting this situation. The labor intermediaries argued with the employers. However, at the end of the interviews, the workers and the labor intermediaries left to look for another job. This was not an exceptional case. The workers rejected the conditions, but others may accept because they will have already paid for transportation and food costs to reach the working area. In case they refuse the job, the expenses cannot be compensated. This is a very important reason for accepting harder conditions; this acceptance is obviously not a preference but rather an obligation.

The informal work arrangement system via oral negotiations between the labor intermediaries and employers disempowers workers directly, and their bargaining power is very limited. They do not have the right to participate in the arrangements and bargaining processes.

The result of the informal work arrangements varies according to workers' characteristics. Ethnicity, for instance, is a significant determinant; each ethnic group earns different wages for the same job.<sup>196</sup> Another indicator is gender;<sup>197</sup> women earn less than men in many areas. Finally, child workers<sup>198</sup> also earn less or are even unpaid.

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<sup>196</sup> See section on Ethnicity and on Wages below.

<sup>197</sup> See section on Gender Dimension.

<sup>198</sup> See section on Child Workers.

This personalized character of work arrangements<sup>199</sup> causes the differentiation at the experience level of unequal power relations among workers. When we analyze the process of bargaining, we see the prominent fact that the leading role of the labor intermediaries perpetuates the “weakness” of workers. In fact, the laborers’ silence encompasses the key role of the labor intermediaries. To illustrate, employers, local inhabitants and state officers speak and arrange on behalf of workers.

The vital role of labor intermediaries in the negotiations relies on the language problems faced by the workers. In Ordu, Kurdish and Georgian workers and in Polatlı, Kurdish workers have difficulties communicating because their mother tongue is different. This is where labor intermediaries come on to the scene. However, this type of communication disempowers workers; they are isolated not only from the negotiation process but also from the local inhabitants and employers. In this framework, the participation of workers in the bargaining process is difficult. To accept or deny the working conditions primarily depends on the labor intermediaries.

Loans borrowed from the labor intermediaries during the winter months also affect workers’ dependence on labor intermediaries. Indebted workers hardly have the choice to refuse an arrangement or to quit a job. Worker #22’s response to the question “Can you quit the job whenever you want?” is “I am indebted to this man (shows the labor intermediary) 400 TL, how can I give up the job? I will earn and pay the loan first and then earn money for myself when I will go to Adana to work in

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<sup>199</sup> The term refer to Linpung Liu, Chunni Zang, “Wages for Migrant Workers in the Pearl River Delta: Determining Factors,” *Social Sciences in China* 29, No. 3 (August 2008), pp.116.

cotton.”<sup>200</sup> In addition to the labor intermediaries, workers may have received money from relatives or friends in order to maintain their livelihood in the winter months or to cover their travel expenses. In conclusion, indebtedness constitutes a major obstacle to free choice.

Poverty also affects workers’ bargaining power. Workers in both Polatlı and Ordu frequently said that if they refused a job they would not be able to survive. Dispossession<sup>201</sup> constitutes another important weakness and is linked to ethnicity. As stated in the section on Landlessness, while most local workers own a piece of land in their villages, Kurds do not and live in county towns by renting a flat. In this case, it is important to notice how this difference reflects on the bargaining power.

The relatively less poor, local workers who own a piece of land have the chance to make better arrangements. People usually said that local workers do not work under the wage of 35TL. In addition, their working conditions in terms of sheltering, breaks for lunch and tea are far better than the poorest conditions of the Kurds.

## Ethnicity

The informal bargaining process catalyzes other determinants which affect the subordinate position of workers directly. The attitudes, rules and the conditions depend to a great extent on the worker’s ethnic origin. In this framework, unequal power relations are reproduced constantly.

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<sup>200</sup> Worker #22, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 10 August 2009. *“Benim bu adama 400 milyon borcum var, işi nasıl bırakıyorum? Burada çalışacağım, sonra Adana’ya pamuğa gidicez orada ancak kendim için para kazanacağım.”*

<sup>201</sup> See section on Landlessness.

To begin with, migrants are often perceived as strangers who can disrupt the tranquility of villages. The “otherization” concept penetrates the labor market and enables employers to maximize their profit via strategizing the exclusion of migrants. To this extent, the levels of exclusion are accompanied by the exploitation of workers. During my field surveys, I observed three ethnic groups, Kurds, Georgians and Turks. I would like to accentuate the differences of these groups and try to explain the effects of these ethnic differences on the inequalities in the labor market.

The local workers do not face much in the exclusionist attempts from the employers. Their weakness comes primarily from their working status; they are laborers and their need to work places them in an inferior status in the bargaining process with employers. As for the Georgians, most of them are illegal workers in Turkey. They come to Ordu with a tourist visa, and need to exit and re-enter every three months. Their illegal status determines their living conditions. For instance, they do not stay in tents like the Kurds, but in abandoned buildings, out of the fear of being arrested. Their vulnerability level is very high. Their coming to Ordu is very recent. They said that “we have worked in this job since 0-5 years”. Actually, they are usually university graduates but could not get jobs in their places of origin. Thus, their search for jobs brings them to Turkey due to reasons such as its close location and the need for labor in the harvest times. Social networks also affect their choice, as in the case of the Kurds.

Çavuş arrange workers for the employers by telephone in the winter months. For the unemployed Georgians, it is a solution in order to meet their and their families’ life expenses. It should be added that there is also a market where the employers come and choose workers, called an “*amele pazarı*” (job market) in Ordu where the selection begins at 6.00 a.m. every morning. This market is mainly

organized for Georgians.<sup>202</sup> This type of arrangement is very far from humane and reminds us of slavery times.

The Georgians are workers who are deprived of decent job conditions. Therefore, their vulnerability is very high. They do not express their problems despite their miserable working and living conditions, 100% of the workers responded the question “what is your major problem in this job?” as “we do not have any problem.” The fear of getting arrested and their gratitude for finding a job are the main reasons, and are reflected their job performances (productivity). Many employers stated that they “prefer Georgians because they are more hard-working than Kurds although the latter are cheaper.”

As for the Kurds, who are the most vulnerable ethnic group, they are citizens in formality and naturally do not have the fear of being deported like the Georgians. However, they are “non-citizens” in practice, in terms access to employment, education, health and other basic needs. Their inferior status is sustained via the existence of the Kurdish problem. To express the case differently, political problems penetrate their lives as one of the important determinants.

In this context, they are qualified as “others” by the local population and are considered as miserable, poor, helpless and passive people. One of the examples is the expression of employer #6:

Kurds are miserable and poor-fellow people. No one would travel 1800 km for 20 TL. They work 7-8 days to cover their travel expenses and 5 days to cover their food expenses. 13 days spent like that. They are poor and miserable people. They are at the bottom of poverty. Their poverty hit the bottom. I could not imagine people who are poorer and more miserable than Kurds. These people are the lowest social class in this country.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> The General Secretary of Agriculture Chamber in Ordu, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009. “*Her sabah 6 da Gürcüler için şurada Amele Pazarı kurulur.*”

<sup>203</sup> Employer #6, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009. “*Kürtler zavallı gariban insanlar. Kimse 1800 km yolu, 20 tl para için gelmez. 7-8 gününü yol için*

It is seen that employers and the local population in general see themselves as helpful, charitable and condescending. Kurdish workers are aware of their otherness and emphasize equal citizenship rights which are not implemented in practice. “We want to have a job. We are Turkish citizens too. We are doing military services too. We are involved if there is a war. Aren’t our children martyrs?”<sup>204</sup> Their point is that they are equal when faced with difficult tasks at painful times, but unequal at the times for having better lives.

### Child Workers

One of the important features of seasonal agricultural activities is the generational transmission. Many workers stated that their “parents did the same job,” 67.9% of workers’ families are seasonal migrant workers in agriculture.

Table 7: The Job of the Families of Workers

Is there anybody in your family who is a seasonal migrant worker in agriculture?	Percent (%)
Yes	67,9
No	32,1
Total	100,0

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*çalışıyorlar, 5 gününü de buradaki gıda için, yemek için çalışıyorlar, 13 günü böyle gidiyor. Zavallı insandır. Gariban insandır. Yoksulluğun en tabanıdır. Yoksulluğu dibe vurmuş insandır. Ben bunlardan daha zavallı, daha yoksul insanlar olduğumu düşünmüyorum. Bu ülkenin sosyal sınıf olarak en son noktası bu insanlardır.”*

<sup>204</sup> Worker #7, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. “İş verirse istiyoruz; biz de Türk vatandaşıyız; biz de askere gidiyoruz, savaş olsa bir şey olsa biz de içindeyiz, bizden şehit mi yok.”

Although the number of child workers is diminishing in Turkey due to the introduction of compulsory education, the shrinkage of agriculture and the expanded number of schools, the very fact that children work in agricultural areas as seasonal migrants is alarming.

Children pick hazel-nuts, onions and help their families. In addition, their duties are almost equal to those of their parents. However, there is no given rule which determines their working conditions and earnings. Specifically, children have three options: they can earn full wage, a half of the wage or they can be unpaid. These different payment systems occur in many places and there is not a clear determinant for these differentiations, but we can draw a general pattern. Unpaidness is common in Polatlı because the piece-rate application for wages usually results in the unpaidness of children. The other charging systems are practiced in Ordu, e.g., day-wage where the number of working days is essential.

In addition to the unfairness of wage amount, parents may not give the wage to children (the actual earners). A young girl worker, #3 in Ordu, expressed the situation: “Elçis give the money to our elders; but our elders do not show us the money.”<sup>205</sup> In this case, gender is another factor besides the age. Young girls are not considered free individuals. For young men, the picture can be different.

The working life negatively effects children’s health. They are more vulnerable than their parents to illnesses. Many workers mentioned that “children have been sick because of the polluted water.” The working and living conditions are harder for children despite the equal work effort.

Child labor is a major problem among the Kurds. The Georgians do not come with their families and workers send a share of their earnings to their children in

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<sup>205</sup> Worker #3, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 6 August 2009. “Elçiler paraları büyüklerimize veriyorlar, büyüklerimizde bize göstermiyorlar.”

