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The State, Entrepreneur, and Labour in the Establishment of the Iranian Copper Mining Industry: The Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine 1966-1979

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Chapter Four

A Developmental State and the Formation of a Working Class

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the formation of the Iranian developmental state, specifically the relationship between the mining entrepreneurs and the state in the expansion of the Iranian copper industry during the founding of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. This chapter shifts focus to the forces at the grassroots, mainly workers and their interaction with the employers, to determine the prevailing industrial relations and how they changed over time. It discusses the different agents' engagement with substantive new rules regulating the employment relationship including methods of control, wages, hours of work, etc. The procedural rules are also reviewed, encompassing management and control of the relationship between the employer and employees such as bargaining and resolution of disputes.³⁵⁹ These will be traced through diverse consequences in three specific time periods, based on the type of ownership and the mode of management of the mine, as follows:

Kerman Mining Corporation (KMC), owned and managed by Iranian entrepreneurs, the Rezai brothers, from 1966-1967.

Kerman Copper Industries (KCI), a joint company owned and managed by the Rezai brothers and a British mining company, Selection Trust, from 1967-1971.

359 Edmund Heery, Nicholas Bacon, Paul Blyton and Jack Fiorito, *The Sage Handbook of Industrial Relations* (eds) Edmund Heery, Nicholas Bacon, Paul Blyton and Jack Fiorito (London: Sage, 2008), 3.

The Sarcheshmeh Copper Mines of Kerman Corporation,³⁶⁰ owned and managed by the Iranian state with the consultancy of the American mining company Anaconda from 1972-1979.

Each period has a distinctive stance towards industrial relations. In two, the classical views of the relevant management, although organised along different lines, involved mainly coercion and paternalism³⁶¹ which derived from the type of employer, social and economic conditions, nature of the work, and the path of traditional labour relations.³⁶² The argument also takes into account the nature of capital, as represented by Iranian entrepreneurs and the Iranian state, ownership, management, the composition of the workforce, labour formation, labour relations, labour migration, and living and working conditions. Principally, these factors shaped the policy of labour relations in specific social and economic conditions, leading to the creation of the following categories of worker: semi-peasant/semi-worker, semi-worker/semi-peasant, and worker. This point particularly refers to the imposition, at different stages, of new conditions from above interacting with the ways that workers, as well as local society, contributed to the formation of their living and working conditions.

The findings indicate that the developmental structure of the Iranian copper industry at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, and its transition from private to state ownership, generated an advancement in industrial relations and working conditions. As the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was nationalised and its affairs came under a state-owned company,

360 Its name was changed to National Iranian Cooper Industries Corporation (NICICO) in 1976.

361 Keith Grint, *The Sociology of Work: Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005).

362 Massimiliano Mollona, *Industrial Work and Life: An Anthropological Reader*, in Massimiliano Mollona, eds. Geert De Neve and Johnathan Parry (Oxford: BERG, 2009), xv.

any policymaking regarding the management and strategy of labour relations in part represented the state's approach towards expansion of the working class and development of local society. This turn towards social phenomena and implementing a paternalist welfare policy and mode of management led to the establishment of a paternalist developmental state. Subsequently, those specifications bonded with the workers' rural background created a specific class relation, leading to the formation of a negative class compromise which echoed during the 1979 Revolution (the idea of negative class compromise was explained in the introduction and will be elaborated later in this chapter).

Social Stratification and Regional Conditions

The contemporary social stratification of rural Iran was transformed by two major events: the land reform of 1963 and the 1979 Revolution. As was explicated in chapters two and three, the former was a mega plan which aimed to address some social-economic aspects of Iranian society, including the question of property ownership in rural areas. The land reform targeted growth in rural productivity, leading to a surplus rural workforce which was shepherded out of agriculture into industry.³⁶³ The plan also aspired to transform the power structure in countryside areas across the country. The programme was prearranged and supported by the US, as part of their strategy to implement social and economic reform in selected countries from the global south, including Iran, in an attempt to create a barrier against Soviet expansion. As a result, US President JF

³⁶³ Colin Leys, *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), 8.

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Kennedy and his administration set up an advisory team to assist undeveloped countries to advance their economy and improve social welfare.

The social stratification in the Sarcheshmeh community during the 1960s was similar to the general hierarchy of rural areas in Iran, characterised by peasant proprietors and petty landowners, sharecroppers and tenant families, and landless villagers known as Khushneshin.³⁶⁴ In addition, Sarcheshmeh hosted seasonal immigrants from the city of Rafsanjan, in the hunt for work at harvest time.³⁶⁵ There were also traders to facilitate the economic relationships between urban areas and the countryside, exchanging rural produce in the cities and vice versa. For instance, the traders brought tea and sugar from the cities, the two staples of everyday consumption in country areas, although the rural way of life made the locals little dependent on the urban economy.³⁶⁶ The wealthy locals usually left the area during the winter to avoid the worst of the weather.³⁶⁷

The Sarcheshmeh region was deprived before the start of exploration operations in 1966. Poverty was rife, and with the exception of a few major landowners, most struggled under the harsh conditions. The rural population suffered from a shortage of rudimentary services such as clean water, electricity, and medical care. The vast majority were illiterate due to the lack of educational services in the area. The village of Pariz was the regional hub for providing primary public

364 Ashraf and Banuazizi, *Class in Pahlavi Period*, Encyclopaedia of Iranica.

365 Abbas Khaleqinejad, "Pishineh-ye Sarcheshmeh" [Sarcheshmeh's Past], *Cheshmeh Magazine*, no. 4, 1384[2005].

366 As the locals frequently mentioned in their interviews with the author, the tea and sugar cubes had been the two staple goods consumed in the locals' everyday life.

367 Selection Trsust Archives, *The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970*, 1.

services, therefore, people from Sarcheshmeh had to take a long journey to Pariz for necessities such as medical care. Reza Niazmand described Sarcheshmeh in following words:

“On my first visit to Sarcheshmeh there were a few families who lived like people of the Stone Age. There were no facilities and no wealth. Each family had huts dug two metres down into the ground and they used tree branches for rafters (Pictures 1). Some people even kept their goats in their huts. Each family had a few walnuts trees and a small piece of land, around 200 m², which was planted with vegetables. None of them had ever seen a bathroom, or a school — let alone a doctor in their lives.”³⁶⁸

According to the observation of one of Selection Trust’s team, regarding the local diet:

“The diet of the peasant population was very poor and deficient in vitamins and protein, especially for young children. Their food supply consisted of a couple of pieces of unleavened bread and goat milk curds dried into small hard balls, about the size of a very small lemon. This may be supplemented by walnuts, dates in autumn, or by dried apricots, but this would be unusual. Meat was an infrequent part of the diet. Local lamb or mutton is expensive by any standards, since its average price was around 20p per 1b. It was the height of luxury for a family living on less than 30 per diem, which is about the equivalent monetary value of the income obtained by local peasants.”³⁶⁹

368 Aliasghar Sa’idi, *Technocracy VA Syasatgozari-ye Eqtesadi dar Iran be Revaiat-e Reza Niazmand* [Technocracy and Economic Policy Making in Iran: Reza Niazmand’s Narrative] (Tehran: Loh-e Fekr, 1394 [2015]), 238.

369 Selection Trsust Archives, *The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970*, 48.



**Figure 1: Local houses before the formation of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine
(Image courtesy of NICICO)**

The area had poor accessibility to the bigger cities such as Rafsanjan. Public transport was infrequent. On the rare occasions that locals went to the nearby cities, the journey would take many hours, or in some cases even days, along narrow tracks through the mountains. The region was known for its severe weather and heavy snow in winter, when any such journey would naturally be even more hazardous.

The 1966 drought in the Sarcheshmeh area was calamitous for the people whose living was dependent on a fragile subsistence economy; their main source of income coming from small-scale farming or animal husbandry. As a former mineworker, originally from Pariz, explained: his family had around 20 sheep, and they had to sell all of

them to survive the drought. They were obliged to travel tens of kilometres to Yazd in the neighbouring province to sell them, since there was no buyer in the region. Each sheep was sold very cheaply, for 30 rials.³⁷⁰

The Local Entrepreneurs and the Formation of the Semi-Peasant/Semi-Worker

As was described lengthily in chapter three, the Iranian mining entrepreneurs, the Rezai brothers, founded KMC³⁷¹ and started the first stage of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine in August 1966. The initial recruitment spread by word-of-mouth throughout the region, with no necessity for public media announcements or a recruitment agency. Most locals welcomed the project, because of the hardship generated from prolonged poverty. At first, the small scale of operation combined with chronic local unemployment produced a push factor in recruitment so that the company did not face a labour shortage. The vast majority of local peasant farmers and landless villagers were absorbed into the labour force. They were unskilled, with no experience in modern industrial employment, much less in mining. Moreover, they had been born and grown up in an agrarian community, totally at variance with a modern industrial order and the dominant social relationships in an urban society. The company then had to plan industrial principles, to socialise a rural workforce; not a smooth process with people who were raised in natural rhythms, unaccustomed to modern industrial discipline. The case was not unique, as reaction to coping with the world's new industrial order

370 Hassanpur. Interviewed by Author, December 24, 2013.

371 Kerman Mining Corporation

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varied according to regional characteristics as well as political and economic conditions. For instance, in the early 1900s, during the establishment of Iran's oil industry, the labourers with nomadic and rural backgrounds had difficulty adjusting to the imposed discipline in the workplace, and some even left their jobs.³⁷² However, half a century later in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, the same conditions were easily assimilated by the local workers who performed with much more flexibility.

To achieve early adaptability as well as reproduction of labour power for modern industrial conditions, the companies applied different means to control the workforce, to impose a new order, to implement an employment policy, and to design an appropriate industrial workplace. Therefore, those means including recruitment policy, wages, job promotion, training, disciplinary actions, along with welfare policy including housing and accommodation, shaped the company's approach to labour relations.³⁷³ The labour relations comprised two classical models, a coercive system and a paternalist system. The former refers to the period when forced labour was lawfully practised around the world. Slavery subjugated workers to draconian conditions with no autonomy in choice of their work, nor the privilege to make demands for their primary rights. The response of early capitalist employers to labour shortages was to institute coercive practices, particularly in the colonial states.³⁷⁴ Workers were

372 Touraj Atabaki, "From Amalleh (Labour) to Kargar (Worker): Recruitment, Work Discipline and Making of Working Class in the Persian/Iranian Oil Industry," *International Labour and Working-Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 168.

373 Jill Rubery and Frank Wilkinson, *Employer Strategy and Labour Market* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 26.

374 John Sender and Sheila Smith, *The Development of Capitalism in Africa* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 46.

often monitored in the workplace and strict rules could be introduced such as a ban on talking to fellow workers or even whistling, which were liable to be punished by a fine, or even dismissal.³⁷⁵ The transformation of social relations and the nature of the workplace, along with development of human rights, and coupled with the limitations of a coercive system to improve the efficiency of labour, heralded the widespread decline of coercionist discourse; eventually a paternalist approach to labour relations emerged.³⁷⁶

Although the idea of paternalism is one of the key arguments in feminism and gender studies, in managerial strategy it was applied to combat forced-labour employers and coercive labour relations. Paternalism is principally concerned with the promotion of social phenomena. It is determined by both persuasion and repression in the mode of management, with the objective of attracting workers to industry as well as boosting their productivity.³⁷⁷ For example, the scarcity of both skilled and unskilled workers led to the growth of industrial paternalism in France in the 19th century. Companies began offering housing, schools, health care and other social services to create more enticements for the labour market. In Iran, the oil industry was one of the earliest workplaces to introduce a paternalist social policy.³⁷⁸

375 Keith Grint, *Sociology of Work* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 118.

376 For examples see Donald Reid, "Industrial Paternalism: Discourses and Practice in Nineteenth Century French Mining and Metallurgy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27, no. 4 (October 1985): 579-607; Michael Burawoy, *The Politics of Production: Factory Regime under Capitalism and Socialism* (London: Verso, 1985).

377 Donald Reid, "Industrial Paternalism: Discourse and Practise in Nineteenth Century Mining and Metallurgy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27, no.4 (October 1984): 582- 584.

378 Kaveh Ehsani, "The Social History of Labour in Iranian Oil Industry: The Built Environment and the Making of Industrial Working Class 1908-1941" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2014).

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The two distinctive modes of management did, however, contain some common components which muddled the difference between them. This happened at KMC, where there was inconsistency in employment conditions, with soft elements from the coercionist approach and aspects of paternalism being applied. The KMC had no developed vision of labour productivity in the industrial workplace nor a strict agenda on enforcing industrial discipline: their method of management was still inspired by the traditional labour relations system of landlord-tenant.³⁷⁹ For instance, while the foreign managers were strict on punctuality as a principle in an industrial workplace, it took time for Iranian workers to adapt to the concept, and KMC displayed less concern over it.³⁸⁰

The top-down order also tended to engineer the class structure and to produce social stratifications based on a particular agenda. However, its aims may not be achieved as encouragement from above cannot solely determine the process; the agent from below also plays an active role in the procedure. As a result, the formation of social class, which here indicates the working class, is a combined procedure,

379 Patrick Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of Factory in Later Victorian England* (London: Methuen, 1980).

380 See Yahya Sotudehnia, *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no 471, Bahman 19, 1393 [February 8, 2015], 4; Akbar Ramazan Jalali, *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, Day 20, 1392 [January 10, 2014], 4; Da'i, *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no. 60, Bahman 1396 [February 2018], 4-6; Da'i is an agricultural engineer who was in charge of planting at Sarcheshmeh Copper Town. He has delivered a critical view on the presence of foreigners, mainly Americans, and their status in decision-making at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. He believed that the company did not give sufficient status to the Iranians, who were not allowed to be involved in decision making without the permission of foreigners. See Da'i, *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no. 516, Bahman 17, 1394 [February 6, 2016], 5. As will be discussed later in this chapter, Da'i's critique should be viewed with scepticism, because of the scarcity of a technologically trained and skilled workforce in Iran to run a mega project such as Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. The company was actually compelled to be more hesitant in engaging Iranians in leading positions. The government had no other option than to import technology and knowledge from developed countries. However, the company's recruitment policy and education system indicated that they intended to replace foreigners with Iranians in the near future. , Da'i himself denoted that the foreign workforces were well ordered, punctual, and delivered their task based on industrial principles, while those characteristics were less evident among the Iranian workforce.

arising from the interplay of various social forces. This is emphasised in Katznelson's argument on the development of a working class as a multilayer process which consists of four main levels: structure, ways of life, dispositions, and collective action.³⁸¹ The first level identifies the position of the worker in regards to property rights and an ownership network in society.³⁸² This structurally determines the social standing of the worker whose economic life is built upon wage labour in a capitalist system. The rigid economic structure usually neutralises the worker's move towards structural transformation. However, the worker's agency emerges in the second level, since living conditions develop the worker's contribution to setting a way of life within a specified framework. The choices at this level enable workers to actively frame their way of life based on their interests. This factor renders the way of life a conflict zone of different forces, mainly the state, the company and the workers who make every effort to embed their desires into it.³⁸³ The state intended to engineer the formation of the working class to imprint its own preferred model which can be identified through examining its social policies as well as its mode of governance. The third level is related to the workers' conception of change. It focuses on the workers' interpretation of their position in relation to other social groups and their living and working conditions in society. The fourth level is when the working-class agency is present in social-political trends, and embeds its

381 Ira Katznelson, "Working Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons," in *Working Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Pattern in Western Europe and United States*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 9.

