A HISTORY OF THE SOCIAL STRUGGLES IN FATSA

1960-1980

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Title: A History of the Social Struggles in Fatsa 1960-1980

This thesis aims to make a modest contribution, via the Fatsa experience, to the efforts to revive the collective memory about the social struggles in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s. To achieve this target, the thesis utilizes a social history approach that focuses on the everyday experiences of ordinary people regarding social inequalities and their struggles to overcome these inequalities. The social disturbances between 1960 and 1980 are reduced merely to left-right conflicts, youth radicalism and anarchy in the official historiography, and usually to the inevitable social reflections of some macro-structural transformations in the social sciences literature about the period. This thesis argues that in reality these disturbances were a sign of the strict class struggles between laboring masses and capital. In accordance with this argument, it is claimed that the period in question amounted to a historical swelling of the social opposition wave all over the country, as a result of which the resistances and struggles of laboring masses became the principal component of the political sphere that is generally restricted to inter-elite struggles in traditional narratives. Thanks to its local character which ensured that the policies were shaped by a dialectical relation developed between the revolutionaries and the people within the everyday struggles aiming to overcome the concrete problems of the common people, the social opposition in Fatsa acquired an extensive mass support, and this middle-sized coastal town became an arena of one of the most severe social struggles in the country.

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Başlık: Fatsa'da Toplumsal Mücadeleler Tarihi 1960-1980

Bu tez Fatsa deneyiminden yola çıkarak, 1960'lar ve 1970'lerde Türkiye'deki toplumsal mücadelelere ilişkin kollektif hafızayı tazeleme çabalarına küçük de olsa bir katkı yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda tezde sıradan insanların toplumsal eşitsizliklere dair gündelik deneyimlerine ve bu eşitsizlikleri aşma mücadelelerine odaklanan bir toplumsal tarih anlayışından yararlanılmıştır. 1960 ile 1980 arasındaki toplumsal çalkantılar resmi tarihyazımında basitçe sağ-sol çatışmaları, gençlik radikalizmi ve anarşiye indirgenirken dönemle ilgili sosyal bilimler literatüründe de çoğu kez birtakım makro-yapısal dönüşümlerin kaçınılmaz toplumsal yansımaları olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu tez ise bahsi geçen çalkantıların gerçekte emekçi kitleler ile sermaye arasındaki çetin sınıf mücadelelerinin bir göstergesi olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Bu argümana uygun olarak tezde söz konusu dönemin tüm ülkede toplumsal muhalefet dalgasının kabarışına tekabül ettiği ve bunun sonucunda da emekçi kitlelerin direniş ve mücadelelerinin geleneksel anlatılarda elitler arası mücadelelerle sınırlandırılan siyasal alanın temel bileşeni haline geldiği savunulmaktadır. Politikaların, sıradan insanların somut sorunlarını çözmeyi amaçlayan gündelik mücadeleler içerisinde devrimciler ve halk arasında gelişen diyalektik bir ilişki tarafından şekillenmesini mümkün kılan yerel karakteri sayesinde, Fatsa'daki toplumsal muhalefet geniş biçimde kitleselleşmiş ve bu orta büyüklükteki sahil kasabası ülkedeki en şiddetli toplumsal mücadelelerden birine sahne olmuştur.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For almost three decades, our world has been experiencing a process of neo-liberal or capitalist globalization, which is more often than not referred to as merely "globalization," as if it were a neutral and technical development free from ideology and politics.[1] Indeed, as Erinç Yeldan argues, globalization is reckoned to be an inevitable process with its own objective rules to which all countries ought to adapt themselves by means of various social, political and economic structural reforms in order to benefit from the advantages of it.[2] In reality, however, it is a project put into practice by the forces of transnational capital, that is to say transnational corporations, the governments of the main economic powers, and international financial institutions such as the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to extend their spheres of interest worldwide.[3]

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[1] In fact, some scholars even reject the concept of globalization altogether. For instance, drawing examples from African history, Frederick Cooper argues that it is not a useful analytical tool to understand the various mechanisms, limitations, and changing meaning over time of multiple long-distance networks which are not peculiar to the last quarter century, but have been a part of the human life for ages. He goes on to argue that "uniting diverse phenomena into a singular conceptual framework and a singular notion of change," the concept "occludes rather than clarifies historical processes." Frederick Cooper, "What is the Concept of Globalization Good For? An African Historian's Perspective," *African Affairs* 100 (2001), pp.189-213.

[2] Erinç Yeldan, "Neoliberalizmin İdeolojik Bir Söylemi Olarak Küreselleşme," Ahmet Haşim Köse, Fikret Şenses and Erinç Yeldan (eds.), *İktisat Üzerine Yazılar I Küresel Düzen: Birikim, Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2003), p.429.

[3] Ibid., p.430; Eric Toussaint, *Your Money or Your Life the Tyranny of Global Finance*, trans. Raghu Krishnan with Vicki Briault Manus (London: Pluto Press, 1999), p.3.

As Tulin Öngen claims, this project is also an attempt of Capital to redefine the role of the state and existing power relations in accordance with the new accumulation conditions in a time when the Keynesian Welfare State and the class politics representing its specific power relations are no longer useful for the construction and reproduction of the power of dominant classes.[4] In this period, the nation-state has not disappeared as claimed, but it has been transformed into the neo-liberal state, which fulfills the task of the adaptation of countries to the requirements of global economy, namely to the needs of transnational capital.[5] In the 1980s, this meant a pure *laissez faire* ideology strictly opposing state intervention in economic activity; however, beginning with the 1990s, a "market-friendly approach" giving governments "a key role in facilitating the operation of markets through market-friendly interventions" such as "investing in physical and social infrastructure, and providing a suitable climate for private enterprise" has gained strength.[6] As Galip Yalman emphasizes, this change does not denote a rupture in neo-liberal hegemony, but it is an effort to reconcile the New Right with a notion of a more benevolent state, therefore to represent the market as capable of meeting the expectations from it as long as social responsibilities are considered together with individual liberties.[7]

Toussaint states that government interventions in this era have had four objectives:

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[4] Tülin Öngen, "'Yeni Liberal' Dönüşüm Projesi ve Türkiye Deneyimi," Ahmet Haşim Köse, Fikret Şenses and Erinç Yeldan (eds.), *İktisat Üzerine Yazılar I Küresel Düzen: Birikim, Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2003), p.165.

[5] Hayri Kozanoğlu, *Küreselleşme Heyulası* (İstanbul: İthaki, 2003), p.18; Yeldan, p.429.