Georgia. As for the children of local workers, they usually do not work in agriculture. In the public opinion, it is sometimes argued that the Kurds prevent their children from going school due for cultural reasons, which is true in some cases. However, in practice, Kurdish workers are usually forced to take their children out of school in order to sustain their families' survival.

I have been in the centre of Adana for 20 years. I work in the orchards of oranges as a wage-laborer. I earn 25 TL for a day. I pay a rent of 1,500 TL per year. I work for one day and spend and my earning for the expenditures and there is no money left for my children. If you were me, you would work 25 TL and earn 50 TL for 3 days, in that case; would you spend this money for tea, sugar or children? What would you do? We could not do. If we worked fairly, our life would be beautiful. Look at us. I have a daughter, she is as old as you. I took her out of school, I could not afford it. If you were me, you would do the same thing. If your parent did not have the income, how would they send you to school? Look, this is my daughter's document for dropping out of school. (he showed it to me). If she had studied and had a profession, I would be happy. I have two more boys, I wish to send them to school, but I cannot afford it. There is nothing else, I have nothing else to say.<sup>206</sup>

This man interrupted me when I was doing an interview with another worker. He was willing to emphasize the fact that a person living in the same conditions, would do the same; that this is not related to nationality, ethnicity or tradition, but with economic conditions. He wanted to offer his children better living conditions, but this is almost impossible, and that they have to work in order to survive. Besides, even if they go to school, they will probably fail due to irregular attendance. Worker #2 explains:

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<sup>206</sup> “Ben 20 senedir Adana nın içinde oturuyorum. Portakala gidiyorum yevmiye ye. 25 ytl. 1.5 milyar ev senelik ödüyorum. Gidiyorum 1 gün çalışıyorum onu eve veriyorum çocuğuma para kalmıyor. Sen bizim yerimizde olsan fındığa girdiğin zaman 25 tl ye yevmiye çalışıyorsun mesela 2 gün 50 tl yapıyor onu çaya mı şeker mi çocuğa mı vereceksin? Bunu nasıl yapacaksın? Yapamıyoruz. Güzelcene çalışsak daha güzel olur şu halimize bak. Benim bir kızım var senin yaşlarında okuldan çıkarttım okula veremedim, ödeyemedim parasını. Sende benim yerimde olsan aynı şeyi yapardın. Anan baban geliri olmasa nasıl okutacak seni, geri bırakacak okuldan. Bak ben okuldan aldım kızı bak çıkma kaydı bak ( kağıdı gösteriyor) buyur. Belki okusaydı bir iş sahibi olsaydı bende mutlu olurdum. 2 tane oğlan çocuğu var okutuyim diyorum, kudretim yetmiyor. Başka bir şey yok, diyeceğim yok bu kadar.”

How can I tell? If the government representatives helped us, the situation would be different. For example, they gave us a job we would be willing to go to work and eat and drink better. My two children are going to primary school, I had to take them out of school, and while there was a month left for the summer vacation and brought them with me to work. Think about it. I can't afford to send them to school. Now even if I stay for the lifting job, my children will have to go to school 1-1.5 month delayed. Will the administration of the school accept the children or not? The teachers will be angry with us but they do not know that I went to work. Look, my children could read very well, but now, they've forget, think about it.<sup>207</sup>

Clearly, sending children to school is not a realistic option for workers.

Hence, children cannot have a chance to have another profession and to change their lives. Children in these areas drop out of school earlier and start attending school later than average. Many children told me they could not even see their school reports because they had to go to work.

## Gender

Women represent a highly vulnerable group among seasonal migrant workers. Gender discrimination in agricultural life is observed in different places, with different forms and bear different effects on their lives. I would like to deal with the issue by exemplifying wage, bargaining processes, duties and perceptions of women.

In my field survey areas, Ordu and Polatlı, women earn the same amount of money. However, in many places, they earn less than men for the same job in many

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<sup>207</sup> Worker #2, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 6 August 2009. “*Nasıl anlatam: hükümette memleketimizde büyükler, şöyle hükümet adamları yardımcı olsalar tabi böyle olmaz yani. Mesela bize iş verseler: bizde isteriz işe gidelim gelelim daha temiz yeriz içeriz. Mesela 2 çocuğum ilkokula gidiyorlar. Daha tatile 1 ay vardı çıkarttım getirdim. Ona göre hesap et. Okutamiyorum yani. Şimdi ben söküme de kalsam yine 1-1.5 ay ertelenecek. Ondan sonra götüreceğim acaba okul alır mı almaz mı? Öğretmenler kızacak öğretmenler laf edecek ama bilmiyorlar ki mesela çalışmaya gittim. Bak, çocuklarım dört dörtlük okuyorlardı şimdi okumayı unutmuşlar hesap et.*”

places. To illustrate, the Turkish Statistical Institute indicates the wage differences between women and men.

Table 8: The Wages of Seasonal Workers in Household Agricultural Enterprises in 2008

Sex	Average Daily-Wages of Seasonal Migrant Worker (TL)	
	2007	2008
Women	19,17	21,18
Men	25,94	29,16
Avarage	22,19	24,82

*Source:* Turkish Statistical Institute, Agricultural Holdings Wage Structure Survey, 2008

Gender-based wage inequalities are not recent. However, they have significantly increased in the last three decades with the implementation of neo-liberal policies, whereby differences between men and women, children and adults, Kurds and Turks have been exploited for greater profit maximization. Moreover, as is indicated in the section on wages, women's earnings are first received by husbands and/or fathers, who only give part of it to women, so that the real amount received by women is even less than the nominal wage given by the employer.

Moreover, the dependence of women on men is not only constrained by the wage distribution. Their social relations are also confined to the relations with their husbands. The literacy rate for instance, is very low among women. In my field areas, 21.62% of women are illiterate; in contrast, this ratio is only 2.70% for men. As for the primary school statistics, 8.11% of women are primary school graduates. However, the rate for men is 24.32%. The gender gap in terms of education is very high. The lack of education causes serious and permanent communication problems:

it limits women's ability to learn a new language, which affects their whole lives. Women have difficulties in communicating with local inhabitants when they are alone (without their husband) because they cannot speak Turkish, and this increases their dependence on men.

Apart from the agricultural activity, women also work in tents. They cook meals, raise children, wash clothes and dishes, and do many other jobs which I did not count. They said me that "job starts at 6.30 a.m. and finishes at 1.00 a.m." Their labor is unpaid but contributes to the household's savings. To illustrate, they prepare food such as tomato sauce (*salça*) and pickle (*turşu*), which is used for cooking meals, and add these to their dishes instead of buying them on the market.

Although household chores are important, they also have to work in fields. This stimulates the development of solidarity relations among women. In Elekçi Havzası, Ordu, there was a pregnant woman who could not work and stayed in the tents the whole day and looked after the children of other women who went to work for a period of time in a day. She was not paid for this job, which demonstrates the solidarity dimension of the relations among women.

Women's duties can be extremely difficult in many ways. For instance, I saw a woman with her 15-day old baby. She shouted at me as she showed her baby "look, this is how we live and there is nothing more to say." She had to work and look after her baby in the tents. The living conditions in the tents and the transportation conditions to the tents are very poor and harmful to babies' health, but the parents rarely have a choice as a part of their survival strategy.

## Isolation of Workers

In this section the phenomenon of the exclusion of the workers will be analyzed in terms of local people, employers and state officers. In this sense, the fact that different group of workers experience different isolation patterns will be emphasized by illustrating the instances.

### Exclusionist Attempts of Local People

In this part, exclusion will be analyzed in the light of the cases of Ordu and Polatlı. The case of the Kurdish workers will be scrutinized specifically due to their economically and politically disempowered status. I will relate instances of the marginalization of workers according to their ethnicity.

Initially, the Kurdish workers revealed their isolation by expressing that they had no contact with local inhabitants and workers who come from other regions. Several factors explain the isolation phenomenon. The principal ones are geographical location and social exclusion. First of all, the distant location of the labor camps from the centre of the city and villages causes non-communication. In addition, given workers' constrained life sphere, the factor of ethnicity asserts itself in constituting the fragmented structures among workers. In fact, the Kurds, Georgians and local workers share their life experiences only within their own groups. The language problem, the location of labor camps and the division of working areas according to ethnicity are the main reasons for this fragmentation and isolation. Many workers mention the lack of communication; one of them is worker #29;

Let me tell you something: I came here with stars and I'm leaving with stars. We never communicate. You know, I come from east and they are from the west, so our stars don't match [Turkish expression that means we cannot get along with each other]. I told you I have no problem because I do not see them. You can only tell when they speak. They behave negatively and cold, I can feel it. They kind of make feel lower class. We come as stars, we leave as stars. Darkness, darkness, darkness...<sup>208</sup>

People's attitudes discourage him from establishing any relation and he gets stuck in his own world. He stresses his loneliness by drawing an analogy between nature (stars) and himself. Actually, the population density is not low in Ordu, but he is alone, he is isolated from people, and he lives by himself in the middle of the crowd.

The isolation is perpetuated by the indirectness, by which I mean disconnected relations between employers and workers (see Chapter II). In this sense, migrant workers find themselves isolated in a place where the only contact they can hope for is workers coming from similar places of origin.