382 *Ibid.*, 17.

383 The politics of social class in Pahlavi era facilitated and propagated a modern way of life to the Iranians included the industrial working class. That caused a social contradiction in the society which its radical presence was displayed in the social unrest of 1978, leading to the 1979 Revolution.

interest into the social processes.³⁸⁴ According to Katznelson, "Class is a junction term. Questions about the content of each level and about the connections between levels of class constitute the very heart of the analysis of class formation."³⁸⁵ Katznelson proposes an enhanced notion to deal with the complicated process of social class formation in comparison with classical division in the formation of the working class – class 'in itself' and class 'for itself', as elaborated by Karl Marx.

Recruitment and Wage

The KMC period ended in 1967 with nearly 60 paid employees at the mine.³⁸⁶ The early recruitment of the labour force was centred on a number of locals whose living conditions were improved from the time of their employment at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine; one former worker expressed it as a transformational incident in his life. He was initially employed at the age of 13 as a water carrier, to distribute drinking water amongst the workers as well as pouring water onto the drills to cool them down. His commencing wage was 42 rials per day in 1966. Three years later, in 1969, it increased to 65 rials per day for working as tunneller. According to Iran's labour law, which was approved in 1968 and came into effect from 1972, the minimum wage for a worker was determined at 50 rials for Area Three, which included Sarcheshmeh.³⁸⁷ Therefore, the initial wage, 42 rials, was

384 Ira Katznelson, "Working Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons," in *Working Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Pattern in Western Europe and United States*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 21.

385 Ibid., 22.

386 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 13, 2013.

387 Farshid Yazdani, "Hadeaqal-e Dastmozd dar Iran" [The Minimum Wage in Iran], *Goftogu Quarterly* 55 (1389) [2010]: 160.

lower than the minimum, indicating that the company benefited from a growing capital surplus generated from breaching the law and labour exploitation. This issue also exemplifies that the company ignored the fundamentals of labour reproduction, since it did not consider the role of local economic system which preserved the workers' choice to return to their previous jobs when they were laid off, or perhaps retired, or could receive higher remuneration in comparison with the company's payment, or to engage in temporary work during harvest time.³⁸⁸ Subsequently, the company's industrial relations malfunctioned with regard to worker reproduction, shaping semi-peasant/semi-worker rather than industrial worker.

The KMC brought in an eight-hour working day based on labour law.³⁸⁹ It also recognised overtime, however the payment was made under a different title called '*bakhshesh*', which means 'gratuity', 'tipping', and 'charitable giving'.³⁹⁰ In addition, the overtime payment was not transparent regarding the formula of payment, as the labour cards just stated overtime was paid without an exact sum being declared!³⁹¹

Replacing the title of *haq-e ezafeh kari* [overtime payment] with *bakhshesh* [tipping – charitable giving], exposes the KMC reductionist view towards the structure of labour relations determined by the labour law. From a terminology point of view, *bakhshesh* also means the quality of being kind, plentiful and largesse. A gratuity payment is often appreciated in society, but neither the force of the

388 See Marvin Harris, Labour Emigration among the Mozambique Thonga: Cultural and Political Factor, Africa: Journal of International African Institute 29, no. 1(January 1959): 5-65; C Perring, Black Mineworkers in Central Africa (New York: Africana Publ, 1979).

389 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 13, 2013.

390 Dehkhoda Persian Dictionary.

391 A. M. Macleod-Smith to Mr Gill Thomas, February 13, 1969.

law nor social pressure, to some extent, oblige people to tip or pay a gratuity. Therefore, gratuity as a title diminishes the overtime payment from a labourer's right to the employer's right. In other words, the employer is ascribed the status of deciding on a gratuity payment or not. However, it must be noted that the KMC entrenched the reduction at the discursive level, as the company did not actually neglect to make the overtime payment. It indicates that the employer intended to preserve its authority through reviving a traditional labour relations discourse, generated from the landlord-tenant system, in which the "employer" had a meaningfully upper hand in relation to the "employee". That was a strategic manoeuvre from the employer's side to bring a dominant discourse into line with its interests.

Using *bakhshesh* instead of *haq-e ezafeh kari* also represents the latest phase in a transitional period from a dominant traditional order in labour relations, determined in a landlord-tenant structure, to the modern labour relations.³⁹² It also exposes the private sector's attempt to preserve the spirit of traditional labour relations, the landlord-tenant, in a modern labour relations structure. The unclear payment and the lack of transparency in labour rights also enabled the company to keep the level of payment down without any approved documents, which gave it more control over the workforce through altering the point of reference and formula. It displays a mode of management lacking a modern vision towards an industrial

392 The first official consideration of the Iranian state regarding the relationship between workers and employers based on the new labour relations goes back to 1923 when the governor of Kerman issued a set of new regulations in support of the carpet weavers and made the employers responsible for improving the working conditions of the carpet industry in Kerman province. The labour conditions in the Iranian carpet industry were horrifying at the time. The carpet weaving workshops were usually underground, damp and with no natural light. Child labourers as young as 6 or 7 years old were very common.

organisation and industrial relations. Moreover, it confirms the state's weak inclination to impose the rule of the law in supporting the workers' rights against a private employer. That mainly originated from the governmental process which was controlled by a group of men who mostly came from important land-owning families. The same genre of people also occupied cabinet posts as well as senior civil service posts and commissions in the armed forces.³⁹³ According to a US report:

'The Iranian businessman displays a higher degree of avariciousness than his Western counterpart; the motive of profit maximization is extremely highly developed in him. He is apt to look upon labour costs as an unreasonable restraint on his profits and to cut these costs as ruthlessly as possible. Given these mental attitudes, it is only natural that Iranian employers look upon the labour laws with contempt and as manifestations of governmental weakness. They may therefore be expected to do all in their power to subvert these laws, both by taking advantage of whatever loopholes may present themselves and by bribing government officials to administer them to the advantage of themselves.'³⁹⁴

Despite the lack of intention to implement labour law from the employer's side, it also discloses the paucity of the workers' awareness of their rights. Therefore, the gaps that occurred in labour awareness as well as implementation of the law, along with a faultline existing between the employer's view on labour relations and the labour law, generated an exploitive condition, which led the

393 US Government, "Basic Survey of Labour Affairs in Iran," 26 September 1955 (888.06/9-2655) (U.S.NA)

394 US Government, "Basic Survey of Labour Affairs in Iran," 26 September 1955 (888.06/9-2655) (U.S.NA).

employer, here the KMC, to misuse the circumstances in order to preserve its dominant position in the labour relations.

The KMC, then, intended to preserve the spirit of the landlord-tenant system which steered the company to resist full adoption of new labour relations' regulations, leaving their practices lagging far behind what the state had established in its own industrial operations. Indeed, it will become clear in due course that a considerable transformation in labour relations took place when the Iranian state took over the mine.

Training

The remote location of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine partially determined the KMC's choice in labour recruitment. Despite the inevitable skill deficit in the area, the plan was to keep labour costs down by hiring unskilled locals and training them, rather than employing people from outside. Training unskilled labourers whose professional experience was mostly restricted to agriculture and animal husbandry had to be a complicated process. The Rezai brothers transferred a technical team from their chromite mines in the Esfandagheh and Faryab areas, also located in Kerman province, to Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine for training purposes.

The team of instructors conducted the training sessions which covered two main clusters of technical matters as well as health and safety codes. However, the output was a group of workers whose skills were obsolete, discontinued years ago in the projects run by top global mining companies, since the instructors' knowledge was out-dated. This issue was exposed in the next level of the project when a team of

experts from a British mining company, Selection Trust, was appointed to retrain the workers.

The KMC workers' obsolete skills increased hazardous situations and reduced the productivity of their labour. For instance, many injuries were caused by applying the unsafe technique of using iron scrapers to remove misfires, or using picks instead of pinch bars to remove loose rocks;³⁹⁵ also hand-lashing rock for loading onto trucks, which is usually carried out using a rail-sliding method. The old lashing practice engaged more workers on the task and significantly reduced their efficiency. Moreover, the ends of the tunnels were not ventilated, not even by using compressed air. The airways were located far from the workers' mouths and supply hoses were too long. Therefore, the low volume of oxygen and long hoses soon exhausted the labourers due to breathing difficulties.³⁹⁶ In this case, each end needed five workers as well as having a back-up, while in the advanced method the number of workers required was reduced to three, with no need of back-up from a specialist team.³⁹⁷

Accommodation

Most of the local workers had been living in villages a long distance from the mine site. The undeveloped roads and transport in the area made their daily commute between operation sites and the villages impossible. Pariz, the village from which most workers came, was roughly 9 km from the mine, which meant the workers spent hours to

395 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 6.

396 Ibid., 6.

397 Despite the passage of around half a century, we still see the problem, mostly in privately owned mines in Iran. The most recent tragic mining incident, which happened in Zemestan Yurt coal mine, caused 43 dead in May 2017.

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reach the site on foot. The company then decided to install the workers next to the site. A number of tents were erected for short-term settlement, with four or five people allocated to each to rest in and sleep. However, the tents were inadequate to protect the workers against Sarcheshmeh's long, harsh winters. Subsequently, the company built two accommodation blocks for the labourers and one block for other staff, but the poorly appointed buildings could barely stand the severe weather. Roofs were not waterproof; even light rain was driven into the accommodation. Once, a roof was blown clean away by a gust of wind.³⁹⁸ The blocks were not divided into separate rooms; all labourers lived together. A number of coal-fuelled heaters were installed, around which the labourers usually lay down during their rest periods, with their feet towards the heaters and their heads fanwise into the room.³⁹⁹ The workers had to stay on site for a working week from Saturday to Thursday afternoon. They had one day off weekly, Friday, to visit their families, but had to go back to work on the Saturday. The locals called it *Haftah Khofti*.⁴⁰⁰ Workers were also given two days off a month.⁴⁰¹

The KMC flouted the development of welfare policy and paid even less attention to implementation of a modern industrial strategy in the workplace, indicating an absence of strategic vision on labour

398 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 2-3.

399 In the next stage, the contribution of Selection Trust in the project produced a fair impact in improving labour conditions based on promoting a paternalist view towards labour relations. They indeed criticised the poor standard of accommodation provided by the KMC and stated unequivocally, "Considerable modification had to be carried out to make the labour blocks reasonably habitable." See Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 1-2.

400 Esma'ili, Interviewed by Author, December 11, 2013.

401 The lack of consideration towards the workforce among the mine owners was also common in developed countries in the past. An old report from England, albeit from the 1840s, indicated that less than one in fifty English mine owners paid attention to labour conditions and labour welfare. See reports from commissioners enquiring into children's employment (1843) quoted in D. Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 183.

reproduction. That is shaped by the company's view, originating from traditional labour relations of landlord-tenant which structurally conveyed some coercionist components as well as some elements of paternalism.

The embedded landlord-tenant structure at the time was still nurtured by reviving the traditional hierarchical culture in which the worker was identified as a serf, whose labour provisions did not need to be developed beyond basic living and working conditions. That was very much the case within the mining sector, chiefly due to the configuration of the mining industry in Iran which, at the time, was a labour-intensive operation with Iran's undeveloped mining industry relying on cheap labour to generate surplus revenue.⁴⁰² Moreover, the rough nature of the work absorbed workers with poor job prospects who had no choice but to accept the conditions, with little awareness of their labour rights. Likewise, at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, the workers were usually landless villagers. The remote location of the mine sites also made the workforce less accessible and out of sight, causing shortcomings in their protection by the labour law.

The policy preserved the framework of traditional labour relations whose structural function was reproducing landlord-peasant relationships. Therefore, the KMC as a "modern organisation" distanced itself from its key structural duty of reproducing a worker through implementing modern labour relations, instead creating a semi-peasant/semi-worker.

402 Ricardo Godoy, "Mining: Anthropological Perspectives," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 14 (1985): 206.

Local Resistance

The emergence of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine brought a set of changes to the locals' economic conditions and their social lives. It fashioned a new type of labour relations in a traditional community which had been founded on a mechanical solidarity.⁴⁰³ The force of capital and industrial discipline reorganised the social structure and set up new institutions, leading to the transformation of the dominant agrarian order into a modern industrial order. Urban forces were felt in the area, with modern social elements and urban goods gradually finding their way into the locals' everyday lives. In an interview about the history of Sarcheshmeh, one of the ex-workers still excitedly remembered the first time he saw a tuna steak in the hands of a member of the KMC surveying team.⁴⁰⁴

The establishment of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was generally welcomed by the majority of locals, including the landless villagers, since the company created job opportunities. However, the social dynamism was sometimes less in tune with modern transitions, and the agents of traditional order from the host community occasionally stood against what undermined its authority and the dominant order. In a project founded on extracting natural resources, the initial threat would be against the local land ownership. As a result, most challenges originated from people who either owned land or had an influential status based on traditional power structure in the local

403 Emil Durkheim drew the concept of labour to the midpoint of his social thought to develop his argument on formation of social solidarity based on division of labour. He categorised societies into two groups based on mechanical and organic solidarity. The former founded social relations in a traditional society and the later constructed a modern society. See Emil Durkheim, *Division of Labour* (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

404 Hassanpur. Interviewed by Author, December 24, 2013.

community. Inevitably, the project sometimes brought a level of tension to the area. The company preferred to apply a paternalistic approach, with an emphasis on justification and convincing people, rather than force and threat. One day, when a camera was set up for mapping, one of the locals stopped the operation saying “Here is my property. What’s this? I haven’t died yet, but you’re digging my grave.” He received the reply: “No, we’re not digging your grave. There is an Emamzadeh [Holy man] here who’s going to make us all rich!”⁴⁰⁵ In relations with workers, the Managing director of KMC, Mahmud Rezai, strove to generate loyalty through his presence among the workers. One former worker said that Rezai was a humble man, treating the workers as though he were their father. On his two visits to the site, he shook hands with the workers and spent time talking to them.⁴⁰⁶

Since traditional authority framed the social order in the Sarcheshmeh region, local notables played a crucial role in social organisation. Therefore, the KMC approached the village headman, Hossein-Aqa Amiri, to mediate between the company and the locals.⁴⁰⁷ He was appointed as the residents’ delegate in negotiations with Nikkhah, who had been introduced as the representative of the company. Amiri initially offered his land to the company to erect tents and store machinery.⁴⁰⁸ His influential status convinced some landowners to

405 Abbasi, Interviewed by Author, December 11, 2013.

406 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, November 24, 2013.

407 Max Weber presented three types of authority: legal, traditional and charismatic. The division, as the very titles reveal, is based on the origin of the power in each type. In the local community such as Sarcheshmeh area the traditional actor played a significant role in power structure of the society. See Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation* (New York: The Free Press, 1964).