[6] Michael P. Todaro and Stephen C. Smith, *Economic Development*, 8th ed. (Boston: Addison Wesley, 2002), pp.128-9.

[7] Galip Yalman, "Neoliberal Hegemonya ve Siyasal İktisat: Latin Amerika Dersleri," Ahmet Haşim Köse, Fikret Şenses and Erinç Yeldan (eds.), *İktisat Üzerine Yazılar I Küresel Düzen: Birikim, Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2003), pp.456-60.

> First, the liberalization of international capital flows and the opening of domestic markets to international competition. Second, the privatisation of state-owned companies and public services. Third, the deregulation of the labour market and the dismantling of social safety net. Fourth, maintaining and improving competitiveness through the pursuit and achievement of the first three objectives.[8]

All over the world, these measures have been accompanied by "a global offensive by Capital against the labour of workers and small producers."[9] Wages have been lowered, the social gains of working people have been rolled back, labor organizations, that is to say, the political and bargaining power of Labor, have been weakened.[10] As a result, in a seemingly paradoxical manner, class-based social movements have declined in an age of mass impoverishment, high unemployment, low living standards, and increasing inequality within and between countries.

Turkey has not been immune to these developments. The 24 January 1980 economic decisions and their forcibly implementation after the 12 September 1980 military coup marked a new era in which the economic and political crisis of the previous period was solved in accordance with the demands of big capitalists against those of labor forces.[11] The obstacles in front of the integration of the economy into global markets were removed, the left and the class movement were oppressed by the military and legal ways, and the social and economic life were fine-tuned for the interests of Capital.[12] In other words, Turkey joined the global phenomenon called "the race to the bottom," which Kozanoğlu describes as the curtailment of wages, working conditions, employment, social security standards, and environmental

[8] Toussaint, p.28.

[9] Ibid., p.3.

[10] Ibid., p.29; Öngen, pp.165-166; Yeldan, p.441.

[11] Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2002,* 9th ed. (İstanbul: İmge, 2005), pp.147-150.

[12] Öngen, pp.176-7.

regulations in order to guarantee the trust of national and global capital.[13] While opening enrichment opportunities to the few, these developments led to a dramatic deterioration of the living conditions of the masses, and left them in an insecure social environment. Poverty became more widespread than ever while the gap between the rich and the poor increased to the point that both began to live in their own ghettos in cities.

Surely, these developments brought about reactions from the society. Workers at the private and public sector, agricultural producers, students, and intellectuals organized various actions at different times. Nevertheless, such reactions remained as separate pieces, and could not constitute the basis of a strong and permanent social movement that questioned and threatened the existing power relations. The current weakness of social opposition not only forms a sharp contrast with the 1960s and 1970s, when crowded masses of workers, peasants, *gecekondu* (built at night) dwellers, students, intellectuals and the poor all over the country quickly embraced radical projects for transforming the social order, but also it disproves the "crisis theories" which assume a direct and mechanistic relationship between socio-economic crisis and the rise of class-based social movements. Indeed, what is rising among people at the moment is not a class-based opposition, but identity politics. In a political atmosphere where Labor organizations and the socialist left do not have the capacity to define and intervene into the agenda, socio-economic tensions are translated into ethno-religious disputes. A recent and tragic manifestation of this tendency was the treacherous assassination of Hrant Dink, a courageous Anatolian-Armenian journalist whose only guilt was to decisively advocate peace and dialogue

[13] Kozanoğlu, pp.19-20.

between Turks and Armenians, by a seventeen year-old boy who come from a poor neighbourhood of the big northeastern city of Trabzon.

Fatsa is one of the places where this social and political transformation of Turkey after the 1980s can be observed clearly. Today, Fatsa is a large town struggling with huge economic and social problems. The chief factor contributing to these problems is the collapse of the hazelnut sector for producers due to neo-liberal economic policies accompanied by the oppression of labor forces, a trend discussed above. Leaving them naked against destructive market conditions, these policies have brought about the dissolution of numerous small and middle-sized agricultural households in the countryside. One can see a sign of this tendency in the accelerated decline of rural to urban population ratio in Fatsa beginning from the 1980s, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Rural and Urban Populations of Fatsa since 1980.

Year	Rural Population	Urban Population	Total Population
1980	90,094	22,405	112,499
1985	88,332	29,811	118,143
1990[14]	55,332	39,467	94,789
2000	57,053	63,721	120,774

Source: Compiled from DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri 12.10.1980*, *Ordu* (Ankara: DİE, 1980), pp.4, 6-7; DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, *20.10.1985*, *Ordu* (Ankara: DİE, 1985), pp.4, 6-7; DİE, *1990 Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri* (Ankara: DİE, 1990), p.64; DİE, *2000 Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, *Ordu* (Ankara: DİE, 2000), pp.61-2. Note: The State Statistics Institute (*Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü - DİE*) defines the city according to the administrative division structute; therefore, the population in province and district centers are defined as urban population while the population of *bucak*s (sub-districts) and villages are defined as rural population. In fact, this methodology falls short of calculating the real urban and rural populations, yet the numbers still give a clear picture of the social change in question.

[14] Other than rural to urban migrations, a reason for the rural population decline in 1990 was the foundation of Çatalpınar and Çamaş towns. Cevat Erbil, "İdari Yapı," Cevat Erbil et al. (eds.), *Adanmış Bir Kentin Anatomisi* (Unpublished book).

Recently, the troubles of the producers have noticeably increased because of the WB and IMF-backed government policies attempting to further liberalize agriculture by eliminating agricultural sales cooperatives and unions, and replacing support purchases and input subsidies with direct income payments.[15]

Parallel to the sharp decline in the purchasing power of hazelnut producers on which the economy of Fatsa depends, trade and industry have deterioated as well. By April 2007, there was only one regularly working hazelnut factory in Fatsa. Two key industrial enterprises of the town, Demas Water Products Marketing Joint Stock Company (*Su Ürünleri Pazarlama A.Ş.*), and Fatsa Meat and Fish Corporation Fishing Complex (*Et ve Balık Kurumu Balıkçılık Kombinası*), had already been closed down. A number of industrial facilities were only able to maintain production by firing some of their workers. Several other income generating activities such as apiculture and fishing were almost dead, too.

What's more is the lack of state investments in the town. A significant portion of the people in Fatsa believe that this is a way of punishing the town because of its affinity towards radical left politics before the 12 September military coup. Indeed, public investments are quite low according to the town's size, and with regard to its neighbours Ünye and Ordu Center. For example, until the formal opening of the Faculty of Maritime Sciences last year, there was not a single university faculty in Fatsa.