Apart from the lack of communication, the second dimension is social exclusion. Insulting behaviors towards Kurds are not rare. Much of the news was about this issue. One of the instances is below:

There were two temporary migrant workers who came from Batman in Sakarya and Sapanca. One of them went to the photographer to get a picture taken and did not appreciate the result. Last Saturday they argued.. Yesterday while the man was walking down the street the photographer said "Did I not tell you not to walk in this street?" And then, the photographer and his friend, a tradesman, shouted racist slogans and affronted and attacked the worker. The attack began with the sentence: "We could not get it over with you in the mountains and now you're here facing us?" One of the children is severely injured.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Worker #29, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. "*Ben sana bir şey diyim: Ben yıldızlarla geliyorum yıldızlarla gidiyorum. Hiç diyalogumuz olmuyor. Olanlarla hiç biliyorsun ben doğuluyum onlar batı olduğu için pek uyuşmuyor yıldızlarımız. Ben diyorum ya görmediğim için sorun yaşamıyorum. Sadece konuştukları zaman belli oluyor. Elektrik veriyse bunu hissedebiliyorum soğuk davranıyorlar. Biraz alt tabakada hissettiriyorlar. Yıldız gelip yıldız gidiyoruz karanlık karanlık karanlık...."*

<sup>209</sup> *Bianet.org*, 05 June 2007, "Sapanca'da Mevsimlik İşçilere Irkçı Saldırı." Available [online]: <http://bianet.org/biamag/bianet/97117-sapancada-mevsimlik-iscilere-irkci-saldiri>, "Bir

While local inhabitants may frequently act violently against Kurds at many times, this is not the case for the Georgians. The main reason is the underlying “Kurdish problem” in Turkey, which is now a major political issue. It affects the exclusion of the seasonal migrant workers directly because this group is the most vulnerable to oppressive actions; they are dispossessed, and deprived of means of self-protection (e.g., unionization). Local inhabitants legitimize their excluding attitude by pointing out workers’ unprotected situation. Worker #22 expresses a case which he experienced in Antalya. “I lived in Antalya two years ago. I worked there. I sat down in a café. My mobile phone rang and the ring tone was a Kurdish song. People threw me out. This happened to me, believe me.”<sup>210</sup> Even, the melody of a mobile phone could be a sufficient reason to kick a Kurdish migrant of a place which locals see as their own. Consequently, features which indicate “other ethnic origin” such as spoken language and Kurdish songs, reveal exclusionist attitudes.

The lines which determine the boundaries between workers and indigenous people are very clear. In this framework, workers retire into their own shells; they live in a restricted sphere, and are labeled “strangers.” However, they nourish resentment and reflect it in their expressions. For example, worker #10 related a theft anecdote with the idea that people can be forced into crime;

Some villagers complain: why are the workers settled there, they should be removed? Alright remove, police and gendarmerie come they say move; where can we go? Go wherever you can. Ok then, do you accept that I go into

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*Sakarya'da Sapanca'da Batmanlı geçici işçiler varmış. Biri fotoğraf çektirmiş, sonucunu beğenmemiş, geçen Cumartesi fotoğrafçıyla atışmışlar. Dün yine aynı caddeden geçerken fotoğrafçı 'sana buradan geçme demedim mi' diyerek laf atmış. Diğer esnafla birlikte ırkçı sloganlar atıp hakaret ederek saldırmışlar. Saldırı "sizi dağda bitiremedik, burada mı karşımıza çıktınız" sözleriyle başlamış. Çocuklardan biri ağır yaralı.” [19.04.2010].*

<sup>210</sup> Worker #22, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 10 August 2009. “2 yıl önce Antalya da yaşadım. Orada çalışıyordum kahvede oturuyordum telefonum çaldı Kürtçe müzik çaldı. Beni dışarıya çıkardılar. Bunu yaşadım yani.”

the street and become a robber? No. Do you accept that I become a thief? No. I came here with my children and my family to work. If take this away from me theft, highjacking, assassination will be my recourse. I have no choice, what can I do? If I cannot eat, if my children, my family in the tent want bread and that there is no bread what can I do, that's what I'd try, I've no other choice, what can I do? Sister, the poor, the thieves you are watching them on TV, you know them, it's all in your house. They're not doing it for pleasure. It is not a profession. It is because he has no other choice, because he is hungry that he envisages death. Nobody would put his hands into fire for pleasure. I know that if I put my finger into the fire, it will burn. Theft is the same. My sister, there is no issue, there is no cure, this is our distress. Leaving for another place is also a distress. Wherever we go, whatever work, we do we do it with honor, with our family. But it's still the same. Still this place is happiness. I heard from my kirve<sup>211</sup> that tomorrow it will rain. The water will leak from my tent, my bed will get muddy and I will live with this mud. Now, the time is good. November is the harvest of beet, can you imagine? Who could stay outside? But we will still be living in tents at that time. This is outrageous.<sup>212</sup>

He argues that hunger can make people do things they would not have imagined until then: anyone can be force to act violently, involuntarily and dangerously. The consequences of these attempts can be punishment in a prison for many years or even death in some cases. However, death can also come from hunger; he emphasizes that it is the motivation when he says that nobody would put his finger into the fire voluntarily.

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<sup>211</sup> Kirve refers to a man who acts as a sort of god father to a boy at his circumcision.

<sup>212</sup> Worker #10, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 7 August 2009. "Bazı köylüler şikayet ediyorlar: oraya konmuşlar efendim işte bunları kaldırın. Kaldır ama jandarma polis geliyor kalkın nereye gidelim. Nereye giderseniz gidin. O zaman ben yola çıkıyım soygunculuk yapıyorum kabul eder misiniz? Hayır. Hırsızlık yapsam kabul eder misiniz? Hayır. Ben çoluk çocukla ailemle buraya gelmişim çalışmak için bunu da elimden alırsan benim çarem o olur. Bir yol kesme, bir ev soymak bir adam öldürme. benim çarem yok. Burada aç kalsam benim çoluğum çadırda aç, ekmek istese ekmek yoksa ben napiyim o yolu denerim başka çarem yok napiyim. Zaten bacım, ablam bak şu fakirlik şu hırsızlık yapanlar hep televizyona veriyor görüyorsunuz, hepsi sizin evinizde geçiyor zaten. Bu keyfe yapmıyorlar. Bu meslek değil. Demekki çok mecburdur çok açtır diye ölüme kendini atıyor. Niye yapıyor? Kimse keyfe kendini elini şu ataşa sokmaz. Biliyorum ki parmağımı şu ateşe soksam yanar, hırsızlık da aynı. Olmuyor bacım olmuyor derdimiz halimiz çaremiz yok. sıkıntımız boldur. Buradan kalksak da sıkıntı çekiyoruz. Hangi memleketi gidersek hangi işe gidiyorsak namusumuzla ailemle çalışıyoruz. Yine de böyle oluyor. Yine burası mutludur . Kirveden duyduym yarın yağmur yağacak çadırda duracağız, benim çadırın şurası akacak benim yatağımın şurası çamur olacak ben o çamurla yaşayacağım. Şimdi yine iyi pancar zamanı 11.aya geliyor hesap et kim dışarıda kalabilir ama yine de çadırda yaşıyoruz toplanana kadar. Rezillik burada işte.

To sum up, the alienation between migrants and local inhabitants become a reciprocal process. The perception of migrant workers as marginal people causes the reflection of migrants. The laborer's isolated and marginal position prevents them from raising their voices and uniting. Hence, their inferior status is perpetuated in both economic and social areas, and both feed each other.

### Exclusionist Manners of the Employers

In the previous section, the isolation of workers in the working and living places was drawn. In this section employers' perception of workers will be represented by exerting their exploitative targets.

Firstly, as noted in Chapter II, the employers have no contact with the workers in the work relations (indirectness). This blocks of workers' communication possibilities and puts them in a very limited sphere. It is clear that indirectness disempowers workers and limits their possibilities to seek justice and have a voice on their working conditions. Employer #1 gave clues related to this non-communication. "Workers come through the labor intermediaries. We have no connection with the workers. 4/5 of this region's workers arrive through the labor intermediaries. The employers negotiate with the labor intermediaries, workers do not have a right to speak about wages."<sup>213</sup> In this picture, the authority is held by employers and labor intermediaries; workers are the silent figures who are invisible in the decision-making (bargaining) process, and are visible only in the working period. Sustaining these relations as such is highly beneficial to the employers, and social relations with

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<sup>213</sup> Worker #1, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 6 August 2009. "Dayıbaşları aracılığıyla oluyor. Bizim işçilerle bağlantımız yok. Bu bölgeye gelen işçilerin yaklaşık 5 te 4 ü dayıbaşları tarafından getiriliyorlar. İşçilerin fiyatta bir söz hakkı yok sen sadece dayıbaşı ile konuşuyorsun."

workers are irrelevant to employers. Employer #6 describes this process with regards to Kurds in Ordu:

The people who live in Karadeniz met the workers who come from south east, or rather Kurds, 10 years ago. The reason is their lower wages and costs, because they claim nothing. They go wherever they are told to go. Just near a water source, they would erect their tents, don't care about rain or flood. I mean no electricity, no water; they feed themselves with the water of the creek, they are not a burden to the employers, to us, the guy just lives on the bank of the creek. He doesn't ask for log, he doesn't ask for shell, he doesn't ask for electricity, he doesn't ask for water, he doesn't ask for bread. He doesn't have anything. Their costs seemed suitable for us and we came into contact with the southeast instead of local workers. After having met Kurds, they seemed beneficial to us. Of course their productivity is low. They have no knowledge about the hazel-nut because they met it a short time ago. Their productivity is low, but their costs are even lower and this provides us benefits. Therefore, we began not using local workers.<sup>214</sup>

He conceives Kurdish workers as "others" who are poor and desperate beings but not exactly human. Their conditions are very far away from the humane life areas. In addition they do not ask for better standards. This is why he prefers these workers despite their low productivity.

The competitive labor market between the Kurds, Georgians and local workers has been beneficial to employers' profits. Although the basic characteristics of the agricultural market are distinct from the global market such as the communication, industry and service sector, the labor market is very similar to the ongoing trend all over the world. Specifically, the competition between workers, according to their ethnicity, decreases labor costs, including wages, transportation,

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<sup>214</sup> Employer #6, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. *"Karadeniz 10 yıl önce güneydoğulu işçilerle daha açıkçası Kürt işçilerle tanıştı ve ücretler, maliyetler düşük olduğu için, çünkü talepleri yok. Nereyi gönderirseniz gidiyorlar, bir su başına yerleştiren onları çadırlarını kursunlar, yağmur, sel umurlarında değil. Yani elektrik yok, su yok, dere sularıyla falan karınlarını doyuruyorlar, işverene, bizlere hiçbir yükü yok, derenin kenarında yattıyor adam. Odun istemiyor, kabuk istemiyor, elektrik istemiyor, su istemiyor, ekmek istemiyor. Hiçbir şeyi yok. Bize maliyetleri uygun geldi. Biz yerli işçi yerine güneydoğu ile temasa geçtik. Kürt işçilerle tanıştıktan sonra avantajlı geldi. Verimlilikleri elbette düşük. Fındıkla yeni tanışıkları için, fındığı tanımıyorlar, bilmiyorlar. Verimlilikleri düşük ama ücretleri de düşük, bu bize menfaat sağlıyor. Buradaki yerli işçileri kullanmamaya başladık."*

food and other costs. Edna Bonacich's concept of "ethnic antagonism", where the labor market is divided into the determinant parts which are structured according to workers' ethnicity and their work circle is very different from each other, was explained in Chapter II. In this framework, the concept is very useful to analyze the whole picture by taking the interest relations into consideration.