408 Naser Amiri, *Shab-e Khatereh, Esteqamet-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no. 516, Bahman 17, 1394, 6.

sell their land to the company, in exchange for shares in the mine, and some future lifelong benefits.⁴⁰⁹

The Emergence of Paternalism and Formation of Semi Worker-Semi Peasant at KCI⁴¹⁰

The mega scale of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine determined KMC to run the project in partnership with a British mining company, Selection Trust. They established a joint company, KCI, with day-to-day administrative management remaining in the hands of the Iranians while Selection Trust managed the operation on site. That was in the late 1960s when dominant colonialism had been eliminated and the global south turned to a post-colonial era. The multinational companies in neighbouring countries had already shifted to a paternalist mode of management, where a series of principles focused on welfare policies and improving labour conditions. The presence of Selection Trust then opened up a new chapter at the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. It criticised KMC's traditional view and instead instigated paternalism to enhance the employees' living and working conditions, leading to a growth in labour productivity. Selection Trust also aimed to detach semi-peasant/semi-workers from their previous source of income, land, encouraging them to make an autonomous economic life from what they had inherited from their rural background. The process at that time transformed a semi-peasant/semi-worker into a semi-worker/semi-peasant.⁴¹¹

409It was verbally claimed by a local ex-worker, but he did not show evidence to prove it.

410Kerman Copper Industries Corporation

411 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 18.

The KCI restructured the company and reconsidered the legislation, with the intent of introducing a restricted industrial discipline as well as modifying its view on labour relations and welfare policy. The company then strove to impose a new organisational discipline, designing places and creating spaces that would dictate an industrial order, tearing apart the workers' peasant boundaries and rural ties. For instance, the company faced a problem with the local workers' timing and punctuality, because of a discrepancy between the concept of time in a modern workplace and that in a rural community which was based on the rhythm of nature. The local workers had no conception of timing and organisational relationship in a modern society. In their interviews, the ex-workers all mentioned timing and punctuality as a major concern from the KCI's time onwards. Stern supervisors did not accept an excuse for showing up a little late at work and the workers were even penalised for a short delay.⁴¹² The KCI also confronted the challenge of introducing a modern organisational hierarchy and setting the protocol for the organisational relationship. For example, the local workers were in the habit of walking into offices and interrupting conversations, demanding that their problems or requirements be addressed immediately.⁴¹³ This issue originated from their rural culture and the structure of relationships in the landlord-tenant system, whereby landlords could be contacted directly at the request of the peasants in their care.

412 In their narrative about the past, the workers generally appreciated those strict rules, however their feeling sometimes shows that the strictness was too much. The difference is viewed when a few years later the company recruited skilled workers from Khuzestan province who used to be employed at Iran Oil Industry. They had already good fortune to work in the modern principle, then they had internalised modern industrial principles including punctuality and good time-keeping.

413 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 14.

The work discipline was not just restricted to the workers, but affected Iranian graduate employees as well. Most of them had expected a desk job rather than to be working in the field. If they were asked to go and work in the field, they interpreted the request as mistreatment, or even an insult.⁴¹⁴

Wages, Training, and Labour Background

The KCI's initial assessment showed that the project required many more workers to proceed. The local labour force was the primary target for labour recruitment. After two years, in 1969, staff numbers had increased to 468, of whom 400 were locals, 60 were British experts, and 8 were Iranian experts.⁴¹⁵ More than 90 per cent of the workers were from Kerman province, with some 75 per cent from villages in the immediate vicinity of the mine.⁴¹⁶ As a result, 1,400 to 1,800 people as family members of the local workers benefited directly from the company, thus representing a significant impact on the local's living conditions.

Although the KCI improved its labour conditions, its strategy did not cover the wages. Again it must be noted that, owing to widespread poverty and famine at the time, the wage payment had considerable influence on the lives of local employees.⁴¹⁷ For instance, a tunneller was paid 65 rials per day in 1968-9 and he stated that the wage was

414 Ibid, 13; An Iranian engineer also revealed that in the early days of his career in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, once his American supervisor replaced him with a worker and asked him to do the workers' job, but he declined as he believed that was disrespectful as he was educated personnel. The supervisor replied that he would be dismissed if he disobeyed and explained that he must be perfectly knowledgeable in the task of his workers, otherwise he could not supervise them. Therefore, he must work practically to learn the tasks. See Ahmad Ahmadinejad, "Yek 'Omr ba Ma'dan va Karkhaneh" [A Lifetime in the Mine and Plant], *Asr-e Mes Online*, <http://asremesonline.ir/news/print?Id=10273>

415 National Library and Archive of Iran, Letter from Sazeman-e Barnameh VA Budjeh [Budget and Plan Organisation], Azar 23, 1348 [December 14, 1969].

416 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 11.

417 Ibid.

quite sufficient at the time.⁴¹⁸ A rail track worker and shot firer was paid 58 rials per day at the end of the Selection Trust period in 1970.⁴¹⁹ A driver holding a private driving license was paid 216 rials; and a bus driver could earn 516 rials per day; equivalent to three to eight times more than a worker.⁴²⁰ Mine workers had two free days per month, although they were paid for holidays.⁴²¹

The establishment of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine started during the expansion of industrial and constructional projects across the country from the mid-1960s onwards. There were a number of significant projects developing in Kerman province, such as the Zarand Coal Mines, the Iranian Steel Corporation, power stations, and Jiroft Agriculture and Industry. Therefore, the province would not be able to supply manpower for all those concerns, including Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, simultaneously. Consequently, the project had to deal with a critical labour shortage.⁴²² Moreover, the range of skills on offer in Kerman province was very limited. Tradesmen such as carpenters, mechanics, plumbers or electricians were very rare, especially if trained to a decent standard. The company then decided to import labour from outside Kerman province including Iranians from other ethnic backgrounds, such as Armenians or Azerbaijanis.⁴²³ Azerbaijanis were known as the finest artisans in Iran, which enabled them to obtain positions in a project which required a high level of industrial skill. In those days, technical schools had not been developed throughout Iran, which effectively preserved the privilege

418 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, November 24, 2013.

419 Hassanpur, Interviewed by Author, December 19, 2013.

420 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 15.

421 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, November 24, 2013.

422 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 12.

423 Ibid., 12.

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of the Azarbaijanis to hand down their skills to the younger generation, with few contenders from other parts of Iran. Therefore, they were a valuable source of labour for the industrial owners, and many Azarbaijani skilled workers were employed at all types of project.⁴²⁴

The KCI also premediated a training system to educate the local forces and inexperienced personnel. Accordingly, teams of instructors were set up for each particular job. For instance, the tunnelling training team comprised of technicians named Wallace, Simmons, Taggart, Winsor, and Briggs who had a hard mission instructing the local workers, because the old workers had already been instructed in unproductive and unsafe techniques by the KMC. Therefore, the training was slow, as the instructors had to break the old habits and prepare the workers to carry out the same task through a different method. However, the KCI's report acknowledged that local workers' progress was beyond their expectations, and left the instructors highly satisfied. Based on its previous experience in training unskilled workers in other countries, mainly in Africa, Selection Trust concluded that the surprising outcome in training unskilled local workers was due to the locals being naturally intelligent and well capable of learning new skills promptly.⁴²⁵

The nature of working in a mine site is generally typified as a hazardous, masculine and challenging process. Digging, drilling and cutting tunnels which usually takes place in remote areas requires distinctive advanced skills, as well as some level of courage and

424 The existence of antipathy to outsiders from other parts of Iran, particularly Azerbaijan, cannot be denied. See Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 12.

425 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 14.

independency, compared with those required to assemble parts in a well-maintained workshop. Despite the fact that Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine is an open pit mine, which is different from underground mining, the exploration period needed workers experienced in digging and delving into the earth which is essentially an underground working task.

Drilling in a mine is a delicate operation in terms of technique, technology and proficiency. It requires a high level of skill, which inexperienced locals at Sarcheshmeh were unable to deliver. The KCI then came to an agreement with a British company, Geoprosco International, signing a contract on 6 February 1968. Later two Boeing 707 cargo aircraft were chartered to carry six rigs from London to Tehran. The first three rigs arrived on site on 13 April 1968, with the rest in place by 18 April.⁴²⁶ At one stage, for several months all 27 of Geoprosco's staff were involved in three shifts, working seven days a week, which obliged them to live on site for a long period of time.

The surveying operation in an opencast mine required tunnelling to remove earth and extract samples to estimate the mine's extent as well as the ore's type and grade. As opposed to drilling, tunnelling could be done by the locals, after training. Selection Trust retrained the former tunnelling teams at KMC as well as training new ones in a modern technique, consisting of a series of more advanced, efficient and safer methods. The outcome was completion of twenty-two tunnels during the KCI period. Each tunnel had one foreman and four workers. A general foreman controlled tunnelling tasks and a

⁴²⁶ Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 3.

supervisor monitored the whole tunnelling operation. The hierarchy in tunnelling from higher position to lower position is: 1- Boss 2- General Foreman 3- Foreman 4- worker. Any employee's position could be identified by his uniform and helmet. A foreman had a vertical line, rather like the number 1, on the front of his helmet. A general foreman's helmet had two vertical lines, like 11. Labourers had dark blue uniforms with their name and labourer number inscribed on their helmets. The supervisory staff wore a brown and cream uniform.⁴²⁷

Welfare Policy

Housing and Accommodation

Accommodation during the KCI period improved in both quantity and quality, however the company did not reach their quality goals due to the rapid rise in the number of workers. The accommodation of workers and junior skilled staff was generally of a poorer standard than that of senior staff. They constructed three accommodation blocks for the labourers with basic facilities including a few lavatories and a single communal bathroom with six showers, accessible through a common entrance hall. Water was heated in a large steel tank with a ballcock valve that rendered the flow of water insufficient for more than three to four showers simultaneously.⁴²⁸ The labourers' blocks that had been built in the KMC period were just renovated,

427 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 5, 2013. After the 1979 Revolution all personnel, including labourers, staff, and managers, were required to wear the same uniform. The idea was rooted in the principles of social equality which were of concern on the revolutionary agenda.

428 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 42.

with no extension in the early years. Space was insufficient for the number of workers, so as many as 14 men had to exist in one room.⁴²⁹ In early May 1968 there were ten rooms serving as sleeping accommodation for senior staff of the Geoprosco team, in the former junior staff block. There were four rooms in the office block and three in the mess block. One room in the office block was also used as an occasional office. In addition, there was a single block of semi-detached houses for two married couples on site and a two-bed caravan. Then, an eight-roomed living block and additional duplex block accommodation were added to the complex as married quarters.⁴³⁰ At the end of 1969 more accommodation was added as follows: four duplex accommodation blocks as married quarters; one block of ten single rooms; one block of twelve twin rooms; one block of eight double rooms; two double rooms in the mess block; one room for the doctor at the hospital; and a caravan and a two-bedroom house at Khatunabad.⁴³¹

The most junior skilled staff had a separate block, which was in rather better condition as they had larger and more comfortable rooms big enough for five to six people.⁴³² There were 31 furnished buildings, an office, warehouse, laboratory, bar and restaurant, powerhouse, and pilot plant.⁴³³ The accommodation for the workers was barely adequate.⁴³⁴

429 Ibid., 41.

430 Ibid., 39.

431 Khatunabad was an area close to Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine.

432 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 41.

433 Sazman-e Barnameh va Budjeh [Budget and Plan Organisation], Letter, 23/09/1348[December 14, 1969.

434 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 40.

The workplace and the residential quarters were designed on the class division of manual worker and skilled staff. Also, nationality and ethnicity were the main characteristics that distinguished people by task. Marital status, and whether an employee was accompanied by family on the site had much to do with the settlement. Within a few months of Selection Trust's takeover, the two former labourers' barracks were converted into a warehouse and new rooms to house labourers, two or three to a room. The blocks of the labourers and technical staff were divided, so that on entering the technical staff building one saw a corridor twenty metres long with doors to rooms opening to the left and right. Each room had two beds, and a lavatory and bathroom were located at the end of the corridor.⁴³⁵ Class division was also applied in welfare services such as food provision, transportation and healthcare. Iranian and British technical staff shared the same canteen, but the workers' canteen was separate. Labourers and technical staff were also allocated separate buses.

Health, Food, and Leisure Time

Further to KCI's developmental plan to provide basic facilities on site for the employees, the company built two new separate clinics, one for skilled staff including Iranians and foreigners, and one for the labourers. The company also prepared daily food for all employees in exchange for some 60 to 70 rials a month, which was much lower than real cost, and was deducted from their wages. The dishes were

435 Khosro Ehyai, *Khaterat-e Nokhostin Mohandes-e Iranye Mes-e Sarcheshmeh* [The Memoirs of the First Iranian Engineer in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine], Mes Press Online, accessed <http://mespress.ir/news/?Id=2231>

good in terms of ingredients and quality.⁴³⁶ In a report following a visit to Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, a Selection Trust observer also noted that the catering was very good. He commented, “In an exploration camp, such as Sarcheshmeh, a good standard of catering is vital to the morale and health of the staff.”⁴³⁷

Leisure time activities are a contemporary phenomenon originating from the modern mode of everyday life. Some key factors such as income, occupation, and education determined the leisure activities, however, as a cultural phenomenon, they were also dependent on other variables such as social structure, cultural institutions, and dominant value systems. For instance, the agrarian community which is built upon a natural rhythm and traditional value system does not generate much spare time for leisure. However, that was not so much the case for Sarcheshmeh locals. Their religious nature, with its keen attention to the rites and ceremonies of the faith, was a significant part of their social lives. Even when they had become more accustomed to modern life, the preference of the local Sarcheshmeh workers was still to spend time at home with their families, or to visit relatives in their villages.⁴³⁸

However, the workforce at KCI was not restricted to the locals and there was a significant number who came from other provinces and

436 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 5, 2013.

437 Selection Trust Archives, Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine project, Selection Trust report by Jack Thomson, July 16, 1968, 2.

438 Some other studies acknowledge that this was a common character among the workers from other geographical regions. More than 90 per cent of workers in Arak said that their favourite leisure activity was spending time with their families. An interesting point is that, according to Assef Bayat, even the industrial workers in Tehran did not spend their time in the coffee houses there; the coffee houses were in fact mostly used by migrant construction workers and the homeless. See Assef Bayat, “Farhang va Ravand-e Shodan-e Kargaran-e Karkhanejat-e Tehran” [The Culture and Proletarianization of the Factory Workers in Tehran], *Alefba*, no. 4, Azar 15, 1362[6, December, 1983], 103; Farhang Ershad “Migration and Life Style: Work and Leisure in an Industrialised City of Arak” (PhD diss., Chelsea College, 1978).

countries outside Iran. Leisure time was a major issue, as the non-local forces were in a remote area with limited social interaction, far from their families. Therefore, financial privilege and high salary was not always persuasive enough to induce people to work in a mining site such as Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. Creation of a supportive atmosphere became a key concern for companies operating in such circumstances.

In the early stages, there were no leisure amenities on site which made staying there tough for non-local labourers and technical staff, especially for foreigners who had to spend four to four-and-a-half months on site without contact with their families. Local newspapers were at least one or more days late, and English-language newspapers were even more out-of-date by the time they arrived.⁴³⁹ However, conditions did improve. A cine projector was brought on site and a number of dart boards were set up for the use of staff.

Labour Conflict and Land Use Conflict

The embedded class relationship imbalance in capitalism emanated from private ownership of the means of production, but in certain conditions it can be transformed, by means of class compromise. This evolves from the working-class agency, enforcing its will on the social and political climate. It can also occur through enhancing the two sources of working class power: structural power and associational power.⁴⁴⁰ The former derives from the status of workers in a tight labour market as well as the location of a particular group of

439 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 50.