Based on my observations in Fatsa in April 2007, I can argue that as a result of all these developments, today there is an enormously high rate of unemployment in the town center of Fatsa. The number of coffeehouses, which are kept open from the

[15] Sinan İkinci. 12 March 2007. "Turkey: Depressed Prices Sparking Farmers Protests." Available [online]: http://www.wsws.org/articles/2007/mar2007/turk-m12.shtml [07 June 2007]; Abdullah Aysu. 14 September 2006, "Tayyip İspanya Fındıkçılarını da Vurdu." Available [online]: http://www.bianet.org/2006/09/15/85256.htm [07 June 2007].

early hours in the morning until the midnight, is extraordinarily high, and they are always full with men playing cards or chatting. Moreover, I am told that, to earn a living, besides the big cities in Turkey, many people in Fatsa have migrated to foreign countries including Russia, Iraq, and even Japan. Young people whom I talked to said they viewed low-paid jobs in the service sector such as being a waiter in a restaurant as a pretty good opportunity for themselves especially if their insurance premiums were paid. The position of an ordinary public servant, on the other hand, is considered to be a great prospect. In fact, most of the young people in Fatsa experience severe difficulties in finding a job, and a considerable portion of them are said to have joined various religious sects which, to some degree, provide them with protection against the everyday troubles of capitalist society. Also, numerous young people in the town are said to use drugs and carry guns. Indeed, the decay of public order and security as a consequence of increasing social imbalances is a common issue of complaint among people in the town.

Despite all these problems, contrary to the 1960s and 1970s, in Fatsa it's hard to say that the lower classes are organized in a social movement that oppose the existing system of exploitation. The political transformation of producer peasants and the poor in general is so dramatic that one can even talk about two different Fatsas. During my visit to the town, I witnessed a striking example of this transformation. On 7 April, as a part of his Eastern Black Sea tour, the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came to Fatsa to realize the opening of the Bolaman-Ordu tunnel. Despite the fact that during his government, the price of hazelnut had fallen from 7 to 2.5 YTLs, he was greeted with the applause of a big crowd mainly composed of common people. Before the 12 September coup, several thousands of these people had come to the district center to attend those impressive

"End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meetings for which they would prepare with a feast excitement. Now, as happened the day before the prime minister's arrival, they come with sullen faces to join the long queue in front of the Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*), which they had even occupied in 1967, to be able to get a little bit of fertilizer and diesel oil money. Previously, as we shall see, broad masses of women, men and even children would directly take part in politics, believing in the motto "Rights are not given but gained!"[16] Nowadays, they just prefer voting once every four or five years for local notables heading the local branches of major center-right parties, which are in the government or likely to be so, to deserve the gifts of power. This, I believe, indicates a significant change in the political behaviour of the lower classes in Fatsa from direct participation for collective emancipation to clientalism for individual opportunities. The results of local elections since 1984 confirm this allegation. While in 1984, 1994 and 1999, the winner was the Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi - ANAP*), in 1989 and 2004, it was the True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi - DYP*) and the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi - AKP*) respectively.[17]

One, but not the sole, reason for this weakness of social opposition is the ideological hegemony of neo-liberalism, which shows itself with such notions as the end of ideologies, the inevitability of capitalist globalization, and the impossibility of collective emancipation. Among what feeds these notions is the colonization of the past for the sake of present-day power formations. The traumatization of the collective memory in Turkey after the 12 September 1980 coup should be evaluated with regard to this fact. In the official historiography, the widespread social

[16] "*Hak verilmez, alınır*!"

[17] Available [online]: http://www.yerelnet.org.tr/belediyeler/index.php?belediyeid=127383. [09 June 2007].

struggles and resistances between 1960 and 1980 are either completely forgotten or distorted as to be simply left-right conflicts, youth radicalism, anarchy and terrorism. As a result, possible alternatives to the current social order are marginalized, and existing power relations based on inequality and exploitation are strengthened. This points out the political significance of history writing and social memory. As Paul Connerton states, the control over and the regulation of social memory is not only a technical issue, but it's related to the legitimacy of the existing social order.[18]

A typical example of this is a book published by the General Secretariat of the National Security Council in 1981.[19] Throughout the book, the reasons for the disturbances of the pre-coup period are claimed to be the anarchy caused by foreign-rooted leftist and rightist terrorists who exploited the rights and freedoms given by the Constitution of 1961, and economic problems, as well as the collapse of state authority due to the polarization, narrow-mindedness and selfishness of major political parties. In this plot rebuilding the state authority, the army is presented as the savior of the unity of the country, the nation's existence and prosperity, and even the democratic regime. In his radio and television speech on 12 September 1980, Kenan Evren, the chief of general staff, put forward similar arguments:

> My Dear Citizens; ... in order to protect the integrity of the country and the nation, the rights, law and freedom of the people, to rescue them from fear by ensuring the security of life and property, to ensure their welfare and happiness, to re-establish and maintain the supremacy of law and order, in other words, the impartial State authority, the Turkish Armed Forces have had to seize the management of the State. … To reach these targets, from the lowest-rank private to the highest commander, the all personnel of the Turkish Armed Forces, the guardian

[18] Paul Connerton, *Toplumlar Nasıl Anımsar?*, trans. Alaeddin Şenel (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1999), pp.8, 11-2.

[19] Milli Güvenlik Konseyi Genel Sekreterliği, *12 Eylül Öncesi ve Sonrası* (Ankara: n.p., 1981).

and protector force of the State against internal and external threats, will stay out of politics.[20]

Such a scenario not only hides the role of some state forces in the bloody events of the period,[21] but also, much more importantly, it conceals the severe class struggles carried out in the social arena by reducing them to merely acts of violence.[22] Yet, the class character of the coup might be guessed from the contentions of its performers on Labor movements and strikes. Accordingly, strikes and various actions of Labor were accused of being "ideological" and in conformity with the aims of terrorist activities, and they were held responsible for the running of the economy into a bottleneck because of reduced production.[23]

Unfortunately, a considerable portion of social sciences literature on the period reproduces these kinds of evaluations, too. For instance, even in 1977, in an article Şerif Mardin argued that it was primarily the violent acts of students that had caused the recent change in the social behaviour of some citizens in Turkey. For him, the 1971 military memorandum had been realized because of the violence generated by a group of leftist terrorist students, and since 1973 student incidents had increasingly

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[20] "*Sevgili vatandaşlarım; … Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri; ülkenin ve milletin bütünlüğünü, milletin hak, hukuk ve hürriyetini korumak, can ve mal güvenliğini sağlayarak korkudan kurtarmak, refah ve mutluluğunu sağlamak, kanun ve nizam hakimiyetini, diğer bir deyimle Devlet otoritesini tarafsız olarak yeniden tesis ve idame etmek gayesiyle Devlet yönetimine el koymak zorunda kalmıştır. … En kıdemsiz erinden en üst komutanına kadar Türk Silalı Kuvvetlerinin tüm personeli bu amaçlara ulaşmada Devletin iç ve dış tehditlere karşı kollayıcı ve koruyucu gücü olarak siyasetin dışında kalacaktır.*" [All Turkish to English translations are mine unless a contrary statement is given]. Quoted in ibid., pp.200-3.