Bonacich asserts that the employers import workers from other countries when the costs of labor are expensive. In this way, they reduce wages, and costs of other expenditures such as food and sheltering. In addition, dividing the labor market by ethnicity and determining the lines very clearly prevents unionization and the possibility of strikes.<sup>215</sup> As such, employers obtain the cheapest and most docile labor force; which is their essential target. Bonacich's theoretical approach enlightens the cases of Ordu and Polatlı. The employers usually stress how much they appreciate the low costs of the Kurds and Georgians.

The Kurds are situated at the bottom of the split structure of the labor market. From an economic perspective, their poverty conditions are perpetuated as expressed at length in Chapter II. Poorer workers make the worst work arrangements and are trapped in a vicious circle of poverty. The section on the informal bargaining process of the present chapter revealed the informal feature of the working arrangements and how this perpetuates the cast among workers because the conventional rules are not changed by any will. However, in the Turkish case the ethnicity has another particular dimension. Although the Georgians and Kurds experience poverty at similar levels, Kurds have a lower status in the labor market. Employer #6 mentions the distinction between Georgians and Kurds:

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<sup>215</sup> Edna Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labor Market," *American Sociological Review* 35, no. 5 (October, 1972), p. 554.

We are more tolerant with Georgians than with Kurds because they are imported. They carry Georgians passports. These are our goods, local goods are cheaper. We can use them better/ we are using it more exploitatively. Albeit, Georgians also work at very low wages, but their experience with hazel-nut is older. Their productivity is slightly better this is the reason for the preference for Georgians. A competition environment has developed here. This year, for example, the majority of the employers said if you come, come for 20 TL. A friend called me a short time ago and said that we think giving 20 TL to workers, what do you think about that? I said shame! You gave 22 TL last year, you should give 23 TL this year. What a disgrace. He said: everybody gives 20 TL to these Kurds and got off with it. Georgians' status is slightly better.<sup>216</sup>

Price is a significant factor for the decision of employers in choosing workers. However, as the above quotation indicates, workers' efficiency is also important. Georgians are evaluated as more hard-working; and to this extent, although their prices are higher than Kurds', they may be preferred. Moreover, the historical proximity may be another factor explaining this preference. Georgians and the indigenous people in Ordu have developed close relations over many years. There are many inhabitants whose mother tongue is Georgian. Furthermore, there have been many marriages between the two groups. In this cultural framework, Black Sea people consider Georgians closer to themselves compared to Kurds.

On the other hand, the Kurdish problem negatively affects this market. Seasonal migrant workers constitute a group which is landless, poor and constrained to work for survival. In addition, their Kurdish identity creates an exclusionist atmosphere where they cannot find equal opportunities with other citizens. In this case, class and ethnic identity are encompassed. Ercan Geçgin considers the relation

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<sup>216</sup> Employer #6, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 15 August 2009. "Gürcülere daha musammahalı davranıyoruz. Onlar çünkü ithal. Gürcistan pasaportu taşıyorlar. E bunlar bizim malımız, yerli malı daha ucuzdur. Daha iyi kullanırız. Gerçi gürcüler de çok düşük bir ücrete çalışıyorlar. Ama onların fındıkla tanışmaları daha eski. Biraz daha verimli işçilikleri, o yüzden tercih ediliyor. Bir rekabet ortamı oldu, bu yıl mesela daha ucuz işçi bulmak için işverenlerin çoğu gelirse 20 ye gel şimdi falan diyor. Biraz önce bir arkadaş aradı beni, mesela biz bitirdik 20 tl vermeyi düşünüyoruz, ne diyorsunuz dedi. Artık utanın dedim geçen sene 22 verdiniz bu yıl da 23 verin ayıptır dedim. Ya bu Kürtlere herkes öyle veriyormuş dedi çıktı işin içinden. Gürcülerin biraz daha statüsü yüksek."

with these identities and the exclusion of workers.<sup>217</sup> He asserts that seasonal migrant workers are excluded owing to these poor and ethnic identities. Employer #7 exemplifies this exclusion issue:

Today, the discrimination against Kurdish workers cannot be denied. This is what I want to say, there is no discrimination against Kurds in our village because our village has Kurdish origins. In addition, this village is “enlightened”. I mean that this village has surpassed itself. Of course, petty unpleasant events sometimes occur, but we do not give credit to these. We do not discriminate workers saying Mehmet is Arab or the other is Kurd, coming from Diyarbakır. We have a socialist past. In the past, this perception was the same. That is why we do not give credit to these issues. However, the discrimination has occurred and still occurs in some Turkish villages. We see it. For instance, when we go to some villages, a man proudly says: workers cannot come to this café house. He sees this as a superiority. He says: Kurdish workers cannot enter the café house in our village. Why? What a pity? Maybe he lives in a tent, be he would also need to take a rest and want to play cards in the café house. Some villages, local people do not even permit workers to enter the village. It occurs in Polatlı, we see it, but in our village, it does not occur. Here it never occurs. Workers come to the village in the evenings, their tents are nearby, they sit and have a chat with us. In our village, you cannot find a chair after 06.00 p.m. because workers the café house is full of workers.<sup>218</sup>

Kurdish and Turkish villages illustrate different characteristics on the issue of discrimination. The latter have more nationalist attitudes, exclude Kurdish workers, and maintain a strict will to keep the workers in a separated, constrained labor camp. Unfortunately, this is the most common attitude. In fact, his village is an exception due to its socialist legacy, which attaches importance to the equality of workers.

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<sup>217</sup> Ercan Geçgin, “Ankara-Polatlı Örneğinde Sosyal Dışlanma Açısından Mevsimlik Tarım İşçiliği,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (2009).

<sup>218</sup> Employer #7, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, 17 August 2009. “Bugün Kürt işçilere karşı ayrımcılık var tabii. Ben bunu söylemek istiyorum bizim köyümüzün temeli Kürt olduğu için, biraz da şunu kabul etmek lazım, bizim köyümüz aydın köyü, yani artık kendini aşmış bir köy. Tabii arada ufak tefek şeyler oluyor ama bu tip şeylere prim vermiyoruz. Ama işçiyi burada ayırmıyoruz Mehmet arab diye öbürü Diyarbakırlı kürt diye değil. Bizim sosyalist bir geçmişimiz var. Geçmişte de öyleydi. Onun için pek prim vermeyiz bu konulara. Ama bazı türk köylerinde oldu, oluyor. Yani onu biz görüyoruz. Mesela bazı köylere gidiyoruz, söylüyor adam övünerek diyor ki: Ama bazı köylere gidiyoruz; adam övünerek diyor ki işçi bizim kahveye gelemiz diyor. Bunu bir üstünlük gibi görüyor kendisin de. Bizde diyor Kürt işçi kahveye giremez. Niye? Yazık değil mi? O çadırda yaşıyor belki o da dinlenmek ister, gelir burada kâğıt oynar. Bazı köyler işçiyi köyün içine bile sokmuyorlar. Bu var, Polatlı da bunu görüyoruz, oluyor. Ama bizim buralarda olmuyor. Bizim buralarda kesinlikle olmuyor. İşçiler gelir akşamları, çadırı yakın, burada gelir oturur, sohbet eder. Bizim burada saat 18.00 dan sonra oturacak sandalye bulamazsın, işçilerden.”

Moreover, this unusual village is also distinguished with its ethnic origin. At this point, the separation between Kurdish and Turkish villages is related to the Kurdish problem. The ongoing violence in the southeast reflects the perception of Kurds and Turks in the eyes of people who are outside the violence.

### Exclusionist Attempts from the State Officers

The main exclusionist attitudes to Kurdish workers were discussed in the previous section. Yet, the role of state agencies in this process is also important.

The state plays a paradoxical role on the issue of seasonal migrant workers. On the one hand, public institutions such as İŞ-KUR theoretically hold the right of interference and regulating the labor market; however, in practice these institutions do not play active roles. On the other hand, state officers have an active role in the seasonal migration process. Specifically, the security forces of the state and the governor, the chamber of agriculture are the main actors who contribute to the exclusion of migrants. A young worker told me about a day when he was in a bazaar with his friends and the gendarme asked them to leave. The gendarme has no legal right to ask such a thing if there is no criminal or any other suspicious case, but this oppressive behavior reflects the general pattern against migrant workers.

To begin with, attitudes towards Kurds are very different from those towards other ethnic groups. The Black Sea region is famous for having nationalistic reactions. Many workers express that Ordu is the place among all working cities where they are most exposed to ethnic discrimination. Surely, the reason for this situation derives from the Kurdish problem. The local people are very vulnerable to the violence in the southeast and they can have exclusionist reactions to Kurdish

workers. In this framework, local inhabitants' mentality provides support to the state representatives' attitudes. The general secretary of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ordu gives his ideas about the workers:

Look, let me tell you something: If a person comes here to pick hazel-nut, he has to stay at the employers' house. I am a producer; I have a garden, every producer has a worker-home<sup>219</sup> his living house. It means that there is a place for workers to stay. In that case, you come here for your different ideas. If you want such a sheltering place, no such thing has existed since many years, 100-150 years. I am giving an example, today 40 thousand people come to Ordu in the harvest season, this was the same 20 years ago. You will ask where they came from 20 years ago. They were coming from the higher villages in Ordu, and then local people emigrated from Ordu. Ordu became one of the cities where emigration was the most important. Therefore there has been a need of workers. What happened then? People just took their beds and climbed to the villages in height to the hazel-nuts. Here picking hazel nuts has never been organized with labor camps, wherefrom workers come to my garden to pick the hazel-nuts. My home is situated 22km away from the city. I could possibly not rent a car, to bring workers in the morning at to send them back to the camp 22 km every day. It is too expensive, it's impossible. Everybody has a threshing floor nearby their home, and a place to stay. We are opposed to such things.<sup>220</sup>

For him, the workers are entirely responsible for their grievances. He argues that workers can be accommodated by the employers nearby the gardens they work in. However in practice, employers cannot afford it and staying in tents is not a choice, this is not a mystery given the miserable living conditions in the tents. The state officer's perception implies that migrants are potential terrorists or criminals.