440 Erik Olin Wright, "Working Class Power, Capitalist -Class Interests, and Class Compromise," *American Journal of Sociology* 105, no. 4 (January 2000): 957-1002.

workers in the industrial sector.⁴⁴¹ In a certain conditions, the two types of power give the workers the upper hand in challenging their employers or negotiating with them by collective bargaining. Therefore, the workers used their means of power to remove barriers impeding their ambitions and oblige the employers to reconsider labour interests. Moreover, with reference to the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, the assembly of workers at KCI, mainly comprised of local manpower, on occasion were able to reshape the structure of class conflict because it could merge with the land use conflict; since landownership as a source of power enhanced the local workers' advantage in grappling with the company.

Returning to the structural power of the workers, the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine confronted labour shortage at a certain point during the year. The issue arose from the long absence of workers on two occasions; first was the long national holiday of Nowruz (New Year holiday), when it was expected that the workforce would be absent for two weeks. The second was at planting and harvest time, when some peasant-workers left their jobs to work on their own small holdings or on their landlord's land. Absenteeism is a common problem worldwide which can be rooted in uncertainty about job security, insufficient payment, and a non-attractive welfare policy. For instance in France in the 19th century, mining was one of the business sectors which provided the lowest supplementary income to its workforce. Then, miners' resistance was projected by seasonal absenteeism as workers joined in regional grain, grape, or potato harvests; with a preference for flexible schedules which allowed for the comings and

441 Ibid., 962.

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goings.⁴⁴² Labourers entered the mines as soon as there was an agricultural crisis, but when other job possibilities arose, including rail construction, the young disappeared.⁴⁴³ To resolve the problem, the business owners introduced a permanent job contract, increased wages, improved work conditions, and promoted social policies.

Sometimes in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine the labourers also resisted industrial discipline in the workplace, specifically when a foreign supervisor was in charge. In one case, a foreign supervisor who exercised rigid control was injured one night by a worker from Pariz, who had been egged on by fellow villagers. The company identified the attacker and dismissed him the next day.⁴⁴⁴ However, the company sometimes demonstrated less authority against local employees who were disobedient or misbehaved. For example, subsequent to the KCI's offer, one small landowner traded a share of his land to the company, and also agreed to sell the rest later. Meanwhile, the company offered him a job as a concession to prevent him from trouble making and to secure his cooperation in the future. However, the reward did not properly succeed, and the company was sometimes faced with disobedience and ill-discipline from him.⁴⁴⁵ The Iranian managers tried to appease him, as the worker still had some power based on his landownership, while the British who had little knowledge about the local power relations questioned why the company did not bring disciplinary action against him.⁴⁴⁶ That power

442 Michelle Perrot, "On formation of French Working Class," in *Working Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and United States*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986), 78-79.

443 Ibid., 79.

444 Hassanpur, Interviewed by Author, December 19, 2013.

445 That was most likely a technique from the locals to force the company to buy land at a higher price to get rid of the trouble making.

446 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 12.

also originated from a structural base, as the mine was in the early stages of exploration and the company was not well-established. Moreover, it was the state's intention to preserve a decent consideration to the locals based on the structural relationship of villagers with the state. In the case of an escalating dispute between the company and the powerful local employees, it could disrupt developmental procedure, leading to financial loss for the company.

In general, Sarcheshmeh was peaceable until the months leading to the 1979 Revolution. The workers brought a number of collective actions to present their discontent to the authorities, but all had been minor incidents which never led to a critical disruption. Only two minor strikes occurred during KCI's management. Both strikes were run peacefully, lasting just a few hours. The first strike was by Geoprosco workers, the drilling contractor, because the company did not make an overtime payment, which was caused by an accounting error.⁴⁴⁷ The second strike occurred among contract workers involved in the pilot plant construction.⁴⁴⁸ Both strikes were swiftly resolved with minimum conflict. The lack of collective bargaining during this period was because, in the newly established mine, the workers had not yet unified under a collective identity. That was also partly rooted in the scarcity of organisational power among the workers — however, there was a good level of satisfaction among the workers which was due to the company's welfare policy combined with the locals' poor economic background, which was the case for the vast majority of the workers at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. The labour wage protected their families from a chronic shortage of the

447 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Opperation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 14.

448 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Opperation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 14.

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necessities of life and relieved their deprivation. Moreover, the state kept an eye on the industrial relations, which is observed in the state's responses to petitions received from the workers against the employers. Despite the fact that the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine workplace had not become an organised "proletarian" environment in terms of exhorting the company through collective bargaining, individual workers nevertheless made personal demands.⁴⁴⁹ The labour law introduced an internal judicial council to the workplace, as well as an external court for matters which could not be resolved internally. Despite this judicial system, each citizen could bypass the whole process and send a petition to the central authority, which was the Shah. The bottom-up route of making a complaint through the Royal Investigation Office enabled ordinary people to seek redress in different ways.⁴⁵⁰ The Royal Investigation Office referred the matter to the relevant authority, and followed up the result.

Petitioning is a worldwide practice to place "demands for a favour or for the redressing of an injustice directed to some established authority".⁴⁵¹ It is a channel to facilitate communication between the governor and the people. Petitioning the Shah was a tradition in Iran as well. However, after the Constitutional Revolution the petitions were mostly referred to the newly established legitimate power centre, the Parliament.⁴⁵² The rise of Reza Shah reconstructed the channel of

449 The poor state of the archives in Iran regarding people's petitions related to the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine caused some difficulties in this study, as the few preserved documents mostly contained personal issues.

450 For further explanation on the tradition of Arizeh Nevisi see Siavash Shohani, "Arayez, Rahyafte be Tarikh-e Forudastan: Barresi-ye 'Arayez-e Asnad-e Majles-e Shora-ye Melli'" [An Approach towards History of Subaltern: A Study on Petitions in Documents of National Parliament], *Ganjineh-ye Asnad* 79 (1389): 42-79.

451 Lex Heerma Van Voss, "Introduction," *International Review of Social History* 46 (2001): 1.

452 Mansureh Ettehadiyeh Nezamafi, *Majles VA Entekhabat* [The Parliament and the Election] (Tehran: Nashr-e Tarikh-e Iran, 1375[1996]), 23.

petitioning between the Shah and the people, as he stated “I am obliged to look after the oppressed and to liberate them from the oppressors. I will permit all my countrymen to bring their complaints directly to me and to request redress directly from me.”⁴⁵³ The significance of petitioning to the rulers firstly is rooted in the central government receiving the opinions and feelings of the ordinary people.⁴⁵⁴ This helps the central authority avoid resistance brought about by a lack of concern for people’s demands by the local authorities. Secondly, the right to petition works as a safety valve.⁴⁵⁵ If petitioning provides citizens with the opportunity to express their demands and grievances, at the same time it enhances the legitimacy of the rulers.⁴⁵⁶ It needs to be indicated that the lack of labour unions and labour syndicates also prompted the workers to send their grievances to the Shah instead of a related syndicate.

Reviewing petitions presented to the Royal Investigation Office against some senior staff at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine shows that the Office considered the demands, referring them to the appropriate authorities for further investigation, and followed up the results. For instance, in a petition to the Shah from a local employee, Ahmad Sarcheshmehpur, who had been dismissed, he complained against Colonel Auhady, a senior company man who was head of security for KCI.⁴⁵⁷ The initial indication is that Auhady’s power, which derived

453 Habib Ladjevardi, *Labor Unions and Autocracy in Iran*, Syracuse (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 12.

454 Lex Heerma Van Voss, “Introduction,” *International Review of Social History* 46 (December 2001): 1.

455 K. Tenfelde and H. Trischler, eds., *Bis vor die Stufen der Throns. Bittschriften und Beschwerden von Bergarbeitern* (Munich, 1986), 14 Quoted in Lex Heerma Van Voss, “Introduction,” *International Review of Social History* 46 (December 2001): 4.

456 Serhan Afacan “State, Society and Labour: A Social History of Iranian Textile Workers, 1906-1941” (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2016), 18.

457 Petition, National Library and Archives of Iran, Kerman.

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from his organisational position as well as his background in the Iranian army, did not cause the villager to hesitate in lodging a grievance against him. That demonstrates the local's enhanced agency in challenging an authority and also the expectation that it would be considered by the central authority. In another petition, an engineer named Reza Dadashzadeh complained about what he claimed was the misbehaviour of his British supervisor.⁴⁵⁸ His radical nationalist sentiment will be extensively discussed later in this chapter. Ali Fasihi, a driver at Sarcheshmeh, also complained about being dismissed from his job.⁴⁵⁹ Tracing the correspondence regarding the petitions mentioned above, shows the system was followed in an orderly way, and a decision was duly given.

Shop floor conflicts, which rarely occurred, could happen between workers, such as when the workers sometimes demanded more food from the catering staff at the canteen, which could cause an argument and might lead to a fight.⁴⁶⁰ However, conflict was not just between workers and supervisors, but between Iranians and foreigners, too. Therefore, nationalist sentiments were a source of conflict not only among the Iranian workers, but also among the Iranian managers. Because of the clannish nature of the region, worker relations could be connected to events outside the workplace, so that any dispute or friction at work could quickly extend outside it. This could even lead to a conflict between two villages. Despite the fact that reports record

458 Petition, National Library and Archives of Iran, Kerman.

459 Petition, National Library and Archives of Iran, Kerman.

460 Selection Trsust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 5.

no constant problems leading to major disruption, some issues arose which will be discussed later in this chapter.⁴⁶¹

Land is a significant component in the structure of social relations in the countryside. Land ownership contributes to the formation of social status through its economic value as well as its importance as a social capital. It shapes part of the social identity of rural communities, specifically among those whose land ownership dates back to distant ancestors. As a result, any interference in their property ownership, such as mining development, does not occur without land-use conflict: the locals expect to be compensated by the company in return for giving permission to carry out mining operations on their land. "Treasure" is the common term applied to discovery of a mine deposit in Iran. The treasure, then, must be shared with the owner of the land at the time of discovery.⁴⁶² This could be interpreted also as the locals must have priority in receiving benefit from cash payments, employment prospects and social services.⁴⁶³ Therefore, for the locals, working at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was assumed not as a privilege but as an inalienable right. They expected that they should

461 In the interviews with the former workers, they rarely expressed discontent about the foreigners and their relationship with Iranians. Also, in Abbas Kamali, "Goftogu ba Aqa-ye Abbas Kamali, Kargar-e Ta'mirgah-e Ma'dan" [A Conversation with Mr. Abbas Kamali, the Worker of the Mine's Repair Shop], *Tohid Magazine*, 1361[1982], 4. *Tohid* was an internal magazine which started being published after the 1979 Revolution and it was the organ of Islamic Association of Employees of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex Corporation.

462 The well-known Iranian historian, Mohammad Ebrahim Bastani-Parizi states that "we, people of Pariz, have eaten Nun-e Jo, Dogh-e Go [Oat Bread and Cow Yogurt] and suffered hungeriness for thousands of years and perceive the copper mines as a stake to protect a treasure. Now see who are the main shareholders of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine and where is its money, which is equivalent to oil income, going?" See Mohammad Ebrahim Bastani-Parizi, *Az Pariz ta Paris* (Tehran: Nashr-e Khora, 1378), 301; in another quote he stated: "the people of Pariz must breathe the dust generated from extraction, and the trees of Mohammad Samani Pariz and Dargaz valley are dying due to acid rainfall, while the electrical wire, telephone cables, and transistors are supposed to be manufactured in Yazd [a city in neighbouring province]". See Mohammad Ebrahim Bastani-Parizi, *Sahifeh-ye Al-Ershad* (Tehran: Nashr-e Elm, 1384), 173.

463 Stuart Kirsch, *Mining Capitalism: The Relationship between Corporation and Their Critics* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 7.

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not have to compete with non-local workers. In effect, distribution of economic benefits can be one of the critical sources of conflict.⁴⁶⁴

The Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine had a hard task in convincing local inhabitants to sell their land and driving them to move to a new place. They would have to deal with a considerable number of people who owned land. The locals interrupted the exploration in a number of ways, such as blockading of roads, lying down in front of bulldozers, and sitting on a shot hole when it was ready for blasting.⁴⁶⁵ As mentioned before, Amiri and KMC's advocate, Mr. Nikkhah, were appointed to negotiate with the locals to justify the project. Amiri initially gave one of his own gardens to the company to gain the people's trust. It was an effective move on his part, but did not prompt all the local landowners to follow suit. The next step was that the KCI decided to act more boldly. Some people were faced with threats from Colonel Auhady,⁴⁶⁶ head of the company's security department. He was also appointed for land purchasing. Later, rumour spread that if owners did not sell their lands they would be banished to Abu Musa Island or Tunb Island.⁴⁶⁷ Another rumour also circulated that the mine would be expanded to a distance of four farsakh⁴⁶⁸ on four sides, and every village within that radius would be evacuated. The exploration operation also damaged the environment and natural

464 See Javier Arellando-Yanguas, "Mining and Conflict in Peru: Sowing the Mineral, Reaping a Hail of Stones," in *Social Conflict, Economic Development and Extractive Industry: Evidence From Southern Africa*, ed. A. Bebbington (London: Routledge, 2012), 89-111; Colin Filer, "Resource Rents: Distribution and Sustainability," in Ila Temu, ed. *Papua New Guinea: A 20/20 Vision*, Edition 1, Chapter 13, (Australian National University, 1997), 222-260.

465 Selection Trust repost, 25.

466 Ali Amiri and Mohammad Amiri, Interviewed by Author, December 16, 2013

467 Abu Musa Island and Tunbs Island (Greater and Lesser Tunbs) are small islands located in southern Iran in the Persian Gulf. They were recognised by Sarcheshmeh locals as remote places with very hot weather.

468 Farsakh, some call it farsang; in the past it was a unit of measurement of distance, and is still sometimes used by older people. 1 farsakh= 6km.

resources with chemical substances infecting the rivers, and harming the agriculture and animals. As a result, more locals decided to sell their lands and migrate to a new place.

Mahmud Rezai's meeting with the local community also settled the conflict, as he promised that if the mine reached the exploitation stage, three per cent of it would be transferred to collective local ownership.⁴⁶⁹ The landowners also came to an agreement with the company on a pension scheme which committed the company to pay a monthly pension to those who could not work in the company. The monthly payment was between 2,000 and 4,000 rials per month, according to the scale of proprietorship of each individual. For instance, someone who had 14 habeh⁴⁷⁰ was paid 2,400 rials per month.⁴⁷¹ Some landowners also reached an agreement with KCI and sold their land for varying prices. In one case in 1968-1969 the company bought 14 habeh for 8,000 rials per habeh.⁴⁷²

The KCI's negotiation with financial institutions to extend loans for the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine did not go well. Their negotiations with the Iranian state also had a similar result. Therefore, financial uncertainty led to a reduction of activity on site, until there was not enough work even to fill the workers' usual working hours. The working day that once began at 6:30 am shifted to a start-time an hour later at 7:30 am, and finished at 3:30 pm. Then, the company was compelled to suspend its activities at the mine, and work there stopped for two years. Although that was not good news for any of

469 Jokar, Interview by Author, October 16, 2013. He claimed that Rezai's written promise was signed and delivered to the locals, but no such document has been seen by this author to prove it.

470 Habeh: It is a unit of property and land ownership. Each plot of land is divided into six Dang, and each Dang is 16 habeh. Therefore, each property is divided into 96 habeh.