[21] In fact, this point has been widely discussed by various authors. For example, see Suat Parlar, *Kontrgerillanın İşgal Kuvvetleri 16 Mart 1978 Katliamı* (İstanbul: Bağdat, 2006); Barış Yetkin, *Kırılma Noktası 1 Mayıs 1977* (İstanbul: Otopsi, 2005); Nail Güreli, *1 Mayıs 1977 Türkiye Devrimcilerinin "İki 1 Mayıs" Belgeseli* (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2006); Cüneyt Arcayürek, *Derin Devlet 1950-2007 Darbeler ve Gizli Servisler* (İstanbul: Detay, 2007).

[22] Of course, this does not mean that i deny the existence of political violence during the period in question. For a detailed analysis of social, political, cultural and psychological causes of political violence see Doğu Ergil, *Türkiye'de Terör ve Şiddet Yapısal ve Kültürel Kaynakları* (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1980).

[23] Milli Güvenlik Konseyi Genel Sekreterliği, pp.24, 40-1.

turned into conflicts between leftist and rightist groups.[24] According to another prominent Turkish scholar Kemal H. Karpat, the 12 September military intervention was an inevitable solution to put an end to the terrorism, which had "escalated into a mini-civil war between the leftists (including Kurdish separatists) and rightists." Blaming the radical elements of the intelligentsia for "manipulating and exploiting the freedoms granted under democracy," Karpat maintains that "the military have emerged as the defenders of the political democracy."[25] Likewise, Clement Henry Dodd claims that "the military cannot be criticized for intervening" since politicians were unable or unwilling to end the growing political violence and terrorism.[26] Lucille W. Pevsner, too, considers right-left violence and terrorism to have been the principal cause of Turkey's political crisis, and the major reason for the military intervention.[27]

Fatsa has frequently been a reference sample for these views not only in the official historiography, but also among academic circles and popular writers. For instance, in the above-mentioned book of the National Security Council, along with the incidents in Kahramanmaraş, Çorum and Konya, the Fatsa events are presented as one of most striking examples of the widespread anarchy and terror in the country that caused the coup. It's argued in the book that Fatsa was a so-called "liberated zone," and the people in the town were oppressed by the militants of a secret organization by such mechanims as coercion, violence, and illegal People's

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[24] Şerif Mardin, "Türkiye'de Gençlik ve Şiddet," Şerif Mardin, *Bütün Eserleri 9 Türk Modernleşmesi Makaleler* 4, ed. Mümtaz'er Türköne and Tuncay Önder, 15th ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), pp.251-6.

[25] Kemal H. Karpat, "Turkish Democracy at Impasse: Ideology, Party Politics and the Third Military Intervention", *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 2, no.1 (Spring-Summer 1981), pp. 1-3, 7-8.

[26] Clement Henry Dodd, *The Crisis of Turkish Democracy* (London: Eothen Press, 1983), pp.26-9.

[27] Lucille W. Pevsner, *Turkey's Political Crisis Background, Perspectives, Prospects* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), pp.70-3.

Courts.[28] In the same way, in a novel claiming to elucidate the incidents in Fatsa, Selahaddin Turgay Daloğlu portrays the era as an instance of communist terrorism and violence during which the patriot people of Fatsa were either silenced and forced to emigrate or killed.[29] Pevsner, too, asserts in her book that Fatsa was declared to be a "liberated zone" by the leftist terrorists who set up People's Courts as well.[30] Similarly, Atilla Yayla contends in his Ph.D. dissertation that terrorism was the main characteristic of the Fatsa branch of the Revolutionary Path (*Devrimci Yol - Dev-Yol*), and this was confirmed when people left the militants on their own after the military operation.[31] Following Yayla, in his book, Orhan Türkdoğan considers the Fatsa events to be a Soviet-backed experiment of a Bolshevik state establishment based on terrorism.[32] Likewise, Erik Jan Zürcher regards Fatsa as a liberated zone with the characteristics of an independent Soviet republic, while Feroz Ahmad, though in a hesitant manner, gives voice in his book to the claims that the town was occupied by leftist militants.[33] It's easy to come across analogous arguments in popular newspapers at different times. For instance, in an article on 16 February 1997, on the way to the 28 February military memorandum by which the coalition government between the Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi - RP*) and the DYP was downed, Metin Toker compared Sincan, which was governed by an Islamist mayor, to Fatsa, arguing that both were the examples of failed attempts to challenge

[28] Milli Güvenlik Konseyi Genel Sekreterliği, pp.172, 213-4.

[29] Selahaddin Turgay Daloğlu, *Fatsa'da 5 Adam* (İstanbul: Gurbet Yayınevi, 1981).

[30] Pevsner, p.71.

[31] Atilla Yayla, *Terör-Terörizm ve Fatsa Örnek Olayı Çerçevesinde Türkiye'de Terör* (Ph.D. dissertation, Ankara University, Social Sciences Institute, 1986), pp.343-4.

[32] Orhan Türkdoğan, *Sosyal Hareketlerin Sosyolojisi İdeolojiler ve Köylü Hareketleri* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1998), pp.486-509.