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<sup>219</sup> Amele evi

<sup>220</sup> The General Secretary of Chamber of Agriculture, interview by the author, tape recording, Ordu, Turkey, 16 August 2009. "Bak kızım ben size bir şey söylüyüm. Eğer insan fındık toplamaya geliyorsa, üreticinin evinde kalacak. Ben üreticiyim benim bahçem var her üreticinin evinin yanında amele evi var. Yani kalmaya yeri var. Yani bu o zaman şu: sen o zaman buraya farklı düşünceler için geliyorsun. Eğer böyle bir şey istiyorsan böyle bir barınma alanı istiyorsan yıllardan beri 100 senedir 150 senedir böyle bir şey oluşmamış. Aynı şekilde örnek veriyorum bugün Ordu'ya fındık hasat sezonunda 40 bin kişi giriyorsa 20 yıl önce de 40 bin kişi giriyordu. 20 yıl önce nereden giriyordu diyeceksin, Ordu'nun yüksek ilçelerinden giriyordu daha sonra Ordu sürekli göç verdiği için, Türkiye'de göç veren illerin başında geldiği için işçi ihtiyacı oldu. İnsanlar ne oldu aldı yataklarını çıktılar köye toplayacakları yere çıktılar. Yani burada hiçbir zaman fındık böyle toplanmıyor: bir toplanma yeri olacak, burada bu insanlar kalacak, oradan gelecek benim bahçeme, bir kere benim evimin olduğu yer şehre 22 km, 22 km her gün ben burada araba tut, buraya getir buraya git gel sabah akşam bu bir kere maliyet yüklü böyle bir şey olmaz. Herkesin evinin yanında harmanı var, kalacak yeri var biz böyle bir şeye de karşıyız."

When he says “they come here for different ideas”, he implies “terrorist attempts”. Similar perceptions have led to oppressive sanctions against workers. For instance, last year and the year before, the governor banned the entrance of Kurds to Ordu, workers started settling near by the road in trucks.

Furthermore, the state officers investigate workers’ criminal history; they demand migrant workers’ identity cards from every village headmen. In fact, there is no such treatment in many unqualified jobs (e.g., workers in the construction sector or waiters). However, in the case of seasonal migration in agriculture workers are suspected of bearing criminal characteristics. This perception bears prohibitive, despotic and oppressive practices, in both legal and illegal terms, against migrant workers. Their disempowered position prevents them from developing organized protest reactions because working in these areas is their only chance of survival.

In recent days, news about the migrant workers in Ordu provinces has been published in the mass media.<sup>221</sup> According to the information, this year and after, Kurdish workers cannot come to pick the hazel-nut because they have been evaluated as the supporters of PKK. Instead of the Kurdish workers, Georgians will be preferred. If the former come and work in the gardens, they will be the subject of a file at a police office. This decision was taken in the “PKK meeting” that some governors and representatives of security and military forces participated. It is very obvious that the Kurdish migrant workers are seen as potential terrorist and the oppressiveness has reached the extreme levels as the days goes on.

Taking all the discussion in this chapter into account, it can be said that each group of workers in terms of ethnicity, gender and age experiences the vulnerability of exploitation at different levels. These differences are observable in the bargaining

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<sup>221</sup> See one of the instances of the new: *Sendika.org*, 09 June 2010, “Karadeniz Kürtlere Kapatıldı.” Available [online]: [http://www.sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi\\_no=30982](http://www.sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi_no=30982) [9 June 2010].

process. Poverty is a major determinant which affects the power of workers in this respect. The relatively less poor have better work arrangements in terms of wage, accommodation and working conditions. Along with these factors, the assumption is valid in the most cases in Turkey; however, there are certain differences to be stated. The Kurdish problem affects the work relations directly. Although the levels of poverty of Georgians and Kurdish workers are close each other, the latter have the worst work arrangements. Ethnicity plays a crucial role as far as the issue of vulnerability is concerned. Each ethnic group experiences different kinds of hardships. For instance, on the one hand, the Kurdish problem puts Kurdish workers in an excluded place. On the other hand, the Georgians face difficulties due to their illegal status. Moreover, the local workers complain about the poverty dimension in their lives. Apart from the ethnic discrimination, gender and age are also the reasons for the exploitation. Women workers earn less in most places and they do additional jobs such as cooking and looking after the children, which are not priced but still help saving the money for the budget of the family. As for child workers, they earn less and are unpaid in particular areas. Moreover they are more sensitive to the worst living conditions; the diseases among children, which are derived from the unclean water or bad weather conditions, are more common than they are among the older workers.

In the second part of the chapter, the exclusion was analyzed by indicating different groups' attitudes namely, the local people, the employers and the state officers. The common point between these groups is to isolate workers from the incorporation with the society by showing them as the "others". In the second chapter, it was emphasized that creating "non-indigenous others" enabled the marginalization of the workers and made their status inferior in front of the local

people. The main conclusion to be drawn is that evaluating and behaving them as different people, brings the profit maximization to the land owners. To create different categories according to age, gender and ethnicity is a requirement for the exploitation.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Seasonal migrant workers represent a vital labor force in order to sustain agricultural production all over the world and in Turkey, as well. By the effects of industrialization and urbanization, agriculture has lost its considerable labor force; they were generally small land owners and unpaid family workers. In that case, migrant and immigrant workers constitute the essential manpower for the cultivation of crops at both the national and international levels. The prevalent form is the former one for Turkey. However, the latter also is becoming highly visible day by day.

The literature for Turkey has focused mostly on the problems of seasonal migrant workers by describing their working and sheltering lives. In order to contribute new evidence to this literature, this thesis scrutinized the different dimensions among workers for being affected by the worst living conditions. In this framework, the field surveys which were done in Ordu and Polatlı, enabled me to observe different groups among workers. I had the chance to see workers whose ethnic identity was Georgians, Kurdish and Turkish nationality and also women and child workers whose conditions were different from the rest. To this extent, the most striking consequence of this study is the changing levels of vulnerability to the exploitation in terms of ethnicity, gender and age among workers. To examine the relations is quite important in order to reveal all the unfairness within this labor market. From this point of view, this study has substantial importance to this literature since it introduces different kinds of unequal power relations within the seasonal agricultural labor market.

As it was stated in the theory chapter, proletarianization, labor mobility, unequal power relations and marginalization are notions which make lives of workers understandable and also indicate the role of those workers for the functioning of working life in our age. Briefly, the general trend of proletarianization in agriculture is meaningful for evaluating the key role of seasonal migrant workers. Actually, this concept evokes the industrial workers; however, the real conditions of the migrant laborers in agriculture represent strongly proletarian features in practice. They are totally landless or own very small amount land, the cultivation of which does not contribute to the household significantly. Their survival depends on working in agricultural areas as waged laborers. Today, this case is essential in order to capitalize the farming activities because the small peasantry is dissolved and big agricultural corporations can be established in this way. To this extent, the seasonal migrant workers are evaluated as the cheapest and the most obedient labor force all over the world. They are deprived of basic needs such as adequate education and health care and they have very little chance to change their quality of life; namely, rising into the upper levels in this stratified capitalist society.

The mobility of labor is significant in order to keep migrants inferior in this circle. There is no permanent settlement place for those workers; they are landless, they are on the move for six months per year. To this extent, the casualization of labor, which means the increase of temporary employment, yields the phenomenon of homelessness for those workers. On the one hand, workers are always mobile by following the jobs wherever they find them. On the other hand, to quit a job is almost impossible owing to the feature of contract-based jobs for a particular harvest time. At this point, the main conclusion is that the notions of mobility and immobility close each other.

In this context, the unequal power relations are vital for the labor market in order to profit maximization. There are key concepts within these relations. Firstly, poverty affects the work relations immensely. The relatively less poor workers make better work arrangements in terms of wages, accommodation and working facilities with the land owners and labor intermediaries. It means that the people at the bottom always stay on the same level. Secondly, informal working relations lead to the unequal power relations in favor of employers. In most countries such as Turkey, Spain and the US, the work relations for seasonal (im)migrant workers are sustained via oral arrangements, which are very far away from being legal. This personalized character of work relations disempowered workers in front of the employers. Needless to say social capital gains curial importance, as workers' only connections are the labor mediators. In this context, the exploitation easily reaches the maximum level because there is no control over the mechanism to protect workers.

Thirdly, "frame of reference," which means the worse working conditions in the places of origin of workers, results in accepting all the unfairness in the host places. To work in these places is not a choice, but is an obligation for the workers. In addition, the language problem for (im)migrants prevents workers' unionization and acting together against the employers. They have difficulties in communication with the employers and the other workers as well. In this case, again social networks play the key role and workers must accept the given conditions.

Finally, "ethnic antagonism" is a concept which has significant effects on the unequal power relations. The employers use the strategy by dividing the workers according to their ethnic identities. Each ethnic group earns more or less and has different working and sheltering conditions. In that case, workers cannot get unionized and their struggle areas become distinctive. Moreover, the competitive

labor market thanks to the presence of different ethnic groups enables employers to reduce the prices.

The last theoretical concept is the marginalization of workers, which is commonly used as a strategy to keep workers subordinated within the working relations. The geographical isolation of the mass settlement of workers is an important factor to prevent their incorporation with society. Their constrained communication facilities cause social isolation. Furthermore, this limitation consolidates the importance of social networks because the labor intermediaries are the only people who enable the communication. As for the (im)migrant status of labor disempowered workers, they are (none) citizens and cannot have the same utilities from the state enterprises with local citizens in the host places. They are represented as strangers, disturbers and criminals, so their incorporation with the society is prevented. In that case, marginalization of workers enables the conservation of limited life areas of workers.