471 Mohammad Amiri, Interviewed by Author, December 16, 2013.

472 Mohammad Amiri, Interviewed by Author, December 16, 2013.

the employees, their newly acquired skills had nevertheless made them a qualified labour force for other projects across the country. They dispersed to various places, with a coal mine in Zarand in Kerman province one of their main destinations.

Selection Trust's team left the site too, leaving behind all their machinery and instruments, for they believed there was still some hope for the project. Ayatollahi-Musavi was in charge of the site, acting as guide for the representatives of companies and financial institutions who came on site for a survey.⁴⁷³ The company also kept five workers during the inactive years, including Mahmud Bastani-Parizi, Alijan Nurmohammadi, Mahmud Syah, and Amiri as caretakers of the company's property and equipment. The weather station was kept open to record all meteorological data. The KCI's efforts brought no results and ultimately, they left the project for good in 1971.

The Turning Point: New Management and Transformation from Semi-Worker/Semi-Peasant to Worker

As was described in the previous chapter, the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was nationalised in 1972 and the mine's affairs came under a state-owned company named SCMCK. The well-known Iranian technocrat, Reza Niazmand, was then appointed as the first managing director of the company. SCMCK reached an agreement with the US mining giant Anaconda to act as consultant to resume the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine project. The state muscled in to accelerate

473 Akbar Ayatollahi-Musavi, "Mes-e Sarcheshmeh Qabl az Jang-e Jahanye Avval Kashf Shodeh bud" [Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was Discovered before the WWI], *Asr-e Mes Online*, Tir 3, 1395 [June 23, 2016], <http://asremesonline.ir/news/?Id=10396>

the progression, with a very detailed plan and sufficient investment arranged so that the project would be completed in four years.⁴⁷⁴ The Parson-Jordan Company from the US became joint contractor and a British company, Binnie and Partners, contributed by supplying the water system. Later in 1977 a German company, Krupp Gmsh, and a Belgium company, Mechim, became involved in constructing the refinery.

SCMCK, as a state company, gave special consideration to the workforce and promoted the KCI's paternalist view to the next level. As was discussed in detail in chapters two and three, the post-war development of the welfare-state in Europe was based on Keynesian economic theory and its rapid expansion partly resonated from the growth of communism as a threat against the Western bloc. Socialism became the centre of thought, leading to a redefining of social phenomena to determine new state principles and launching a series of welfare policies to protect citizens against unforeseen incidents such as unemployment, illness, and aging. Therefore, the new social policy improved the living standards of the vast majority of people in the Western bloc, including the working class which was identified as the strategic social force in fighting against capitalism.

The idea of a welfare state inspired some developing countries, including Iran. The rapid growth of the price of oil in the late 1960s and 1970s provided the Iranian state with an enormous source of income, enabling it to introduce some welfare policies targeting the working class. However, the social programmes were not evenly

474 The giant project did not complete in four years because of a considerable shortage in infrastructure such as transportation as well as human resources. As a result, the mine practically reached operational stage in 1980.

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placed, as the growth of remunerated labour in terms of amount, social position, and job security expanded in the large new industries particularly oil, petrochemical, steel, and industrial manufacturing.⁴⁷⁵ This stemmed from Iran's industrialisation strategy, based on import-substitution. This forms a discrete labour market in comparison with an export-oriented strategy of industrialisation. The latter predominantly relies on low labour costs to keep the final price down, making it competitive on the international market, while the former targets the domestic market to make the country autonomous from outside market forces in relation to a particular commodity.⁴⁷⁶ Consequently, import-substitution laid the ground for specific industries to monopolise the domestic market with no strong competition and enabled them to raise their financial performance. As a result, the strategy of import-substitution and state protectionism was less in consideration of a reduction in labour costs, as it led to companies offering an enhanced welfare policy to attract the most skilled workers in competition with the others industries during the 1960s and 1970s when Iran's rapid industrial growth increased the scarcity of skilled labour.⁴⁷⁷ The uneven welfare policy covered a third of the total paid workforce in Iran, who received five times more income than workers in other industries and sectors.⁴⁷⁸ The remaining two thirds were semi- and non-skilled workers in the mining industry, construction, and small industries and services in urban areas.

475 Fred Halliday, *Iran: Dictatorship, Development* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 189-190.

476 M Bjorkman, L.S. Lauridsen, and H Secher Marcussen, "Types of Industrialisation and Capital-Labour Relation," in *Trade Unions and the New Industrialisation of the Third World*, ed. R. Southall (London: Zed Book, 1988), 99.

477 Assef Bayat, *Workers and Revolution in Iran*, 27.

478 *Ibid.*, 189-190.

The Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was distinguished as one of those companies to offer higher wages and advanced social services. In addition to the strategy of import-substitution which stimulated the advanced welfare policy at the mine, the quality of the policy and its dimensions were influenced by other factors. First and foremost, as detailed in chapter three, was the primary projection which indicated that the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine would deliver a high return in its operational stage. Therefore, the company could attain a sufficient level of profitability to be able to recoup its initial high investment in infrastructural welfare development such as housing. That permitted the managing director to allocate further funds to implement an enhanced social policy. However, the remote geographical location of the mine as well as its harsh environment, portrayed it as an unpleasant place to work, specifically to those coming from outside the region. The labour force therefore eschewed the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine as a desirable workplace, especially during those years of rapid industrial growth in 1960s and 1970s when the country was faced with a paucity of professional workers, including a skilled labour force, technicians and experts. In addition, the presence of American and European workers drove the managing director to pay more attention to improving social services. As Reza Niazmand stated “I planned to construct a modern copper complex in all aspects from technology to welfare facilities. We had to run highly developed social services to persuade the work force to stay at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine.”⁴⁷⁹ Last but not least, the presence of an American company at the mine inspired the company to view its social policies

⁴⁷⁹ Reza Niazmand, Interviewed by Author, June 4, 2016.

and labour force in the light of the American's stance.⁴⁸⁰ According to Niazmand, the presence of Americans greatly influenced the design of social policy and the establishment of welfare foundations at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine.

Recruitment, Wage, and Social Policy

The SCMCK called on former employees, who had meanwhile found positions in other companies during the gap years, to return to Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. The first person, number 1001, was registered as Mahmud Bastani-Parizi, and the second one, 1002, was Ahmad Hosseini-Hansinji. The rapid expansion of the mining industry in Kerman province, including coal mines in Zarand and the copper mine in Sarcheshmeh, intensified the possibility of a labour shortage in the agricultural sector.⁴⁸¹ Therefore, the company was driven to importing labour from outside Kerman province from such places as Azerbaijan and Khuzestan. The skilled workers from Khuzestan brought significant experience gained from establishing and maintaining one of the biggest oil refineries in the world, the Abadan refinery, which elevated them to the status of precious skilled workers for the country.⁴⁸² Motreqi, as the foreman of the workers

480 For further explanations about the dominant view in designing workplace and company towns in America see Margaret Crawford, *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of American Company Towns* (London: Verso, 1995).

481 Prime Minister Hoveida, to Madjidi, the head of the Budget and Plan Organisation. National Library and Archives of Iran, Kerman.

482 Fred Halliday stated that the Iranian oil industry made no significant contribution to the training required for a skilled industrial labour force in Iran. His claim needs further investigation. First of all, their numerical strength was not low in comparison with certain other industrial sectors. The skilled oil workers were also renowned, and their influence can be seen in the establishment of other heavy industries, including the Iranian copper industry. See Fred Halliday, *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 180. For further reading on trading workforce on Iranian oil industry see: Touraj Atabaki, *From Amalleh (Labour) to Kargar (Worker): Recruitment, Work Discipline and Making of Working Class in the Persian/Iranian Oil Industry*, *International Labour and Working-Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 159-175; Touraj Atabaki, "Oil and Labour: The Pivotal Position of Persian Oil in the First World War and The Question of Transnational Labour Dependency," in *Micro-Spatial*

from Khozestan, led his team to carry out major concrete construction work, such as fixing steel reinforcement, pouring concrete, and carpentry.⁴⁸³ They were settled on a specific road on the site, called Abadaniha's Lane. The labour shortage also obliged the company to import workers from other countries. Korea, the Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh became the main sources of skilled foreign labour, recruited through a US employment agency.⁴⁸⁴ For instance, the office administrative and secretarial positions required a proficient working knowledge of English language to support the multinational workplace. Because there were insufficient Iranian applicants with adequate English proficiency, the company then looked for qualified workers from other countries to fill secretarial vacancies. The neighbouring Pakistan had been in close contact with the British for a long time, so its people had adopted the English language to a great extent. Moreover, Pakistan's weak economy and proximity to Iran made it a source of cheap labour for Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. However, the office staff did not stay long at the mine and were sent back home due to certain issues raised after their arrival. These circumstances will be explained and discussed later in this section. The company also hired workers from South Korea to carry out all wiring and electrical work. They were settled in separate blocks on Korean Lane.

Despite importing workers from outside the region, the company preferred to focus on training local labourers, rather than outsiders,

Histories of Global Labour, ed. De Vito, Christian G., Gerritsen, Anne (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 261-289; Kaveh Ehasani, "Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization in Khuzestan's Company Towns," *International Review of Social History* 48 (2003): 361-399;

483 Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 5, 2013.

484 Mehdi Zarghamee, Interviewed by Author, November 3, 2016.

based on their assumption of a higher labour turnover among the non-local employees in comparison with a local workforce. The non-local workers were more likely leave their jobs and return home after the training period and working for just a short time, while labour turnover was less among local employees.⁴⁸⁵ To develop labour skills, the company considered a number of institutes for training purposes. The first group of workers was sent to the Markaz-e Amuzesh-e Mashinsazi-ye Arak [The Training Centre at Arak Machin Tools Manufacturing] for training, some went to the Advanced Industrial Centre in Isfahan, and others to a newly established training centre in Rafsanjan. Many were also trained on site at the mine. An American woman, Ms Marylou, also ran English courses for Iranians.

In addition, the company decided to train younger locals in different fields to prepare them for the wider labour market. A number of courses were promoted to the villagers and they were encouraged to send their older children to attend the programmes. Among the applicants, there were teenage girls from different villages, including 16 girls from Pariz who participated in programmes that taught English language as well as office tasks. The company facilitated their everyday transportation from Pariz to the mine and return. The programme promised a good future for the girls, however the local patriarchal culture inflicted social pressure on them and their families because working outside the home was not acceptable for the girls, especially in a workplace with unknown men. The locals labelled the girls, Dokhtaran-e Ma'dani [The Mine Girls], to differentiate them

485 Gerald LaMiaux, Interviewed by Author, December 7, 2015.

from other girls, applying much social pressure.⁴⁸⁶ However, one of those girls who has retired from Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine states that “we were pleased to go to the mine, because they respectfully treated us in the training centre and we were called ‘Miss’.”⁴⁸⁷

Along with the project development, numbers in the workforce increased, as the company had employed 46 foreign experts, 75 Iranian technical staff, and 561 workers up to the end of 1973 (table 1).⁴⁸⁸ The total employees, then increased to 1,310 in 1974, of whom 980 were workers, 261 Iranian technical staff, and 69 foreign experts.⁴⁸⁹ In the following year, 1975, the number of employees grew to 1,264 labourers, 534 Iranian technical staff, and 590 foreign experts. The total number of employees rose to 2,655 by 1980.

Table 1: Numbers in the Labour Force at the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine Project

	Total number of workforces	Iranian workers	Iranian staff	Foreign experts
1973	682	561	75	46
1974	1310	980	261	69
1975	2388	1264	534	590
1980	2655	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine Annual Report 1973 & 1974

486 Zahra Vosuqi, “[We Spent our Childhood in Sarcheshmeh], Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement, no. 516, Bahman 17, 1394 [February 6, 2016], 7.

487 Ma’sumeh Ebrahimi, “Neshast-e Khatereh” [Sharing Memories Meeting], Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement, no. 516, Bahman 17, 1394 [February 6, 2016], 7.

488 Sarcheshmeh Copper Company Annual Report, 1973, 10.

489 Sarcheshmeh Copper Company Annual Report, 1974, 10.

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Work was carried out in a single shift until early September 1974 with work hours from 7 am to 3:30 pm and a 30-minute lunch break from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon. However, the project development was behind schedule, therefore the company set up two shifts to compensate for the delay.⁴⁹⁰ To accelerate the pace of progression, it then decided to implement a three-shift working plan to be undertaken by 16 excavation machines. Each machine required four workers, hence 192 workers were engaged in working with the excavation machines over a 24-hour period.

Table 2: Sample of Workers' Daily Wages at NICICO

Occupation	Year	Wage (rial)
Guard	1972	140
Assistant Technician	1972	200
Assistant Builder	1973	120
Driver (Licence Level 2)	1972	320
Driver (Licence level 1)	1973	876
Assistant Driver	1973	342
Construction Worker	1973	100
Plumber	1973	320
Gardener-grade 2	1973	408
Assistant Gardener	1973	288
Mechanic	1973	350
Stockman	1973	120
Stockman	1974	240
Welder grade 1	1973	600
Carpenter- grade 2	1973	300
Carpenter- grade 1	1973	568
Assistant Carpenter	1973	120

Source: Houman Resource Records at NICICO

490 Sarcheshmeh Copper Company, Annual Report, 1974, 6.

The Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine paid a minimum wage of 120 rials per day to the unskilled workers in 1973 (See table 2). That was close to the 140 rials paid daily to Iranian oil workers. However, the fundamental difference was that the mine was still being established and was not yet operational, while the National Iranian Oil Company was well-established as a wealthy company.⁴⁹¹



Figure 2: Workers at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine 1976

Based on company legislation there were six weeks of work and one week of leave for the technical staff, called “R&R”. The company also provided free flights to Tehran for staff on R&R on its own light aircraft with a pilot from Pakistan.⁴⁹² Eventually the service was

⁴⁹¹ Mehdi Zarghamee, Interviewed by Author, November 3, 2016. Oil workers received the sufficient pay and developed welfare policy in comparison with the workers in other sectors.

⁴⁹² Nuhi, Interviewed by Author, November 26, 2013.

abandoned because the company realised that some local staff were selling their free tickets to other staff for cash.

The roads to the main villages, such as Pariz, were also improved to make commuting easier for those labourers who had settled off-site.⁴⁹³ The development of the road network allowed labourers to commute daily, which enabled them to stay with their families rather than remaining on site at the mine for the whole week. The Iranians and foreigners took different buses for everyday commuting to the workplace. Beverages and beer were provided on the foreigners' buses.

The company also established a cooperative company with an initial capital of 1,094,500 rials,⁴⁹⁴ to deliver various types of financial services and support to the employees. For instance, it made an agreement with a home appliance supplier in Kerman city, a store named Nokhost belonging to 'Alemzadeh, to finance the appliances needed by the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine employees.⁴⁹⁵

The SCMCK served food at lunch-time every day for labourers as well as general staff. The number of canteens increased although they were still separated on the basis of class division of worker and general staff. Some nationalities, such as the Koreans, also had a separate canteen. The Iranian workers were served with different types of food of reasonable quality; however, some workers state that the technical staff received a higher quality of food and services than the workers.⁴⁹⁶

493 Sarcheshmeh Copper Company, Annual Report, 1973, 6.

494 Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, Annual Report, 1974, 10.