[33] Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1999), p.384; Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, 5th ed., trans. Yavuz Alogan (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2006), p.208.

the authority of the secular and democratic republic.[34] An interview conducted by Yavuz Donat with Kenan Evren in *Sabah* on 5 April 2005 is another example:

> Kenan Evren:
> -Fatsa, a district of Ordu. A very beautiful place. Do you know?
> -I know very well.
> -There, a Tailor Fikri has appeared. He says "I'm the State." He has founded a committee. That committee rules Fatsa. What will or won't be done is decided by the people. Or by that committee in the name of the people. In other words, the decision is not taken by the State. The State authority is zero. The laws of the State are not valid in Fatsa. ... What was Turkish Armed Forces supposed to do? The army had to.[35]

Nonetheless, the conquest of the past by the dominant classes, and the surrender of a substantial section of social scientists do not imply an absolute hegemony. In reality, different sides carry out a struggle over the past via remembering and forgetting in accordance with their immediate political positions. Indeed, what we forget, and what and how we remember relies on how we perceive the current socio-political situation, and what we desire for the future. In this sense, this thesis is an attempt to refresh, via the Fatsa experience, the collective memory about social struggles in the 1960s and 1970s in order to question the hegemony of the dominant classes over the past,[36] and thereby recall the alternatives to the existing social order. With regard to this target, this thesis is inspired by Walter

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[34] Metin Toker, "Düşman Kardeşler: Fatsa ve Sincan," *Milliyet*, 16.02.1997; also quoted in Mahmut Memduh Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın Kırılışı: Fatsa (1978-1980)* (Ankara: Arayış Yayınları, 2004), pp.290-2.

[35] "*Ordu'nun Fatsa ilçesi. Çok güzel bir yer. Bilir misin? / Çok iyi biliriz. / Orada Terzi Fikri diye biri çıkmış. Devlet benim diyor. Komite kurmuş. Fatsa'yı o komite yönetiyor. Ne yapılıp, yapılmayacağının kararını halk veriyor. Veya halk adına o komite. Devlet otoritesi sıfır. Devletin kanunları Fatsa'da işlemiyor. ... Ne yapsın Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri? Ordu mecbur Kaldı.*" Yavuz Donat, "'Ordu Ne Yapsın?, Mecbur Kaldı,'" *Sabah,* 05 April 2005. In fact, a similar assault on the collective memory about the social struggles in Fatsa during the 1960s and 1970s is carried out via the politics of space. For example, one of the biggest main streets of Fatsa which was opened during the mayoralty of Fikri Sönmez is named as the Evren Street referring to Kenan Evren.

[36] Ahmet Oktay, "Mücadele Alanı Olarak Geçmiş," *Birikim*, no.73 (May 1995), p.50 quoted in Burak Gürel, *Political Mobilization in Turkey in the 1970's: The Case of the Kahramanmaraş Incidents* (M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, 2004), p.153.

Benjamin's approach to history in its aim to "resist assimilation into the progressive representational structure … [of] historicism" and "intervene by wresting an experience from the past for the purpose of political mobilization in the present."[37] Benjamin contends:

> The danger affects both the content of the tradition and its receivers. The same threat hangs over both: that of becoming a tool of the ruling class. In every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it. … Only that historian will have the gift of fanning the spark of hope in the past who is firmly convinced that *even the dead* will not be safe from the enemy if he wins. And this enemy has not ceased to be victorious. … All rulers are the heirs of those who conquered before them. Hence, empathy with the victor invariably benefits the rulers. … He [a historical materialist] regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.[38]

Nadir Özbek, too, draws attention to the necessity of such a historiographical stance:

> Our remembrances about the past to constitute an alternative history might be described as a leap backwards from the present circumstances, a search for an inspiration regarding the solution of current problems, and finally an effort for the construction of a new past. It must be stressed that a view of history which does not concern an active intervention in the present time, and confines itself to forming the so-called representations of the past is academism if not chroniclerism.[39]

Obviously, this endeavor to remember the social struggles of the past for an active intervention in contemporary politics overlaps with the Thompsonian social

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[37] Harry D. Harootunian, "The Benjamin Effect: Modernism, Repetition, and the Path to Different Cultural Imaginaries," Michael P. Steinberg (ed.) *Walter Benjamin and the Demands of History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp.64-7.

[38] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Hannah Arendt (ed.), *Illuminations: Walter Benjamin Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp.255-7.

[39] "*Alternatif tarih oluşturmak üzere geçmişe ilişkin hatırlamalarımız bugünün koşullarından geriye doğru bir sıçrama, bugünün sorunlarının çözümüne ilişkin bir ilham arayışı ve nihayetinde yeni bir geçmiş inşasına yönelik bir çaba olarak nitelenebilir. İçinde yaşanan zamana aktif bir müdahale kaygısı taşımayan ve yalnızca geçmişin sözde temsillerini oluşturmakla yetinen bir tarih anlayışının vakanüvislik olmasa bile akademizm olduğunun altı çizilmelidir.*" Nadir Özbek, "Alternatif Tarih Tahayyülleri: Siyaset, İdeoloji ve Osmanlı-Türkiye Tarihi," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.98 (Fall 2003), p.235.

history approach, which aims "decentering the historians' discourse and their categories in favor of the experiences of those who lived and made history."[40] At this point, it must be noted that the battle of Thompson here is not only against any kind of determinism ignoring human agency, but also against elitism which disregards the active role of the laboring classes in the making of history.[41] Indeed as Dirlik argues, "the activity of 'rescuing' entails more than simply bringing the benighted into the light of history," that is "centering of the working people" or "at least denying to history a center."[42] Correspondingly, Özbek maintains that:

> The stress we lay on politics founded on the effort of overcoming social inequalities necessiates that we shape our historical studies on the basis of remembering social inequalities and the everyday experiences of broad masses about these inequalities, as well as on the search for clues concerning the possibilities of overcoming inequalities.[43]

On the other hand, the emphasis made by Thompson on the role of historical subjects and their experiences as opposed to a mechanistic conception of history based on categories and abstractions is equally important, and it might clearly be seen in his conception of class:

> The notion of class entails the notion of historical relationship. Like any other relationship, it is a fluency which evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomise its structure. … The relationship must always be embodied in real people and in a real context. … Class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their

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[40] Arif Dirlik, "Culturalism as Hegemonic Ideology and Liberating Practice," *The Postcolonial Aura, Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), pp.33-4, 46.

[41] Harvey J. Kaye, *The British Marxist Historians* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp.176.

[42] Dirlik, p.32.

[43] "*Toplumsal eşitsizliklerin aşılması çabasını temel alan bir siyasete yaptığımız vurgu, tarih çalışmalarımızı, sosyal eşitsizliklerin, geniş kitlelerin bu eşitsizliklere ilişkin gündelik deneyimlerinin hatırlanması ve eşitsizliklerin aşılması imkanlarına ilişkin ipuçlarının aranması ekseninde şekillendirmemizi gerektirmektedir*." Özbek, p.251.

> interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.[44]

In a similar manner, on the food riots in England during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, he contends that "Of course hunger rioters were hungry, but hunger does not dictate that they must riot nor does it determine riot's forms."[45] Dirlik rightly claims that this "controversy over abstractions is at the same time a controversy over hegemony:"

> Abstractions, substituted for living people, may become tools of hegemony regardless of the goodwill or the professions of sympathy for the cause of liberation on the part of their practitioners. … If knowledge is power as Foucault suggests, abstractions are the instruments of power which the knowing subject employs to establish control over … the known. … This, it should be obvious, licences the comprehending subject to speak in the name of its object, and in case of opposition between the two, justifies the supression of the latter.[46]

Such an approach to history, as Dirlik maintains, also requires that we do not treat the laboring classes as if they compose a homogeneous whole that could be fit into a single category since this would "serve to distance [them] from the historian."[47] In Raymond Williams' words, "there are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses."[48]

Moreover, rejecting the economic determinism and reductionism generated by base-superstructure model, this historical attitude considers culture to be a "semi-autonomous realm [which is] not merely a superstructural element or the organic

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[44] Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), p.9.

[45] Edward Palmer Thompson, "The Moral Economy Reviewed," *Customs in Common* (New York: The New Press, 1993), p.266.

[46] Dirlik, pp.34-5.

[47] Ibid., p.35.

[48] Quoted in ibid., p.31.

expression of a totality, but an active element of history that exists in a dialectical relationship to other constituent elements of society."[49] Clearly, this is in contradiction with "hegemonic culturalism [which] abstracts culture from its social and political context in order to present it as … exterior to, and independent of social relationships."[50]

The social sciences literature on social struggles between 1960 and 1980 in Turkey is problematic also with regard to the social history methodology described above. First of all, in these studies, social struggles are explained only with reference to some macro-structures, thus the constituent role and the experiences of social actors who took part in these processes are ignored. In other words, as quoted from Dirlik above, "abstractions are substituted for living people" and "the comprehending subject is licenced to speak in the name of its object." These abstractions and structures which are utilized to elucidate social struggles during the period include the crisis of the import substituting economy,[51] social differentiation and the rise of classes as a consequence of economic development,[52] rapid urbanization and cultural dislocation,[53] and the political crisis (polarization of major political parties leading to a parliamentary deadlock) stemming from the political and legal system brought by the Constitution of 1961 that overempowered small political groups.[54]

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[49] Ibid., pp.45-6.

[50] Ibid., p.45.

[51] For instance see Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, 5th ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1999), pp.225-6, 259-60, 274-7, 282; Zürcher, p.384-391.

[52] See Mardin, p.280; Keyder, p.268; Karpat, pp.16-8; Zürcher, p.370; Ahmad, pp.161-3; Pevsner, pp.11-2; Dodd, p.31.

[53] See Mardin, pp.258-60, 270-2; Keyder, pp.280-2; Karpat, p.18; Zürcher, pp.391-5; Pevsner, pp.15, 69.

[54] See Karpat, pp.13, 16, 27-31; Zürcher p.382; Dodd, pp.29-33, 39; Pevsner, pp. 55-60, 67.

Openly or implicitly, these works portray social disturbances as a price paid for social and economic modernization or as a symptom of defective modernization peculiar to Third World societies. Karpat's words compose an emblematic example of this understanding which produces a narrative of linear progress, and therefore is responsible for hiding class struggles and exploitation within the social life:

> Yet, one should not ignore the fact that the political chaos, the breakdown of law and order, the fights between ideologically motivated groups, and the sense of pessimism and dejection that for a while betook the country were also the symptoms of a qualitative change long in the making. The qualitative change can be summarized in a few words: during the last twenty-five years Turkey has moved from a predominantly traditionalist, agricultural, semi-literate society to a modernist, semi-industrial, literate society. Various modernistic values, attitudes, and aspirations in the past associated with the minority are now shared, or on the way to being shared, by a majority.[55]

In the second place, these studies more often than not ignore the active role of the laboring classes in the making of history, and instead, grant elites a central place. As a result, the broad social struggles of the period are replaced in these narratives by inter-elite conflicts. For instance, Irvin C. Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak do not hesitate to claim, "it's obvious that until now the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the working class has played a secondary role. The primary struggle has been within the alliance of ruling classes: between bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy, urban and rural bourgeoisie, organized big capital and traditional petty capital."[56]

A manifestation of this elitist tendency might be seen in those works which focus, above all, on ideological differences between various intellectuals and the

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[55] Karpat, p.41.

[56] "*Şu ana kadar burjuvazi ile işçi sınıfı arasındaki çelişkinin ikincil rol oynadığı açıktır. Esas mücadele hakim sınıflar ittifakı içinde geçmiştir: burjuvazi ile bürokrasi, şehir ile kır burjuvazisi, örgütlü büyük sermaye ile geleneksel küçük sermaye arasında.*" Irvin C. Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak, "Sonuç," Irvin C. Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak (eds.), *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003), pp.399-400.

organizations led by them during the period in question. These analyses not only regard intellectuals as the central actors of history, but also close their eyes to the mutual interaction between their ideas and wider social struggles.[57] Here, I definitely do not suggest we should ignore the impact of intellectuals or the importance of ideology in history, but that we should pay more attention not to represent broad social segments as passive receivers.

Another sign of this inclination is the relative indifference to the 1970s, during when social opposition enjoyed a quick massification, compared with the '68 era.[58] In most of these works, '68 is separated from the 1970s, and it is depicted as a movement of intellectuals and students as if it had no relationship with the broader social struggles carried out by workers and peasants.[59] Among some intellectuals, as Tanıl Bora argues, this has even led to the glorification of '68 against '78.[60] For instance, Taner Akçam maintains that the anti-authoritarian and libertarian character of the students in the '68 movement deteriorated during the 1970s when they adopted the cultural values of the people.[61] Unfortunately, such a problematic distinction between the left and the common people, and an arrogant glance at the broad masses, is a dominant characteristic of many leftists in Turkey. Actually, there are only a few analytical studies about social struggles in this period which

[57] For example see Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern* Turkey (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974); Murat Belge, "Sol," Irvin C.Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak (eds.), *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003), pp.159-188; Ergun Aydınoğlu, *Türk Solu Eleştirel Bir Tarih Denemesi 1960-1971* (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1992); Igor P. Lipovski, *The Socialist Movement in Turkey 1960-1980* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992).

[58] For a collection of articles on the '68 movement in Turkey see *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.41 (May 1988); and *Birikim*, no.109 (May 1998).

[59] For instance see Ömer Laçiner, "Bir Aydınlanma ve Öğrenci Hareketi Olarak '68," *Birikim*, no.109 (May 1998), p.19.

[60] Tanıl Bora, "'68: İkinci Eleme," *Birikim*, no.109 (May 1998), p.29.