As for the phenomenon of seasonal migrant workers in Turkey, the history of these laborers goes back to Ottoman times. The crunch time for this job was the beginning of commercialization in agriculture. At this time, the need of the labor in the harvest times expanded; seasonal migration was sustained by both migrant and immigrant workers. The migration destinations were the cotton fields of Çukurova owing to this crop's labor intensive and profitable features. In the early Republican period, the target of capitalization and industrialization determined the actual position of those workers. The worse conditions of peasants after the World War I combined with the objection of capitalization. In this framework, big land owners became more visible and they need landless peasants to cultivate their lands. The number of those workers constituted 60-70% of the total rural population. The place

that received the highest rates of migration was Çukurova, as in earlier times. It should be emphasized that capitalization affected the working life of those workers directly; they gave up reaping and worked only at spading out the cotton after the reaper machine entered the fields. In addition, the cotton became more labor-intensive due to the transition from close bolls to open bolls. The latter is more suitable for industrial production and the timing is more important for harvesting it. In that case, the migrant labor force gained more importance. After World War II, this ratio declined to 50% owing to the adverse consequences of the war on the peasants.

Briefly, the male population decreased and agricultural production faced difficulties due to lower prices. Subsequently, the Marshall Aid program which was signed in 1948 brought about the rapid mechanization of agriculture. Its reflection on seasonal migrant workers was the reduction of their employment by the use of tractors instead of the workers for agricultural production. However, their employment remained important in places that were not suitable for using the machines. Moreover, the migration from the rural to urban areas became more observable during this period. People migrated to cities for access to better earnings, education and health facilities. In that case, the old types of harvesting such as *imece*, in which families worked for each other reciprocally, was disturbed and the reflection of this case on the seasonal migrant workers was the fulfillment of the places of the absent unpaid family workers.

In the 1980s, the agricultural employment as a whole has decreased dramatically owing to the neo-liberal politics. In the global world, small peasantry dissolved and big corporations replaced them. Turkey has experienced this process as well. A considerable amount of small land owners have migrated to cities; they have

not been able to survive under the competitive market conditions in agriculture. Rapid urbanization increased the importance of seasonal workers because they represented a cheaper and more mobile labor force in agriculture. The need for migrant labor has expanded and new migration areas have appeared such as Tokat, Yozgat, Çorum, Konya, Erzincan, Amasya, Kayseri, Sivas and Elazığ beside the old ones such as Manisa, Adana and İzmir. Workers have been introduced to new crops and have new duties such as picking hazelnuts, hoeing and ripping sugar beet, picking oranges and ripping gram and lentil.

In this period, the profile of workers also illustrates important differences. They are dispossessed, usually landless, and live in county towns as tenants. They migrate to rural areas at harvest times and generally are unemployed in the winter months. This picture signifies a proletariat labor force. Another important point in that case is the changing direction of migration; people migrate from urban to rural areas and this case causes and will continue to cause significant changes in social relations. Furthermore, in this period, immigration from the Georgia increased, as a considerable amount of seasonal workers came to Black Sea region at harvest times. However, Kurdish workers generally have constituted the majority in the seasonal agricultural employment.

As mentioned in Chapter IV, the entrance to the seasonal agricultural employment market can derive from the several reasons. The most common reason, which the workers expressed, is that this job is traditional for their families. However, in Turkey there are special reasons, which affect the enlargement and the composition of migrant workers. Briefly, there are four special reasons: the water problem in the southeast, the tobacco quota, the forced migration and the economic crisis. First of all, the lack of water infrastructure in southeastern region made the

peasants give up their original lands; in that case, they work seasonally in agriculture in different cities.

Secondly, the tobacco quota which was implemented in Adıyaman in 1994 led to a massive increase in the number of migrant workers in that region because landless peasants and share croppers could not find jobs there and migration seemed as the only solution. In addition, small land owners also gave up tobacco production owing to the quota implementation and some of them entered the seasonal agricultural employment force.

Thirdly, forced migration, especially in the 1990s, caused that the movement of Kurdish workers towards the centers of the cities in the east and people who do not have any job, become temporary workers in the harvest times. They are unemployed in the county towns in winter months and work in agriculture in the summers. Finally, the economic crisis during the period of 2008-2009 resulted in the severe economic depression for especially waged workers. Some people who are unemployed owing to the crisis have found a remedy for their survival by returning to their hometowns where they participate in seasonal agricultural employment.

In the second part of this chapter, the actual life of seasonal migrant workers was elaborated. First, lack of legal protection in the labor law was emphasized. Second, the legal status of labor intermediaries was explained; the obvious consequence of this part was that the practices are very different and disadvantaging for workers as far as the written conditions in the law is concerned. Third, the role of labor intermediaries was discussed. They are crucial in the process of work arrangements and during the harvest and remuneration times. All arrangements are sustained via the relationships between labor intermediaries and employers and labor intermediaries and workers also. The labor intermediary is usually a relative of the

workers, this fact is important because this feature sometimes results in the coercion of workers to accept all working conditions. Fourth, the possible transportation facilities were introduced and this picture enabled us to see the reasons for famous traffic accidents, which were published in the media.

Fifth, the life in tents was explained. Unhealthy accommodation for workers in those places was emphasized. In addition, the cultural life, solidarity relations and social roles in tents were mentioned. Sixth, the process of wage formation was explained. The board, which is responsible for determining wages of temporary workers, was introduced. However, the essential point is that the prices differentiate in the practice as well as in the legal status. The wages is changing according to workers' ethnicity, gender and age. In addition, the commission of labor intermediaries affects the total earnings of workers. Seventh, the landlessness among workers was stated. The majority of workers are totally landless peasants. In that case, ethnicity is again a factor separating workers. Kurdish workers constitute the major groups for the issue of landlessness more than Georgians and local workers. In fact, the dispossession affects the vulnerability level of workers because they have no other alternatives to sustain the life expenses. They emphasized frequently that their only chance is to work for survival. Finally, the phenomenon of poverty among workers was explained by signifying the expression of "hunger" for the workers.

In Chapter V, the unequal power relations were examined. First, the unfairness is seen to be highly clear in the bargaining process. The lack of legality creates informal and personal work arrangements; in that case, workers are to be left unprotected. Workers do not have a right to raise their voice in this process. The land owners make arrangements with the labor intermediaries instead of laborers. Their silence role of workers disempowers them and exploitative relations become cruder

for workers in that case. The crucial consequence of this part was that the exploitation levels change according to state of poverty and ethnic origin of workers. Relatively less poor people make better work arrangements in terms of wage and work condition than the local workers. Kurdish workers earn the lowest money and stay in tents, where the life conditions are unhealthy and difficult. However, it should be emphasized that the Georgians also face other difficulties. They are illegal workers; their housing places are abandoned buildings owing to the fear of arrest. They have no social security; health care is a serious problem for them. It can be said that Kurdish and Georgian workers constitute groups more vulnerable to the exploitation in different ways rather than the local ones.

In addition, the local workers usually owned the land while other two groups are landless. In that case, poverty-dispossession and ethnicity encompass each other for the issue of exploitation. In other words, there is an ethnicization of poverty within the seasonal agricultural labor market. Using the ethnic differences enabled cheaper and docile labor force to the land owners. Ethnicity creates a split labor market in which each ethnic group feels different problems. Actually, this fragmented structure of the labor market prevents the solidarity and unique struggle arena of all seasonal workers, which is a great advantage for the employers. Apart from the ethnicity, age and gender affect the vulnerability level of workers. Firstly, although their labor is equal with other workers in a determined time, child workers earn less and they are not paid in some places. In addition to their subordination for the wages, their earnings usually are given by the head of family and this initiative usually results in that the case that children cannot receive their total earnings from the fathers. Similarly, women earn less and cannot take their remuneration from husbands of fathers. Actually, they work harder than males. Women cook meal,

clean tents, raise children, and do similar jobs. These duties are not priced but they are effective for saving the money for the budget of household. This unfairness placed them as a different category in terms of exploitation from both the employers and male household members.

In the second part of Chapter V, the exclusion of workers from society was analyzed in depth. First, their distant location of sheltering indicates the isolation of them obviously. They are disconnected, alone and isolated in these host working places. It causes a lack of communication with the local people. Moreover, the Kurdish problem reflects on the case of the exclusion of workers directly. Kurdish workers frequently are disturbed owing to speaking or singing in the Kurdish language. Kurdish and Turkish land owners behave differently; the former do not exclude workers due to their Kurdish identity. In their village the exclusion of workers can derive from only the poverty dimension of workers. In this framework, it should be emphasized that the Kurdish problem brings in different exclusion features on the cases of seasonal migrant workers for Turkey, distinguishing it from the other countries all over the world.