495 Nuhi, Interviewed by Author, November 26, 2013.

496 For instance, the general staff food usually came with soup and fruit, but workers not. Baqeri, Interviewed by Author, December 5, 2013; Hassanpur, Interviewed by Author, December 19, 2013. The

Although the statistics in footnote 503 show that more was spent on food than was standard for employee meals, and could be construed as a sign of corruption of some sort, embezzlement or fraud, there is no hesitation about the good quality and quantity of food based on worker testimonies.⁴⁹⁷

Construction of a Modern Town

The emergence of company towns dates back to the 18th century, with the onset of the industrial revolution in Britain, when dwellings for the workforce were built near the mining and industrial centres. In Iran, the early wave of industrialisation saw the construction of company towns from the discovery of oil in 1908 and the establishment of the oil industry in southern Iran. The first oil company town was Masjed Soleyman, constructed on an old rural centre which had a dynamic relationship with the town. Then the first industrial company town, Abadan, also related to the oil industry, was built around an existing urban community.⁴⁹⁸ By contrast,

food for each employee costed the company as follows: Breakfast - 71.7 rials; Lunch - 73.2 rials; and Dinner - 73.3 rials. The company deducted between 15 to 25 rials from their employees' wages for breakfast, and 20 to 50 rials for lunch and dinner. If an employee ate meals three times a day in the company then he would consume a minimum of 78.678kg of meat per month (2.772kg daily), 15.872kg of rice (512g daily), 85.932kg of vegetables (2.772g daily), 51.368 kg fruit (1.658kg daily), 520 eggs (16.8 daily)

497 An individual consumed on average 216 g meat, 403 g vegetable, 4 g rice and 304 g fruit a day in West Germany in 1977. See Stern magazine, no. 26, July 13, 1978, 95. The examples are not for the Iranian society, but it gives some clues for studying.

498 Hassan M Ashkevari, Barresi VA Shenakht-e Nemoneha-ye Mojod-e Marakez-e Maskunye Vabasteh be Sanaye'-e Aslye Keshvar [A Study of Residential Places Related to the Basic Industries in Iran], in Majmu'eh-ye Maqalat-e Seminar-e Shahrha-ye Sana'ti-Ma'dani [The Collection Articles Presented to the Conference of Industrial-Mining Towns], Vol. 3, Khordad 1370[April 1991], 137. For further reading see: Touraj Atabaki, From Amalleh (Labour) to Kargar (Worker): Recruitment, Work Discipline and Making of Working Class in the Persian/Iranian Oil Industry, *International Labour and Working-Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 159-175; Kaveh Ehasani, Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization in Khuzestan's Company Towns". *International Review of Social History* 48 (2003): 361-399.

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Sarcheshmeh Copper Town was designed for an economic function without dynamic relationships with the outside.⁴⁹⁹

Prior to nationalisation, the KCI asked the ‘Abdolaziz Farmanfarmaian and Associations Group’ in April 1970 to conduct a feasibility study for settlement of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine workforce. A French consultant, Monsieur Marc le Caisre, reviewed the Farmanfarmaian’s outcomes and ultimately a team from Selection Trust prepared the final feasibility study report. That report later became the key reference for construction of Sarcheshmeh Copper Town by the SCMCK and Anaconda.⁵⁰⁰

In contrast with the first industrial town, Abadan, which was designed by a British architect, James M. Wilson,⁵⁰¹ decades later an Iranian architect qualified to design a company town was contracted. The SCMCK then came to an agreement with the ‘Institute of Abdolaziz Farmanfarmaian and Associations Group’ and the ‘Consultancy Engineers Company’ to oversee the engineering services and to monitor its implementation.⁵⁰² The contract was signed on 25 April 25th 1973.⁵⁰³ A location for the town was identified 5 km south-west of the mine. The main construction subcontractors were Gostareh Maskan,⁵⁰⁴ Tesa-Armeh,⁵⁰⁵ Akam,⁵⁰⁶ Merkuri,⁵⁰⁷ and Fildeh.

499 Prior to the construction of Sarcheshmeh Copper Town, some non-local workers and staff lived on site and the rest mostly lived in Rafsanjan. That increased property demand in Rafsanjan subsequently caused a dramatic rise in house prices. The company prepared transport for everyday commuting from Rafsanjan and Pariz to Sarcheshmeh.

500 Mehdi Mohebi-Kermani, “Shahre-e Mes: Fosaursat-e Tose‘eh” [Sarcheshmeh Town: Opportunity of Development], *Mes Magazin*, no 9, 1385, 10.

501 Mark Crinson, “Abadan: planning and architecture under the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company,” *Planning Perspectives: An International Journal of History, Planning, and Environment* 12, no. 3 (1997): 341-359.

502 Abdolaziz Farmanfarmaian was a well-known Iranian modern architect who designed some famous architectural projects such as the Azadi [Shahyad] Sport Complex, a Carpet Museum, the Agricultural Bank building, and Niavaran Palace.

503 The original copy of the contract, Tarh VA Me‘mari Consulting Engineers.

504 It belonged to Mr Ali Ebrahimi.

505 It belonged to Mr Malekzadeh.

Construction of the settlement to house 12,000 people began in early 1974 on a 4 km² plot in a remote mountain area at an altitude of 2,620 m. The area is known to have severe, windy, and snowy weather in winter, with minimum temperatures as low as minus 20°C. The summer weather is pleasant with maximums of about 32°C. Average rainfall is 200 mm per year.

The erection of the town caused the destruction of several semi-residential villages such as Asadabad Safi, Deheh Qilch, Kadij ‘Olya, Kadij Vasati, Kadij Sofla, Asadabad Bayer, Abbasabad Bayer, Qasemabad Bayer. The company also bought the four nearby villages of Kantuyeh, Gorgonak and Gerdbad ‘Olya and Gerdbad Sofla and brought them under the authority of the town.⁵⁰⁸

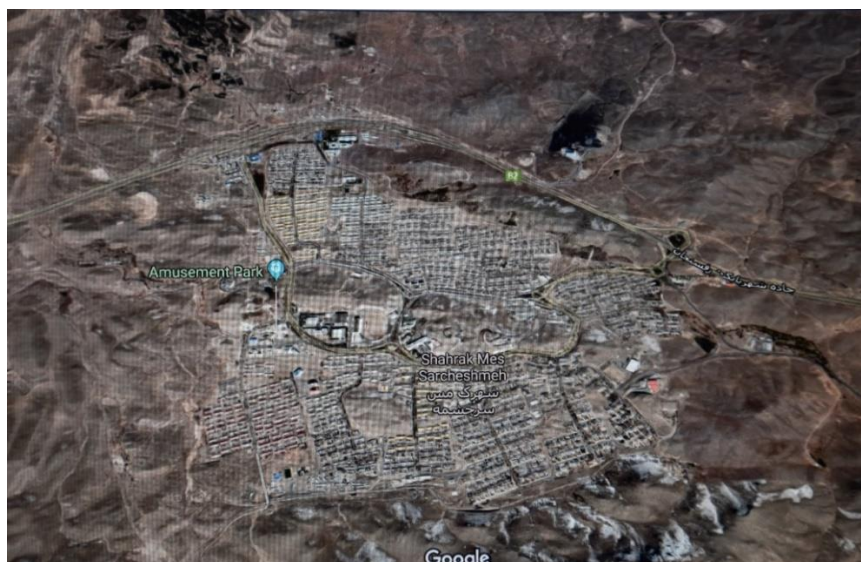


Figure 3: Sarcheshmeh Copper Town

⁵⁰⁶ It belonged to Mr Lajevardi.

⁵⁰⁷ It belonged to Mr Mahmood Monsef.

⁵⁰⁸ Mehdi Mohebi-Kermani, *Dastan-e Yek Shahr: Moruri bar Sheklgiri-ye Shahr-e Mes-e Sarcheshmeh ba Tahlili bar Aiandeh-ye An* [A Review on Formation of Sarcheshmeh Copper Town and Its Future] (Kerman, 1396[2017]), 18.

The town's solitary economic function isolated the residents from the surrounding communities. It prevented formation of any dynamic relationship between the town and the people outside, which enhanced the company's capability in surveillance and control of the workers, especially in times of unrest. The separation was also a barrier against the expansion of civil unrest from nearby cities. In addition, the setting enabled the company to implement its social and cultural policies more smoothly, as it would be difficult to do so if the employees and their families lived in the cities.

The appointed Iranian architect designed the town based on Anaconda's organisational structure, paying less attention to the local specifications.⁵⁰⁹ The ambiance of the town was culturally dominated by a modern middle-class lifestyle which was greatly influenced by middle-class mores in European countries. That could be observed, for instance, in the plan of the houses, with a short fence around the courtyard to separate the private area from the public, predominantly with the intention of keeping the interior out of the sight of strangers. This gender-oriented design aimed to keep the women inside from the view of male strangers, a common characteristic in traditional Iranian architecture which was being upheld by the local workers and some of the technical staff at Sarcheshmeh.⁵¹⁰ The town was also segregated into two parts based on the class division of working-class and skilled staff. The designer used the natural hills as a segregation

509 As was mentioned in introduction, the issue was also seen in the architecture and design of the city of Abadan. See Kaveh Ehsani, "The Social History of Labour in Iranian Oil Industry: The Built Environment and the Making of Industrial Working Class 1908-1941" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2014).

510 After the revolution some people asked the company to build a wall for the houses. See "Sakhtan-e Divar baraye Khaneha-ye Sharak-e Mes Mohem Ast" [Building a Wall for Houses in Sarcheshmeh Town is Important], Tohid Magazine, 1361[1982], 41.

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line. That was a clever usage of the natural environment, which symbolically eradicated the division as a constructed social entity, but represented it as a naturally created phenomena in the town. The division was also applied to other facilities and services from health care to shops.



Figure 4: A house at Sarcheshmeh Copper Town

The town consisted of 2,398 villas of seven types - A, B, C, D, D1, E, and F - based on the Anaconda organisational structure comprising eight levels and grades, starting from the managing director at the top (See table 3). The outline was 14 type A houses for the 14 managers, with two of the houses designated type AA for directors. There were 60 type B houses for 60 senior consultants, 250 type C houses for

junior consultants, and 150 D1.⁵¹¹ D1 was larger than D; and allocated to larger families; however, the type D was superior overall. Each house had its own heating system of Italian design, and all maintenance was to be carried out by the company at no charge. The company also supplied water and energy free of charge. The sizes of the houses varied between 75 and 250 m². Workers were settled on the streets of Kokab, Aqaqi, Razeqi, Maryam, and Nilufar; the Iranian general staff were settled on Nargess Street and some on Nilufar Street, while the Iranian engineers lived on Yasaman Street. Foreigners were housed on Yas street.

Table 3: Classification of Sarcheshmeh Town's Residential Units

Type	Number of Unit	Space (m)	Occupation
AA	2	256	Directors
A	12	256	Managers
B	60	218	Senior Consultants
C	250	144	Junior Consultants
D	550	122	Operators
D1	150	150	-
D2	349	122	-
E	625	96	Operators and Workers grade 2
F	400	80	Unskilled Workers

Source: Mehdi Mohebi-Kermani, January 27, 2014; Anaconda-Iran Report (1973).

⁵¹¹ Mehdi Mohebi-Kermani, Interviewed by Author, January 27, 2014; Anaconda-Iran, A Report on Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine project, 1973.

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The company also constructed 148 camps and 36 suites for single staff called “ss”. Camps had a living room, a single bedroom, and a kitchen and were usually allocated to two people. The suites were for two people as well, with foreigners being kept separate. Three buildings (A3, A4, and A5) were designated for the settlement of the “ss”. They rather resembled a hotel with corridors and rooms on each side with one-to-a-room. According to the plan, building A5 was for single staff, but it was never used as accommodation as its function changed after the 1979 Revolution. Beneath the A5 building there was a restaurant for technical staff.



Figure 5: Sarcheshmeh Copper Town

The company built an international school, called the American School, which was open to Iranians as well. The education system was designed with the help of Dave Zakem who operated an

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international school in Princeton, New Jersey.⁵¹² Each class had about ten students, with some 100 students in total and 20 subjects being taught.⁵¹³ It consisted of two buildings, A1 and A2, each with 32 rooms, 16 on the first floor and 16 on the second. There was also an Iranian elementary school in a type D building on Nargess Street. Nargess Street was assigned to the foreign technical staff, most of whom were American; only vehicles with the “Parsons-Jordan” (P.J.) sign were allowed access to that street.⁵¹⁴

The town also had amenities such bars, a dance hall, cinema, sports club, and a golf course. Two bars were built in the plant area for Koreans and Americans; there was a bar at the golf “clubhouse” and one in the town. Entertainers, even famous Iranian pop stars, were invited to the town. However, the facilities were mostly used by the Iranian technical staff and foreigners. Some activities, such as watching a film in the cinema or going to the gym, were things most of the local workers did not care to do, and drinking alcohol was against their religious beliefs, so bars were of little interest to them. The locals mostly spent their spare time with their families and they might also have been involved in other activities, such as farming and animal husbandry.

The cultural atmosphere of the town did not suit some of the locals and the town bar, for instance, was one of the first places to be attacked by protesters during the 1979 unrest. However, there is no evidence of any particularly vociferous complaint about the dominant

512 Betty Blair, “David V Zakem Last Memories,” Last Memories Website, Last modified: January 23, 2016. <http://davidzakem.last-memories.com/memories>

513 Betty Blair, “David V Zakem Last Memories,” Last Memories Website, Last modified: January 23, 2016. <http://davidzakem.last-memories.com/memories>

514 Nuhi, Interviewed by Author, November 26, 2013.

modern lifestyle at Sarcheshmeh town at the time, and indeed only one interviewee voiced any objection to the cultural and social atmosphere there.



Figure 6: The locations of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine (on the right side) and the Sarcheshmeh Copper Town (on the left side)

The impact of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine went beyond the employees, extending to the local population and their social and economic conditions. During the exploration development, the company had to occupy the surrounding land, therefore some locals left for other villages or towns, such as Pariz and Rafsanjan, but there were still villagers who had no desire to leave their land and move outside the mining zone. Their resistance pressured the company to designate a village called Gorginak, near Sarcheshmeh, for the construction of a set of new houses to relocate the local population. The houses were built in a row and each consisted of a room of 15 m²

with its own storage space. The company also provided a public bathhouse, a coffee house, medical clinic, doctor, and an ambulance.⁵¹⁵ Mr. Da'i, a graduate of agricultural engineering, was appointed to build a large garden next to the new houses. It was named the Kantuyeh Garden⁵¹⁶ and the village's name also gradually changed to Kantu. However, the relocation plan did not proceed smoothly, with some people still insisting on remaining on their land. That aroused tension between the locals and the company, leading to people being driven outside the zone by means of force. All young men over the age of 16 were given jobs by the company and it was proclaimed that all older people who could not work would be paid a monthly pension.

The Semi-Colonial Order and its Contested Legacy

The large workforce, who came from various cultural backgrounds and different nationalities, produced an atmosphere which instigated a degree of dispute, conflict, and collective action. Conflicts also arose over common matters including late payment, preserving group interests, some miscommunications, intensifying work pressure, financial shortage, discrimination, and the nature of the job.⁵¹⁷ On 21 September 1974, for instance, mine workers injured some employees of Akam Company, a construction subcontractor of Sarcheshmeh Copper Town, in a volatile dispute. The clash started with a fight that broke out between two groups in the road. Many mine workers went

⁵¹⁵ Reza Niazmand, Interviewed by Author, June 4, 2016.