[61] Taner Akçam, "'68'den Geriye Ne Kaldı?," *Birikim*, no.109 (May 1998), pp.43-4.

thoroughly take into consideration the roles and experiences of social actors in a specific spatial and historical context.[62]

On the other hand, the official histories of various leftist organizations suffer from these historiographical deficiencies, too. As Sezai Sarıoğlu argues, focusing on high politics, these narrations substitute the macro-political claims of each organization for the experiences of historical subjects, and reduce them simply to numbers. As he goes on to argue, in these de-humanized stories, only some of the leading figures and "martyrs" are given places.[63] In addition, usually the aim of these organization-centric histories is not to offer a critical evaluation of the past, but to glorify it by stressing the accuracy of their previous ideological arguments while blaming practical faults and insufficiencies for the defeat.[64] For example, the Fatsa experience has always been a key reference point for the former Dev-Yol leaders to extol their past in terms of both ideological and practial accuracy. Often, Fatsa is compared to the Paris Commune and the Athenian democracy as a revolutionary criticism of "reel socialism," and almost a perfect implementation of the "rule by the people" principle. Generally, these exaggerated interpretations are related with the present concerns of those who give voice to them. Two articles written by Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu on Fatsa in *Birgün* just after the congress of the Freedom and Solidarity Party (*Özgürlük ve Dayanışma Partisi - ÖDP*), during which harsh debates had occured between the so-called traditionalists and advocators of change, might be evaluated in this context.[65]

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[62] For two good examples see Şükrü Aslan, *1 Mayıs Mahallesi 1980 Öncesi Toplumsal Mücadeleler ve Kent* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004); and Sırrı Öztürk, *İşçi Sınıfı Sendikalar ve 15-16 Haziran Olaylar-Nedenleri-Davalar-Belgeler-Anılar-Yorumlar*, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: Sorun Yayınları, 2001).

[63] Sezai Sarıoğlu, *Nar Taneleri*, 6th ed. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), p.12-6.

[64] For example see O. Tayfun Mater (ed.), *Devrimci Yol Savunması 12 Eylül Öncesi ve Sonrası* (İstanbul: Simge Yayınevi, 1989).

In the light of these historiographical views, this thesis intends to shed light on the everyday experiences and struggles of the people who took part in the Fatsa movement and their interpretations of these experiences. In addition, it strives to keep in mind the warning Williams has made by paying attention to economic, educational, ethno-religious, gender and such social differences within the common people in Fatsa. However, for sure, this does not mean that abstraction and structural explanation would be rejected completely. I believe that a tension and a dialectical relationship between objectivity and subjectivity as well as between continuity and change is a productive one that adds dynamism to history writing, and paves the way for a more holistic historiography. As Karl Marx states, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."[66] Therefore, in this thesis, various historical structures and values will be mentioned with regard to their impact on the following social developments or their transformation by these developments and historical subjects. In its search for a more holistic historiography, this thesis also minds the impact of the upper and ruling classes. In other words, the "history from bottom up" is not interpreted as the "history of the bottom."[67]

Concerning the above-explained political and historiographical intentions, I believe that Fatsa is an appropriate choice. This is because, as shown above, first, it is one of the places where the social and political transformation of Turkey after the 1980s might be observed clearly. Second, there is a vast literature not only in the

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[65] Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, "Fatsa'nın Çağrısı," *Birgün*, 17 February 2007; Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, "Zamanın ve Saatlerin İzinde," *Birgün*, 03 March 2007.

[66] Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p.15.

[67] I borrowed these terms from Kaye, p.228.

official historiography, but also in academic and popular circles considering the incidents in Fatsa to be one of the leading examples of the anarchy and terrorism that caused the coup. And finally, it's also a widely discussed and exalted experience within some leftist circles.

The choice of time interval is also related to these concerns. Up to now, Fatsa has usually been analysed as a municipality experience which actually lasted only about nine months. If as Thompson argues, class is to be treated as a "social and cultural formation arising from processes which can only be studied as they work themselves out over a considerable historical period,"[68] then the municipality experience in Fatsa from 14 October 1979 to 11 July 1980 should be regarded as the crystallization and the peak point of the experiences of historical subjects in Fatsa dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. Because of this, a wider time interval is taken in this thesis. This also stems from the fact that the historical course of Fatsa experience is parallel to the progress of the social opposition wave in Turkey which arose in the 1960s, was interrupted in the early 1970s, grew faster in the second half of the 1970s, reached to its climax in the late 1970s, and finaly was broken down by the 12 September 1980 military coup.

The main source of data in this thesis is the in-depth interviews I have made with twenty-nine persons in İstanbul, Ankara, Kocaeli, Fatsa and Ordu Center, whose durations vary between twenty minutes and five hours. Among these twenty-nine interviewees there are Dev-Yol members from various ranks, their relatives, the leftists from other factions, common people from Fatsa, the lawyer of the defendants in the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial and an extreme right-wing so called "*ülkücü*" (idealist).[69]

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[68] Thompson, *The Making*, p.11.

[69] *Ülkücü* is the name of the supporters of the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi - MHP*).

I have also benefited from the interviews conducted by other authors, journalists and documentarists. Besides, I have made unrecorded conversations, which were not in an interview form, with many people who participated in or witnessed the Fatsa experience. Unfortunately, I was unable to visit the villages of Fatsa and make interviews with villagers, which is a significant defect for the historiographical and political objectives of the thesis. However, I have tried to cover this defect with the archives of several newspapers and journals including *Devrimci Yol*, *Demokrat*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Tercüman* and the *New York Times*. Moreover, these archives provided the thesis with the views of intellectuals, local notables and its opponents about the Fatsa experience. Regrettably, the owner of the local newspaper *Fatsa Güneş* did not let me search the archives, which is another important defect concerning the data collection process. Yet, I have used the reports and articles of this newspaper, which have been quoted in the secondary sources. In addition to these, I have also made use of the reports of various NGOs and public institutions about the hazelnut question, the statistics of the State Statistics Institute, the indictment of the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial, the memoirs of various leftists from the period, countless visual documents and several other primary sources.

The following chapter introduces the reader with the social and historical background of Fatsa to illuminate the social circumstances under which the historical actors in Fatsa made history. It is in this chapter, too, that the hazelnut question, which played a crucial role in the development of the social struggles in the town, is explained in detail. Chapter Three sheds light on the birth and development of the social opposition in Fatsa from the early 1960s to the late 1970's. The fourth chapter examines the municipality period during which this social opposition reached its climax. Chapter Five is reserved for the response of the

ruling classes and its opponents to the rise of the social opposition in Fatsa, and the resulting Target Operation (*Nokta Operasyonu*) which brought an end to the Fatsa experience. Finally, the sixth chapter concludes the paper with an overall evaluation of this important experience.