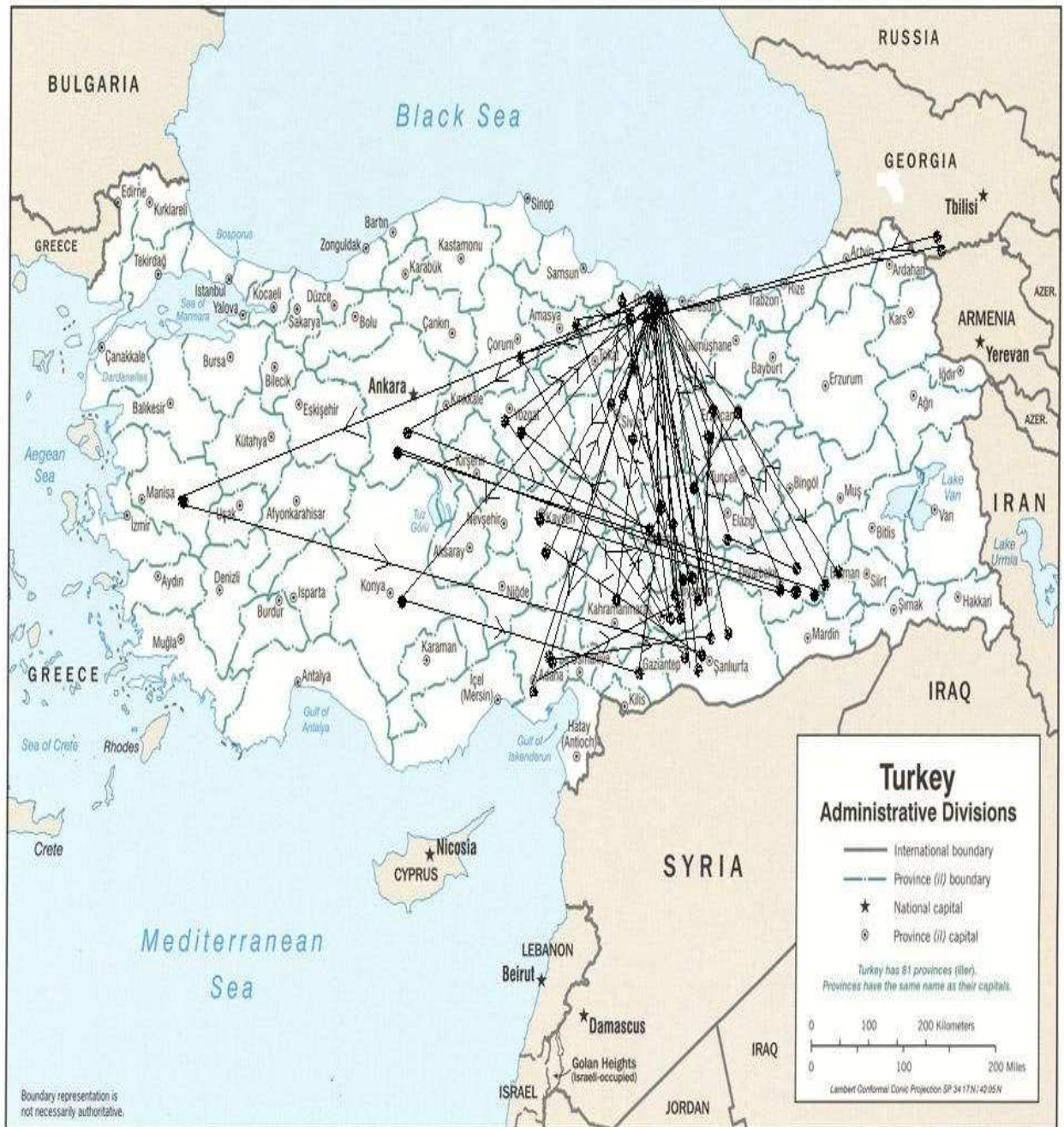
Finally, the exclusion from the state officers towards the workers was elaborated in this chapter. Again, Kurdish workers are the most vulnerable in that case. Their accommodation places frequently are changed by the gendarmes. This is one of the most problematic issues for the workers. Their criminal history is investigated by these officers at the beginning of the job. It creates an oppressive atmosphere on the workers. Moreover, workers are exposed to exclusion from these officers in the bazaar. The state politics and the attitudes of local people affect the behaviors of the state officers. Because of these reasons, workers live in a very limited sphere, where “other” people do not penetrate.

All in all, this study highlighted the inequalities in the seasonal agricultural labor market. Emphasizing different vulnerable groups enabled a more comprehensive look at the issue. In this sense, to focus on one group will enrich the literature on the issue in the future. To illustrate, Georgians are new immigrants in agriculture or women and child workers are workers whose subordination is not limited only to the employers. To study these groups specifically is a need for understanding and seeing migrant workers in a broader framework. Moreover, research which will concentrate solely on the relationship with the labor intermediaries and workers can contribute to the literature significantly because there is an “otherization” of “others” in that issue. Putting forward the exploitative relations of different groups in specific analyzes will provide meaningful information. In conclusion, focusing on the determined vulnerable groups and relations will provide researchers in the future with a chance of enriching the literature on the seasonal migrant workers in agriculture.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE MIGRATION MAP OF SEASONAL MIGRANT WORKERS



Base 802947AI (C00355) 4-06

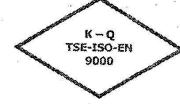
Source: Drawn by the author

APPENDIX B

THE COMMISSION DECISION REPORT ABOUT HAZEL-NUT HARVEST  
WORKERS WAGES



T.C.  
ÇALIŞMA VE SOSYAL GÜVENLİK BAKANLIĞI  
Türkiye İş Kurumu Ordu İl Müdürlüğü



SAYI :B.13.1.TİK.2.52.00.00.090/248356  
KONU : Fındık Hasadı İle İlgili  
İşçi Ücretleri

16./07/2008

ZİRAAT ODASI BSK,  
ORDU

2008 yılı fındık hasadı döneminde çalışacak geçici tarım işçilerine ödenecek ücretler ile ilgili Komisyon Kararı ekte gönderilmiştir.

Bilgi ve gereğini rica ederim.

M.Turan ÇUHADAR  
Vali A.  
Vali Yardımcısı

EKLER:

EK.1-Komisyon Kararı (2 sayfa)

DAĞITIM

- Kaymakamlıklara
- Ordu Belediye Başkanlığına
- Saraycık Belediye Başkanlığına
- Tarım İl Müdürlüğüne
- SSK Ordu Sigorta Müdürlüğüne
- Ziraat Odası Başkanlığına
- Ordu F.T.S.Koop. Müdürlüğüne
- Belediye İş Sendikası Başkanlığına
- Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğüne
- Ordu Ziraat Mühendisleri Odası

Bahçelievler Mah.Adnan Kahveci Bulvarı No 19-ORDU

Telefon: (0452) 2335676-77 Faks: 2331461

e-posta:ordu@iskur.gov.tr Elektronik Ağ: www.iskur.gov.tr

ORDU İLİNDE 2009 YILI FINDIK HASADINDA ÇALIŞACAK İŞÇİLERE ÖDENECEK ASGARI ÜCRETLERİN BELİRLENMESİNE AIT TOPLANTI TUTANAĞI

TARİH :13.07.2009  
KARAR NO :2009/1

- 1-Fındık toplama işlerinde 13 yaşından küçük, çalışmayacak kadar yaşlı ve hasta işçilerin çalıştırılmamasına.
- 2-Fındık toplama işlerinde çalışacak işçilere yaş ve cinsiyet ayrımı yapılmaksızın: 14-15 yaş arası işçilerde günlük net. 12.00 TL 16 yaş üzeri işçilerde ise, yemek bahçe sahibince (İşverence) karşılanması halinde günlük net 20.50 TL. Yemek işçilere ait olursa günlük net 23.00 TL. ödenmesine.
- 3-Toplanan Fındıkların taşınması işinde çalışacak çuvalcılara ve aşçılara. işçi ücreti + % 50 fazlası. Kilo ile toplandığında ise 35,00-40,00 TL. ödenmesine.
- 4-Katireya ( Katırı ile birlikte) 90,00 TL.ödenmesine.
- 5-Kilo hesabı ile fındık toplayan işçilere kilo başına 0,20 KRŞ ödenmesine.
- 6-Patoz saat ücretinin 80,00 TL olarak ödenmesine.
- 7-İşçi başlarına (yöremizde dayı başı olarak bilinmektedir) işçi ücreti + her işçi başına 1,00 TL ödenmesine.
- 8-İşçilerin buldukları yerlerinden çalışma yarlerine naklinin insan taşımaya uygun araçlarla yapılmasına ( otobüs,minibüs ve otomobil gibi).
- 9-Ordu il sınırı dışından gelecek işçilerin dönüşte kolaylıkla vasıta bulabilecekleri yere götürülmesi işverenlerce (bahçe sahiplerince) karşılanmasına.
- 10-İşçi ücretlerinin işin bitimi müteakiben ödenmesine.
- 11-İşverenlerin çalıştırdıkları işçilerin kimliklerini muhtarlıklar aracılıkları ile Tarım Müdürlüklerine veya Ziraat odalarına ve yahut en yakın güvenlik birimlerinden birine bildirmelerine, kimliği bulunmayanlara iş verilmemesine.
- 12-İşverenler ve Köy Muhtarlıkları emniyet bakımından huzur bozucu olaylara anında müdahale ederek durumu en yakın güvenlik birimlerine bildirmelerine.
- 13-İşverenler ve Köy Muhtarları işyerlerinde ve bölgelerinde çalışan işçilerde oluşan her türlü hastalıklara müdahale ederek en yakın Sağlık Kuruluşlarına bildirmelerine.
- 14-Ordu İl Sınırları içerisinde Fındık tarımı işlerinde çalışan işçilerin ücret tespitleriyle Ordu Valiliği yetkilidir. Bunun dışında tespit edilen ücretler geçerli değildir. Bu tür ücret belirlemeye yeltenen kişi veya kuruluşlar hakkında yasal işlem yapılmasına.
- 15-Fındık toplama işlerinde çalışacak işçilerin çalışma koşulları Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığınca yayınlanan "Tarımdan Sayılan İşlerde Çalışan İşçilerin Çalışma Koşullarına İlişkin Yönetmelik" hükümlerine göre sağlanacaktır.
- 16-Yıllardır süregelen geleneklerimize uygun olarak alınan bu kararların Valilik Makamının Onayını müteakip yürürlüğe konulmasına oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

OLUR

13.07.2009  
Adem YILMAZ  
Vali V.

M. Turan CUHADAR  
Vali Yardımcısı  
Komisyon Başkanı

Yücel KARAMAN  
Türkiye İş Kurumu  
İşgücü Piyasası Şefi

Katılmadı  
Dursun KARADAĞ  
FTSK Yönetim Kurulu  
Başkanı

Hasan SERDAR  
Fatsa Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

İhsan İLMAZ  
Güngöntepe Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Ahmet KAYA  
Akkuş Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Zekeriya KIŞLA  
İkizce Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Süleyman SAKA  
Çaybaşı Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Mehmet BAYHAN  
Ordu Ziraat Müh. Odası  
İl Temsilcisi

İsak HACIKAMİLOĞLU  
Tarım İl Müdürü Yar.