⁵¹⁶ Locals call it Kantu.

⁵¹⁷ Despite contradictions between the local culture and what was imported from outside by foreigners and the Iranian middle class, such as drinking alcohol, the women's dress, and the way of relationships between men and women; it did not drive critical reactions by locals or Iranian workers at the time.

back later and attacked the Akam employees. In solidarity with fellow workers, the Akam company workers and general staff all went on strike. In support, the other subcontractors' companies also joined the strike to stand against the attackers. However, the event did not last long and the conflict was resolved through mediation by the site managers. On another occasion, there was unrest among the Koreans who protested because of a month's delay in their payments. The protesters were banging their tools on the floor of their camp at 10 pm. The company then negotiated with them and resolved the issue by promising to make the late payment in a week's time.⁵¹⁸

The workplace conflicts were not solely determined on economic grounds, subjective issues such as nationalist sentiments also played role in triggering the clashes. In fact, the new conditions brought to the surface a concealed resentment among particular groups of employees, which generally arose between Iranians and citizens of the UK and US. The heart of the conflicts and the essence of reactions exposed that some Iranians had been over-considerate in the nature of their relationship with the Americans and British. As will be explained later, nationalist feelings appeared among Iranians from different social classes, included locals, workers, technical staff, and even the managers.

Nationalism is a vacillating concept, targeting different objectives and framed by different components. Some scholars shed light on it as prenominal phenomenon while others, such as Ernest Gellner, identify it as a social entity which emerges from a specific social and

518 Interview with Ahmad Mohammad-Khanlu., "Talash baraye Ehya-ye Ma'dan-e Chaharsad Saleh-ye Songun" [Effort for Reviving the 400 Years Old Mines of Songun], Asr-e Mes Online, Ordibehesht 1, 1395[April 20, 2016], accessed April 20, 2016, <http://asremesonline.ir/news/?Id=10304>

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political context.⁵¹⁹ The former, which represents an essentialist approach, receives less consideration in current debate, but the latter is the mainstream of contemporary ideas on nationalism. Nationalism can be examined through the three main criteria of ideological framework, social movement, or symbolic language.⁵²⁰ In the ideological approach, nationalism pays specific attention to a nation along with its intention of improving its well-being. According to Smith, the pursuit of national well-being is divided to national autonomy, national unity, and national identity.⁵²¹

Nationalism is not determined by a profound structure and is not rooted in a single source, but is a socially constructed phenomenon, considering the multiplicity of the “nation”, that is embedded in the same territory or the same group of people. In fact, one form of nationalism is not replaced by the next, but they coexist alongside each other.⁵²² These phenomena are traceable back to Iran’s contemporary past. Chief among them, is an imaginative narrative based on “the glorious period of pre-Islamic Iran which was devastated by the Arab-Islam invasion”.⁵²³ That imaginative narrative soon found its way into the political structure, and was espoused by the social elites and ordinary people; gradually it transformed into a discourse on nationalism in society. It served the political apparatus

519 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (New York: Coronel University Press, 2008), 132.

520 Anthony Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 1.

521 Ibid., 9.

522 Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, *the Emergence of Iranian Nationalism: Race and the Politics of Dislocation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 4.

523 The social origins of this nationalism discourse go back to the Qajar era, in response to questioning on the causes of frequent defeats of the country in the wars against Russia. In other words, it originated from the formation of an identity of humiliation caused by the inability to face up to the superpowers. Zia-Ebrahimi criticised this nationalism discourse and called it dislocated nationalism, since it was created upon an imaginative narrative which eliminated factual history. To the contrary, he promotes the nationalism of the Constitutional Revolution as civic nationalism which framed the Iranian nation based on law without any racial or ethnic discrimination.

by shaping the national memory, so that social and ethnic differentiations were eliminated in the interests of framing a modern nation. This stabilised foundation preserved its continuity and domination, which led to it being identified as the sole representative of nationalism in Iran. It circumvented other Iranian nationalism discourses, such as civic nationalism which appeared in the Constitutional Revolution and in the nationalism of Mohammad Mosaddeq, Iran's prime minister.⁵²⁴ However, scepticism of a single narrative of nationalism brought about an in-depth scrutiny of Iranian society, resulting in the discovery of other types of nationalism which vary in origin and aims. For instance, one type of nationalism, focusing on social and economic autonomy, emerged out of expansion of a critical view on the interference of external powers, which distorted Iran's historical pathway towards a rule of law, autonomy, and democracy.

The fact that Iran had never explicitly been colonised, despite the presence of superpowers and their frequent interference in Iran's domestic affairs, such as historical incidents including Russia's role in conquering Iran's Constitutional Movements, the allies' invasion of Iran in WWII and the orchestrated coup against Mosaddeq, made it a country that had experienced a semi-colonial condition. The latter two episodes portrayed Britain and the US as humiliating the Iranian national identity and distorting Iran's national autonomy.⁵²⁵ The

524 See Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, *The Emergence of Iranian Nationalism: Race and The Politics of Dislocation*, 4.

525 The issue had a longer background. For instance, more than half a century prior to exploring the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, in the 1890s, near Shahr-e Babk which was close to the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, a British mining team was exploring the area. Since their presence coincided with the Tobacco protests, a feeling of hatred against the British rose up among Iranians. Therefore, one of the British miners was attacked by the people in Kerman, then was detained. See Iraj KIA, *Moruri bar*

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allies' invasion in WWII led to a devastating five years of Iranian occupation, despite Iran having declared itself a neutral country. Chapter two partially outlined Iran's distressing circumstances as a result of the allies' invasion. The next incident referred to is the coup in 1953, orchestrated by the US and Britain, against Iran's prime minister, Mohammad Mosaddeq. The coup brought the Shah back to power, and started a long suppressive governance against political activities and social movements (chapters two and three). Those specificities were based on a particular relationship between the dominant foreign power and the host, which shaped a semi-colonial order and differs from what is identified as a colonial condition.

On the world stage, Iran's post-coup situation coincided with the down fall of colonialism and the emergence of autonomous nations across the global south. That rendered less developed countries willing to leave behind dependency and rebuild a self-governing and independent nation. Consequently, the global south pulled away from the colonial period and turned to a post-colonial era, creating a space where the colonised citizens could revisit their past and reconstruct their relationship with the former colonisers. This impressed the people of semi-colonial countries such as Iran, instigating a reinterpretation of their contemporary past based on the new order. Therefore, their focus was particularly drawn to Britain and the US, making them redefine the two powers' substantial role in their national destiny, which led to the formation of a post-semi-colonial

Tarikhche-ye Mokhtasar-e Ma'aden-e Iran [A Brief Review on History of Mining in Iran] (Tehran: Negin, 1374[1995]), 75.

order.⁵²⁶ As a result, the presence of US and British citizens in Iran, including in the work environment, could be perceived as against the Iranian's social and political autonomy, which sometimes triggered nationalist feelings among the population.⁵²⁷ In fact, it shaped a kind of nationalism aimed at preserving Iran's self-dignity and economic and political autonomy against the US and Britain.

In the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, along with the arrival of British staff at KCI, nationalist sentiments arose among the Iranian workers and locals. In an incident concerning a triumphal arch, which was constructed by the locals at the entrance gate of the camp to honour the start of the exploration operation, the company later needed to demolish it in the interests of exploration development, whereupon the headman's sons stirred up the community's nationalist sentiments. A mob of locals, included local workers, headed towards the arch to ban the mining development and protest against the British for what they claimed was "humiliation of our nationality by the British".⁵²⁸ To settle the unrest, the British contingent did not appear initially, instead a senior Iranian staff member met the protesters and clarified the reasoning behind destruction of the arch. He then stated that the expansion of exploration and demolition of the arch had been ordered by an Iranian manager, not British. The statement had a reasonable impact, but did not entirely rectify the issue. The company then looked for other means of resolution, and ultimately approached the

526 These nationalist sentiments radically emerged in the 1979 Revolution, leading to raiding the US embassy in Tehran and the Iran Hostage Crisis. That caused a stand-off diplomatic relationship between Iran and the US. The aftermath of the revolution also caused a fluctuating relationship with the UK.

527 Contrary to the common type of nationalism in the Middle East which is politico-religious nationalism, my observation in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine rarely found religious origins in nationalist feelings against foreigners. See Umut Ozkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism: A critic Introduction* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 45.

528 Hassanpur, Interviewed by Author, December 19, 2013.

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protesters through the magic of cinema. They set up two movie screens and invited the protesters to watch. The first film was an Iranian one, titled *Dallahu*,⁵²⁹ whose joyful scenes of singing and dancing generated good cheer among the workers. Then, the British placed them in a contradictory position, by screening a documentary film on WWII, consisting of horrendous scenes of injuries and killing, along with destroyed cities. After the film screening, the British asked the protesters to select their route. One way could be similar to the devastating experience of Britain in WWII, and the other could lead to peace and happiness - as created by the *Dallahu* film. A British spokesperson stated that they were there to draw the community towards wealth and joy which was unachievable without the locals' cooperation. That crafty British move resulted in the unrests settling down and led to acceptance of the demolition of the arch without violent clashes.⁵³⁰

It must be noted that nationalist tendencies were not a deliberate standpoint of the workers, but were also observed among the Iranian technical staff and managers. In his grievance to the mine manager, the head of electricity and mechanics complained that non-specialist foreigners supervised his job which was disrespectful to the position as well as to his national identity. Then, he explicitly stated that he was being treated in a colonialist way. The grievance concluded with the argument that if the British were interested in working in Iran, they must change their ways and adjust to Iranian culture; otherwise

529 *Dallahu*, a film by Syamak Yasami, produced in 1965.

530 Selection Trust Archives, The Field Operation at Sarcheshmeh 1967-1970, 7; Hassanpur, Interviewed by Author, December 19, 2013.

they would be on a path to adversity.⁵³¹ A grievance note with the same content was also sent to the Royal Investigation Office.

Some incidents were bound up with nationalist feelings among Iranian managers including the managing director, Reza Niazmand, which were expressed in the form of a special concern for the Iranian employees, particularly the local workers, when a conflict occurred with a foreigner. For instance, a dispute between a British supervisor and a local worker, Ali Amiri, culminated with the supervisor firing Amiri and telling him that he would never find a job anywhere else. In response, Amiri said “this is my country; you’ll have to go back to London one day”.⁵³² The following day, when an Iranian manager was informed of this exchange, he stood up for the local worker and stated: “the Shah insisted that we must pay the locals and landowners. They must be comfortable. Now they are doing the hardest work in the company, and you want to sack them?!” Whereupon Amiri was sent back to work with the blessing of the Iranian manager.

In some cases, conflict flared; an Iranian employee feeling he was being bullied by an American manager might physically challenge the manager to his face. One of the Iranian staff from the financial department had a dispute with his American manager. The conflict quickly heated up and the American manager said “shut up”; whereupon the Iranian slapped his face. The incident was referred to a higher position where an Iranian manager had to take action on the incident. The verdict was expected to be against the Iranian staff which could lead to him being dismissed. However, the outcome was unpredicted, and surprisingly the American supervisor was censured.

531 National Library and Archives of Iran, Kerman.

532 Ali Amiri, Interviewed by Author, December 16, 2013.

That followed a meeting between the Iranian manager and the Iranian staff in which the manager asked him to make an official complaint against the American. The manager insisted, “do not withdraw your complaint until the American comes to you and makes an apology in front your colleagues”. He added, “How dare an American swear at an Iranian in our country”. In the end, the manager said, “I am always on your side.”⁵³³ Thereafter, the Iranian manager’s requirement was fulfilled and the American apologised to the Iranian in front of the others.

In another incident, the second managing director of the NICICO, Taqi Tavkoli, dismissed some American employees due to their poor work performance, which was not a common occurrence at the time. In an interview, Tavakoli described the issue in following words:

“I was not anti-Americans, but the company needed an efficient workforce. Therefore, I asked them all to collect their stuff and go back home. I simply dismissed them all. However, I did not report to the Shah until a proper time, since I guessed it could raise some questions. In a meeting later, I reported the issue to the Shah and explained that, they were paid high salary, 2000 US dollars monthly, but they had little productivity. We can replace them with experts for 800-900 US dollars from the recently closed copper mines at Zaire and Zambia.”⁵³⁴

⁵³³ This happened to Farhad Mehrara and I heard from him years ago.

⁵³⁴ Taqi Tavakoli, “Sarcheshmeh ra Sakhtim ba Hashem-e Gholha” [We Constructed Sarcheshmeh with Hashem Gholha], Mes Magazine, no. 53, Dey 1392[January 2014], 50.

Tavakoli also inspired young Iranians to develop their skills based on the company's plan to gradually replace the Americans with them.⁵³⁵

Once he stated:

“Since the soil and the mine belong to Iran, the foreign experts had to train the Iranians as well. Therefore, I ordered all American engineers to be accompanied by an Iranian engineer. I also authorised them to sign the decision making along with the American engineer. That promoted the personality of the Iranian young.”⁵³⁶

Tavakoli's consideration was also displayed on another occasion, as an Iranian engineer was qualified to be appointed as head of surveying. The position used to be occupied by an American engineer, Jim Rot. When Rot decided to return to the US, he introduced Ahmadinejad as an Iranian engineer qualified for the position, which was a huge promotion for an Iranian in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. Tavakoli not only accepted his promotion, but increased his wages to the level of an American engineer, 2100 US dollars, which was a high salary for an Iranian at the time and an inspiration to other Iranian employees.

As was previously indicated, appointment of the foreign workforce was not restricted to Britain and the US, the company also recruited from Pakistan for office tasks and secretarial positions. The reason for this was the presence of foreign managers in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine; therefore, a sufficient knowledge of English and adequate experience in office skills became essential requirements for a secretarial post. Since most Iranian applicants were less qualified in

535 Ahmad Ahmadinejad, “Yek ‘Omr ba Ma’dan VA Karkhaneh” [A Lifetime in the Mine and Plant], Interviewed by Amir Karimi, *Asr-e Mes*, no 66, Esfand 1393[March 2015], 174.

536 Ibid., 50.

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the English language requisite, the company hired office staff from Pakistan through an international recruitment agency. The choice of Pakistan originated in the long presence of Britain in Pakistan during the period of colonialism. That imbued the host society with the coloniser's work culture, as a considerable number of Pakistani workers inevitably worked in British companies. Subsequently, it generated a profusion of Pakistani workers skilled for different occupations, based on their lengthy experience within British work principles. Their close relation with the British also enhanced the Pakistanis' English language ability which facilitated their communication with foreigners. The other significant parameter was that the Pakistani workforce was cheap labour from a neighbouring country.⁵³⁷

The Pakistanis' performance in office tasks initially received good feedback from the Iranian side, however their presence after a while merged with the dominant semi-colonial conditions in Iran, leading to the provocation of nationalist sentiments. The issue arose from the ways in which Pakistani secretaries treated their managers, who were mostly British or American, by not working wholly within a professional framework, but occasionally fulfilling some extra tasks for their bosses, such as polishing their shoes, even though the boss had not made such a request. The Pakistanis also addressed their British managers as "Sahib" which means 'owner' in Persian and means 'master' in English.⁵³⁸ These issues were of concern to Iranian

537 There were Indian and Bangladeshi secretaries, but they mostly came from Pakistan.

538 It must be noted that epithet had been used to the British in the early decades of the establishment of the oil industry in Iran, as well. See Jalil Mahmudi, Naser Sa'idi, *Shoq-e Yek Khiz-e Boland: Nokhostin Etehadyeha-ye Kargari dar Iran 1285-1320* [Towards a Subtle Rise: The First Labour Unions in Iran 1906-1941] (Tehran: Nashr-e Qatreh, 1381[2002]), 69-70. However, there is no evidence to prove that

managers including Reza Niazmand, as it was reported that some Iranian workers were beginning to imitate the Pakistani's patterns, aiming to hold their boss's attention in contention with their fellow Pakistanis.

That behaviour did not perhaps generate sentiments in a cultural background that had been shaped under long-term colonisation, but it could create ill-feeling and conflict in a country within a semi-colonial context. The conduct was embedded in people who had lived under colonialism for a long time, which had shaped a specific type of relationship between coloniser and colonised which could even be manifested in a third country after Pakistan's independence, as had occurred at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. In fact, it was the embodiment of a colonial legacy which was converted to a social habitus. As it was upheld differently under the semi-colonial condition, where the host was not fully absorbed in the relationship with the "coloniser", there was a distance between them. In other words, the host had not wholly digested the domination, even though it had been implicitly dominated, which partly originated from Britain's long-term presence in Iran. That framed a relationship with the "coloniser", leading to the creation of contradictory reactions among Iranians, as was seen at the mine. While, Iranians were opinionated about the British, they could also come to terms with their past if current circumstances could fulfil their interests.

The appearance of a colonial legacy in a semi-colonial country ultimately sparked the nationalist sentiments of the Iranian manager, since some Iranians were copying that behaviour. Therefore, Reza

"Sahib" was ever applied to other foreigners in other industries. Therefore, it seems that "Sahib" came into use only because of the presence of the British.

Niazmand decided to send all Pakistanis back home, as he was concerned their presence would establish the same type of behaviour among the Iranians at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine.⁵³⁹ It was also a warning to the Iranian workers to follow the work discipline, otherwise the company could take disciplinary action against them.

Working Class and the 1979 Revolution

During the unrest leading to the Iranian Revolution in 1979, the different social classes disported their aggression against the Pahlavi monarchy on the streets of major cities. It was then expected that the workers would participate in street protests along with the other social classes. However, that assumption did not entirely come to fruition as the industrial workers focused mainly on their union claims rather than political demands. That lack of eagerness in supporting political demands continued until the final stage of the Revolution, from October 1978 onwards, when the state lost political stability.⁵⁴⁰ In fact, the industrial workers did not notably support the revolutionaries until the autumn of 1978 when the revolutionary spirit spread across the country and the state was confronted by a unified movement consisting of people from different social classes and social strata including industrial workers.⁵⁴¹

While a radical movement spread across most of the country, the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine remained peaceful and there was no major disruption in the workplace. Some employees, mostly among the

539 Reza Niazmand, Interviewed by Author, January 11, 2015.

540 Ahmad Ashraf, "Kalbodshekafi-ye yek Enqelab: Naqsh-e Kargaran-e Sana'ti dar Enqelab-e 57" [Autopsy a Revolution: The Role of Industrial Workers in the 1979 Revolution], *Iran Nameh* 26, no. 3-4 (2011): 4-53.

541 Ibid.

skilled staff, engaged in minor activities, but the scale was not comparable with other large industrial enterprises. The dominant non-political mode at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine continued until autumn 1979 when the waves of revolution finally reached there. However, the employees, including workers and skilled staff, responded dissimilarly to the movement. While the technical staff mostly joined the revolution through protesting and striking to voice their political demands, the workers evinced little interest in standing against the state. The workers were not always just bystanders, as they displayed their indisposition towards the revolution through different means, including disrupting a technical staff strike. Their will to preserve the status quo originated mainly from their improving economic circumstances that had resulted from the company's welfare policy which was partly influenced by the state's developed social welfare policy towards the workers, aimed at transforming the class struggle into a form of class compromise. Erik Olin Wright divides class compromise into two types – positive class compromise and negative class compromise – to develop his argument on how to advance anti-capitalism.⁵⁴² Before elaborating on Wright's argument, it needs to be mentioned that contrary to the domination of a negative approach to class compromise in Marxist literature, Wright deploys it as a feature of class struggle which can play a constructive role in drawing the transitional course less harmfully. He initially promulgated four strategies which can be applied against capitalism: smashing, taming, escaping and eroding capitalism. Among them Wright focuses on taming capitalism as a wise strategy in the early stages of anti-

⁵⁴² Erik Olin Wright, "Class Struggle and Class Compromise in the Era of Stagnation," *Transform*, no. 11 (2012): 24-25.

capitalism, in which class struggle can be converted to class compromise, leading to a decrease in capitalism damage.⁵⁴³ The mechanism of conversion originates from the enhanced stature of the workers in their struggle against capitalism based on the two sources of working-class power: structural power and associational power. The former is built upon the status of the workers in a tight labour market as well as the location of a particular group of workers in an industrial sector; and the latter represents the institutional power of workers created by the labour unions and workers' councils. Wright states that the institutional power of workers lays the ground to convert the class struggle into a positive class compromise in which both sides of the conflict can benefit from the existing conditions. In other words, the struggle is drawn to a win-win game in which one side's success does not cause the other side's loss. That specification can generate a sustained relationship. Conversely, a negative class compromise, which mainly derives from the scarcity of organisational power among the working class, leads to a zero-sum game between the capitalists and working class, where one side's win results in the other side's loss. Wright criticises the negative class compromise as it cannot reasonably secure the interests of both sides, therefore it forms a fragile relationship between capitalist and worker.

As was stated, there was no dynamic political atmosphere at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine and the uprisings started much later than protests across the rest of the country.⁵⁴⁴ The Islamists as well as leftists had some minor skirmishes, but the vast majority of the

543 Erik Olin Wright, "Why Class Matters," *Jacobin*, December 23, 2015, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/12/socialism-marxism-democracy-inequality-erik-olin-wright/>

544 Abdollahi, "Neshast-e Khatereh" [Sharing Memories Meeting], *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no 516, Bahman 17, 1394 [February 6, 2016], 7.

employees, workers and technical staff, were involved in their daily work and only on rare occasions were political leaflets seen in the workplace. Apart from a number of short strikes, there was no significant collective action. The intelligence service (SAVAK) maintained a minimum presence at the mine in comparison with others state-owned heavy industries, because according to the statute the company was not operating under state regulations, as Reza Niazmand pointed out.⁵⁴⁵

The transformation of labour relations and conducting a paternalist welfare policy and mode of management at the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine significantly improved the living conditions of the vast majority of workers who originally came from the countryside, through offering a permanent employment contract with a sufficient wage, compared with their deprived economic past. Therefore, their new status increased the workers' consent, leading to a particular class relation which eliminated the existing structural conflict between the state and the workers. That was largely revealed during the continuous uprising across the country in 1978, ending in the 1979 Revolution, as the workers participated little in the protests. The few activities were mainly amongst the staff who represented a modern, educated middle class. The discrepancy of political orientation between workers and general staff emerged during the days of revolution, as the workers from a rural background evinced less revolutionary interest compared with the technical staff. In fact, the

⁵⁴⁵ Reza Niazmand, Interviewed by Author, January 11, 2015. That does not mean that SAVAK had no control over the employees. For instance, in one case early in 1976, when the Shah arranged an official visit of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, the SAVAK required workers who had a politically active background to stay a distance of 8km from the site. Hushmand, Interviewed by Author, March 8, 2016.

protests were started by the technical staff.⁵⁴⁶ In an incident during a strike which was held by the general staff, a group of workers attacked them, shouting “you intend to make us wretched. You make us poor.”⁵⁴⁷ That was one of the class-orientated moves from the workers’ side which was in line with their class interests. Their support had profoundly economic roots which were combined with their poor financial background. Their action can be determined in the framework of a class compromise which occurred between the state and the worker. However, the structure of class compromise at the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was not governed by what Wright described as positive class compromise. Positive class compromise is rooted in the enhanced organisational power of the working class, while the structure of power relations, which was inherent in the weak organisational power of the working-class including workers at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine, led to formation of a negative class compromise. That basically reduced the weight of the workers to negotiate for their demands. What cultivated the labour conditions partly developed from the structural power of the workers which grew from rapid industrialisation and the labour shortage in Iran. Therefore, the wealthy companies offered a more enhanced welfare policy and sufficient wages to attract their labour force. It also grew from the structure of the Iranian developmental state which applied a paternalist manner in managing social welfare, which improved the living and working conditions of the workers at the mine, who mostly

546 Reza Khaki, *Rozha-ye Enqelab dar Sarcheshmeh Cheguneh Gozasht* [What Happened in Sarcheshmeh during the Days of Revolution], Interviewed by Amir Karmi, *Asr-e Mes Online*, Bahman 14, 1394 [February 3, 2016], <http://asremesonline.ir/news/?Id=10190>

547 Habil Davari, “Neshast-e Khaterch” [Sharing Memories Meeting], *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no. 516, Bahman 17, 1394 [February 6, 2016], 7.

came from a poor rural background. These interrelated elements contributed to the formation of a reluctant revolutionary working class at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine whose specifications were displayed in the historical moments of the 1979 Revolution.

The main strike initiative at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was carried out in November 1978. The expatriate employees including Americans received anonymous leaflets inciting them to go home.⁵⁴⁸ Later, in the autumn of 1978, an American, Martin, was killed in Kerman.⁵⁴⁹ News of the murder spread fear amongst the foreigners, especially the Americans and British. Anti-American slogans such as “Yankee Go Home” were written on walls in the town and at the mine site.⁵⁵⁰ The mine and town were disordered and the dominant atmosphere was against the foreigners. The managing director, Mehdi Zarghamee, recognised that the conditions were unsafe and out-of-control. He then ordered all foreigners to evacuate the site and return to their home base.⁵⁵¹ Emergency action was promptly taken, and the mine and town were quickly evacuated in silence by all foreigners. They left the town with messages on the walls saying “We’ll be

548 William Branigin, “Iranian Protest Ousts US Workers,” *Washington Post*, November 14, 1978, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1978/11/14/iranian-protest-ousts-us-workers/Off0b79a-51a6-4206-be93-86848dcee18b/?utm_term=.983353fb0574

549 There are different stories about Martin’s identity and his duty at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. Hmaid Iranmanesh stated that Martin was killed at his home. Later, he was identified as the colonel of CIA. See Hamid Iranmanesh, “Neshast-e Khaatereh” [Sharing Memories Meeting], *Esteqamat-e Kerman Weekly Supplement*, no. 471, Bahman 19, 1393 [February 8, 2015], 6; In another claim Martin was introduced as an American colonel who was head of Parsons –Jordan Company, the contractor company at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. See Gholamreza Karbaschi, *Roz Shomar-e Ravabet-e Iran va America* [The Daily of Iran-US Relationships], *Yad* 51-52 (Autumn and Winter 1377 [1998]), 215; Ayatollahi-Musavi delivered a different claim that, in his visit to Martin’s office, he found blood and then realised that Martin was killed. See Akbar Ayatollahi-Musavi, “Mes-e Sarcheshmeh Qabl AZ Jang-e Jahani-ye Avval Kashf Shodeh bud” [Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine was Discovered before WWI], *Asr-e Mes Online*, Tir 4, 1395 [June 23, 2016], <http://asremesonline.ir/news/?Id=10396>. However, the managing director of the company, Mehdi Zarghamia stated that he personally investigated and understood that Martin was an American military veteran who had been working for the US recruitment company in Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. In Mehdi Zarghamee, Interviewed by Author, November 3, 2016.

550 Mehdi Zarghamee, Interviewed by Author, November 3, 2016

551 Mehdi Zarghamee, Interviewed by Author, November 3, 2016.

Back,”⁵⁵² which seemed to be a response to the “Yankee Go Home” slogans. Many possessions and even pets were left behind. Four buses were hired to send the foreigners to Bandar Abbas Airport where they boarded an aircraft chartered to take them to Bahrain, from where everyone headed to their chosen destination, the vast majority of course going back to the United States.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the formation of the working class during the establishment of the Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine from the early stages of exploration in 1966 until the revolution in 1979, when the mine had been prepared for operation. That specific period was divided into three junctures based on ownership and mode of management. The mine brought significant changes to the area and reshaped the social order and economic conditions through different means, including employment of a vast number of locals who had grown up in a natural rhythm and agrarian society. The new conditions engaged the workers with modern industrial discipline and the labour wage system. It also significantly impacted on living conditions through raising income and improving public facilities. However, each stage was constructed on the company’s view towards industrial relations and welfare policy and was imbued with specific characteristics regarding its method of management of the labour force. While the private sector tends to preserve the traditional mode of labour relations, this was transformed with the entrance of the state into the project and nationalisation of Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. The state-owned company ran a

⁵⁵² Mehdi Mohebi-Kermani, Interviewed by Author, January 27, 2014.

developed welfare policy, targeting the workforce across Iran as well as outside. The policy also had a political origin based on the state's strategy to improve the wellbeing of workers, with the aim of reducing the possibility of class conflict. The state's concern came from the expansion of socialism and the emergence of the Soviet bloc whose influence spread across western European countries and their allies. Therefore, the Iranian state was motivated by the advent of the welfare-state in Western Europe after WWII. It formulated its policy in response to economic growth arising mainly from the swift escalation of oil income which provided an opportunity to develop a welfare policy to benefit the working class.

The first stage, determined by the structural view of Iranian mining entrepreneurs, was a traditional approach towards the labour force. Despite a modern labour law being passed to support workers' rights, the private employers did not fully commit to it. That was partially facilitated by the traditional labour relations of landlord-tenant which breached legislation and undermined the rule of law for the sake of preserving the employer's authority, as well as reducing company costs. However, it led to a malfunctioning of the labour reproduction system, outlined as a semi-peasant/semi-worker model rather than a worker.

The presence of Selection Trust transformed the welfare conditions, focusing on modernising the industrial relations. However, nationalisation of the mine turned it to a new stage, as the company implemented a developed paternalism, leading to a transformation in the quality of industrial relations and welfare policy at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine.

Chapter Four

The scarcity of skilled workers, experts and technicians necessitated the government importing a workforce from outside. The foreigners, especially Americans and Europeans, occupied the key positions at Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. However, in contradiction to claims that the company had no concern about its dependency on an outside workforce, they introduced a plan to gradually replace the foreigners with Iranians. It also revealed, beyond the organisational plan, that the reaction of the Iranians, including managers and workers, to foreign staff sometimes arose from a nationalist sentiment which was originated from Iran's semi-colonial order.

To sum up, it was the introduction of a developed paternalist programme consisting of modern principles, good wages, and advanced social services including housing, a health care system, food, facilities and amenities in the town along with advanced training and education, that led to the emergence of a working class which evinced little interest in joining the protests in the 1979 Revolution. Therefore, it is suggested that the Iranian developmental state was based on oil as well as a paternalist mode of governance, titled 'petro-paternalist developmental state', which founded an advanced copper industry and established Sarcheshmeh Copper Mine. This was also achieved through the contribution of a newly formed working class in the Iranian copper industry which can be characterised as a reluctant revolutionary working class which formed in relation with the petro-paternalist developmental state.