Katılmadı  
Ömer AYDIN  
Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası  
Başkanı

İsmail SİRİN  
Ünye Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Vedat DEMİR  
Gölköy Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Vekili

Erdoğan AKKİTİ  
Aybastı Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Hasan SAPAK  
Kumru Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Vekili

Bekir BİÇİM  
Korgan Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Hakan YALIN  
Türk-İş Ordu İl Temsilcisi

2331461  
Atilla KAPTAN  
Ordu Sigorta İl Müdürü Y.

Katılmadı  
Necati AVCI  
Ordu Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Hikmet POYRAZ  
Ulubey Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Özcan AYDIN  
Kabadüz Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Erol ÇELİK  
Kabataş Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkanı

Osman USTA  
Perşembe Ziraat Odası Yön.  
Kurulu Başkan Vekili

Ekrem YURTTUTAN  
Muhtarlar Derneği  
Yön. Kurulu Üyesi

ORDU İLİNDE 2008 YILI FINDIK HASADINDA ÇALIŞACAK İŞÇİLERE ÖDENECEK ASGARI ÜCRETLERİN BELİRLENMESİNE AİT TOPLANTI TUTANAĞI

TARİH :04.07.2008  
KARAR NO:2008/1

- 1-Fındık toplama işlerinde 13 yaşından küçük, çalışamayacak kadar yaşlı ve hasta işçilerin çalıştırılmamasına,
- 2-Fındık toplama işlerinde çalışacak işçilere yaş ve cinsiyet ayrımı yapılmaksızın yemek Bahçe sahibince (İşverence) karşılanması halinde günlük net 19,50 YTL. Yemek işçilere ait olursa günlük net 22,00 YTL. ödenmesine.
- 3-Toplanan Fındıkların taşınması işinde çalışacak çuvalcılara ve aşçılara, işçi ücreti + % 50 fazlası, Kilo ile toplandığında ise 35,00-40,00 YTL. ödenmesine,
- 4-Katırcıya ( Katırı ile birlikte) 90,00 YTL.ödenmesine,
- 5-Kilo hesabı ile fındık toplayan işçilere kilo başına 0,195 YKRŞ ödenmesine,
- 6-Patoz saat ücretinin 80,00 YTL olarak ödenmesine,
- 7-İşçi başlarına (yöremizde day başı olarak bilinmektedir) işçi ücreti + her işçi başına 1,00 YTL ödenmesine,
- 8-İşçilerin buldukları yerlerinden çalışma yerlerine naklinin insan taşımaya uygun araçlarla yapılmasına (otobüs,minibüs ve otomobil gibi),
- 9-Ordu il sınırı dışından gelecek işçilerin dönüşte kolaylıkla vasıta bulabilecekleri yere götürülmesi İşverenlerce (bahçe sahiplerince) karşılanmasına,
- 10-İşçi ücretlerinin işin bitimi müteakiben ödenmesine,
- 11-İşverenlerin çalıştırdıkları işçilerin kimliklerini Tarım Müdürlüklerine, Ziraat odalarına muhtarlıklar aracılıkları ile en yakın güvenlik birimlerine bildirmelerine, kimliği bulunmayanlara iş verilmesine,
- 12-İşverenler ve Köy Muhtarlıkları emniyet bakımından huzur bozucu olaylara anında müdahale ederek durumu en yakın güvenlik birimlerine bildirmelerine,
- 13-İşverenler ve Köy Muhtarları işyerlerinde ve bölgelerinde çalışan işçilerde oluşan her türlü hastalıklara müdahale ederek en yakın Sağlık Kuruluşlarına bildirmelerine,
- 14-Ordu İl Sınırları içerisinde Fındık tarımı işlerinde çalışan işçilerin ücret tespitleriyle Ordu Valiliği yetkilidir. Bunun dışında tespit edilen ücretler geçerli değildir. Bu Tür ücret belirlemeye yeltenen kişi veya kuruluşlar hakkında yasal işlem yapılmasına,
- 15-Fındık toplama işlerinde çalışacak işçilerin çalışma koşulları, Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığınca 16.04.2003 tarih ve 25081 sayılı R.Gazete de yayınlanan "Tarımdan Sayılan İşlerde Çalışan İşçilerin Çalışma Koşullarına İlişkin Yönetmelik" hükümlerine göre sağlanacaktır.
- 16-Yıllardır süregelen geleneklerimize uygun olarak alınan bu kararların Valilik Makamının Onayını müteakip yürürlüğe konulmasına oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

OLUR  
15.07/2008

  
Ali KABAN  
Vali

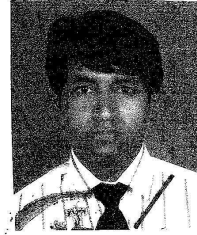
APPENDIX C

AN INSTANCE OF AN AUHORITY LETTER

TC  
FATSA ZİRAAT ODASI BAŞKANLIĞI  
TARIM ARACI (DAYIBAŞI) YETKİ BELGESİ

ADI SOYADI : HALİL EKER  
BABA ADI : ALİ  
ANNE ADI : FERHA  
DOĞUM YERİ / YILI : VİRANŞEHİR/01,02,1985  
İL / İLÇESİ : ŞANLIURFA/VİRANŞEHİR  
KÖYÜ / MAHALLESİ : GÜZLEK KÖYÜ  
TC KİMLİK NO : 39692107322  
ADRES BİLGİLERİ : KATİP KASIM MAH.KATİP KASIM CAMİİ SK.  
34/101 EMİN ÖNÜ İSTANBUL

TELEFON : ---



Hasan SERDAR  
Yan. Kur. Bşk.

İŞVERENE AİT BİLGİLER :

ADI SOYADI : ERDOĞAN YILDIRIM  
BABA ADI : CEMALETTİN  
ANNE ADI : EMİNE  
DOĞUM TARİHİ : 01,05,1970  
TC KİMLİK NO : 35777077924  
İL / İLÇE : ORDU / FATSA  
KÖYÜ / MAHALLESİ : BUHARI KÖYÜ  
ZİR. ODA SİCİL NO : 28-206  
TELEFON NO : 05364602034  
TALEP ED.İŞÇİ SAY.: 10 KİŞİ

İŞ BU TARIM ARACI YETKİ BELGESİ (ARACI – ELÇİ – DAYIBAŞI) İL VALİLİĞİNİN 26.06.2008  
TARİH VE 663 SAYILI YAZISI GEREĞİ DÜZENLENMİŞ OLUP **20.09.2008 TARİHİNE KADAR**  
**GEÇERLİDİR.** 08.08.2008

EKİ : 1 Adet İşçi Listesi



(1)

T.C  
FATSA  
CUMHURİYET BAŞSAVCILIĞI  
ADLİ SİCİL BÜROSU

SAYI : 0981-2008-008827 / 10:07  
KONU : ÖZEL İŞ - İŞÇİ  
VERİLECEĞİ KURUM :  
KİMLİK TÜRÜ : NÜFUS CÜZDANI

FATSA  
08.08.2008

SORGULAMAYA ESAS KİMLİK BİLGİLERİ :

TCKN :  
SOYAD AD : EKER, HALİL  
BABA ADI : ALİ  
DOĞUM YERİ :  
DOĞUM TAR. : . . 1985  
ANA ADI : FERHA  
NÜFUS K.Y. : /

ADLİ SİCİL KAYDI SORGULAMASI SONUÇLARI :

YUKARIDA KİMLİK BİLGİLERİ BULUNAN KİŞİNİN ADLİ SİCİL KAYDI YOKTUR.

~~08.08.2008~~  
YETKİLİ MEMUR  
60300 .(E.K)

CUMHURİYET BAŞSAVCISI Y.

NOT : BU SORGULAMA YUKARIDAKİ ' SORGULAMAYA ESAS KİMLİK BİLGİLERİ ' NE GÖRE YAPILMIŞTIR.

APPENDIX D

A SAMPLE OF AN AUTHORITY LETTER

**TÜRKİYE İŞ KURUMU**  
**GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ**

..... İl/Şube  
Müdürlüğü'nce verilen  
**TARIM ARACI BELGESİ**

İşbu belge ..... / ..... / .....  
tarihine kadar geçerlidir.

Mühür ve İmza

-----

İşbu belge ..... / ..... / .....  
tarihine kadar geçerlidir.

Mühür ve İmza

5

**NOT:**

a) Bu belge, Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Aracılığına İzin Verilmesi ve Aracıların Denetimi Hakkında Yönetmeliğin 7. maddesi gereğince verilmiştir.

b) Aracı belgeleri bir yıl süre ile geçerlidir. Bu süre sonunda aracılığı sürdürmek isteyenlerin belgeleri, sakınca görülmezse Kurumca yenilenebilir. (Yönetmelik Mad.8).

c) Aracılık, yalnız aracı belgesi almış olanlarca yapılır. Başkasına devredilemez, vekalet yoluyla da yürütülemez. (Yönetmelik Mad. 10)

d) Tarımda iş ve işçi bulma aracılığı yapmak üzere, izin verilen gerçek veya tüzel kişiler,

12

1) Tarım işverenleri ile düzenleyecekleri iş sözleşmelerini Kurumda düzenleyeceklerini ya da Kurum dışında düzenleyecekleri sözleşmelerin bir örneğini düzenleme tarihinden itibaren iki hafta içinde Kuruma teslim edeceklerini,

2) Kurumca onanmış bu sözleşmede gösterilen dışında, harç, masraf ve ücret alamayacaklarını,

3) Tarım mevsimi süresi içerisinde derleyebileceği işçilerle ilgili bilgileri içeren bildirim belge isteme ve yenileme sırasında Kuruma vermeyi,

13

4) Ücretlerin kararlaştırılan ödeme biçimine göre, işverence (Günlük-Haftalık-Aylık) her işçinin kendisine ödenmesini sağlayacaklarını,

5) Çalışan tarım işçilerinin günlük brüt kazançlarının Asgari Ücret Tespit Komisyonu Kararında belirtilen ücretin altında olmayacağını,

6) Tarım işçilerinin barınma yerlerini, yeme ve yatma durumlarını sağlığa ve barınma koşullarına uygun biçimde sağlama ve düzenlemeye çalışacaklarını,

14

7) İşverenle yapmış olduğu sözleşme hükümlerine uygun olarak her işçinin hakkını işveren karşısında savunacaklarını, usulsüz ve haksız uygulamaları derhal Kuruma bildireceklerini,

8) Tarımda İş ve İşçi Bulma Aracısı belgesi verilen gerçek veya tüzel kişiler, yaptıkları çalışmalara ilişkin olarak yılda bir kez Kuruma rapor vermek zorundadır. Bu raporun içeriği ve biçimi ile verileceği tarihin Kurumca belirleneceğini

kabul ve taahhüt ederler.

15

APPENDIX E

SOME PHOTOGRAPHS OF MIGRANT WORKERS



07 August 2009, Ordu



10 August 2009, Ordu



08 August 2009, Ordu



17 August 2009, Polatlı



11 August 2009, Ordu



12 August 2009, Ordu

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