Throughout the thesis the terms "revolutionaries" and "people" have been used often. To the reader this may seem to be a sociological classification, as if the revolutionaries were outsiders to the people; however it is not. An absolute majority of the revolutionaries, and almost all of the leading cadres in the town were local people. This usage, rather, stems from a political distinction caused by the fact that both the People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi - THKP-C*) and its successor Dev-Yol had a dual organizational structure which demarcated the professional, disciplined and well-trained (at least in theory) revolutionary cadres from the common people who were not the members of the revolutionary organization although they supported it. Therefore, the term "revolutionaries" indicates these professional cadres who were generally young native males while the terms "people," "common people," "broad masses," and "laboring classes" denote small agricultural producers, landless peasants, workers and petty tradesmen and civil servants in the town. Similary the term "revolutionary movement" designates the cadre party with its own hierarchical organization while the term "social opposition" or "social movement" signifies, in addition to the revolutionary movement, the wider social struggles of the common people.

Lastly, I would like to make an explanation about the wording. I have preferred to write the names of political parties, institutions and organizations in English with the Turkish names and abbreviations in brackets. After the first reference, only the Turkish abbreviations are used. On the other hand, for those

Turkish concepts which do not have an exact match in English, and the titles of the articles and books written in Turkish, i have chosen to keep the Turkish wording with the English translation in brackets. After the first reference, the English translations are not given again.

CHAPTER II

FATSA: THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Geography

Located on the eastern edge of Central Black Sea region,[70] Fatsa is a middle-sized coastal town of Ordu. To the west, it is bordered by Ünye, while further west is Samsun. To the east lies Perşembe, Ordu Center, and Giresun, respectively. Fatsa borders the Black Sea to the north, Kumru to the southwest, Korgan, Aybastı and Gölköy to the south, and Ulubey to the southeast. Further south from these towns is Mesudiye, Sivas and Tokat (See Fig. 1).

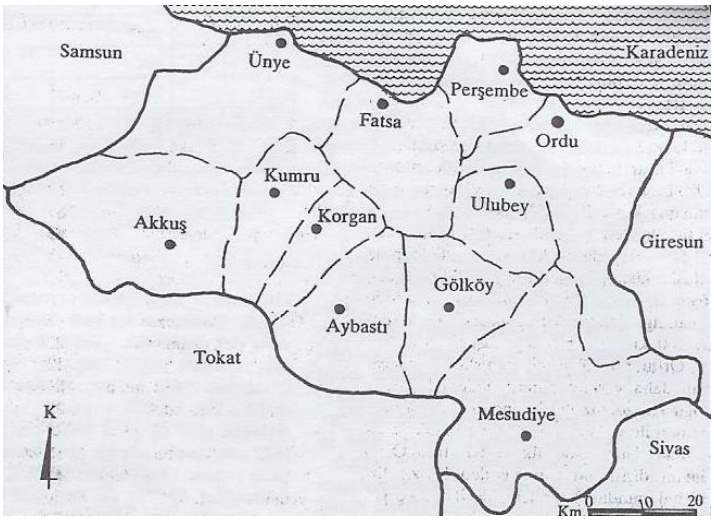


Fig. 1. Map of Ordu indicating the administrative borders of its districts. Source: *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* Vol. 9 (İstanbul: Anadolu Yayıncılık, 1982-1983), p.6301.

[70] Geographically the Central Black Sea region lies between Sinop and the Melet River, which passes by the eastern side of Ordu city center, while the Eastern Black Sea region is located in the area from this river to the border of Georgia. Abdulkerim Sönmez, "Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi Fındık Üretim Kuşağında Toprak Ağalığı, Köylülük ve Kırsal Dönüşüm," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.88 (Spring 2001), p.69.

Lying in the east-west direction parallel to the Black Sea, the Canik Mountains, an arm of the North Anatolian Mountains, divide this area into two distinct settlement zones with different geographical conditions: The coastal zone including Ordu, Perşembe, Fatsa and Ünye, and the plateau or the inner zone including Aybastı, Mesudiye, Gölköy, Ulubey, Korgan, Kumru, and Akkuş.[71] To the south of Canik Mountains, which lacks the warming effect of the Black Sea, there is a terrestrial climate with quite hot summers and very cold, snowy winters. In this region, rainfall is not plentiful. On the other hand, in the coastal zone where Fatsa is located, the typical Black Sea climate is dominant with plentiful rainfall in all seasons. Summers are warm and rainy, while there is little snowfall in winters. Here, day-night and summer-winter temperature differences are not much, while humidity is high.[72]

Fatsa town center lies on a long and beautiful shoreline between the hillsides of these mountains and the Black Sea. This shoreline, the width of which varies between five hundred and a thousand meters, is naturally bordered by the Bolaman River on the East, and the Elekçi River on the West.[73] Just behind this relatively large urban territory with an average altitude of ten meters,[74] the height quickly increases, and the ground gets rugged and sloping. Here on the hillsides lie the villages of Fatsa. However, the valleys of the rivers mentioned above cut these highlands and create some flat lands in the inner parts as well. Further above, on the

[71] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), p.111.

[72] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6254.

[73] Ibid., p.6303.

[74] Ibid.

mountain ridges, begin the jungle areas with beech, hornbeam, alder and chestnut trees.[75]

Economic Life[76]

The geographical position of Fatsa had a strong impact on the fate of the town. In fact, the coastal towns in the region, namely Ünye, Fatsa, Ordu Center, and to some degree Perşembe, had various advantages when compared with the inland towns. First of all, thanks to their temperate and rainy climate,[77] they became the centers of hazelnut agriculture, as opposed to the inland towns which lacked a cash crop to sell in the market, and, besides a week stockbreeding and field agriculture, primarily depended on *gurbetçilik* (working abroad).[78] In Fatsa, too, hazelnut agriculture quickly spread, and dating from the 1950s, it became by far the most important economic activity in the town. In 1980, Fatsa shared the first place with Ünye in hazelnut production in Ordu with 15,000 tons. At the same time, the production of Mesudiye, Akkuş, Aybastı, Korgan and Kumru were a hundred, 190, 850, 950 and 2,300 tons, respectively.[79]

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[75] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, pp.94-5. By 1967, the size of this forest area in Fatsa was 1,620 hectares. Ibid.

[76] Beginning from this section, the facts given about Fatsa belong to the 1960-1980 period. For this reason, the past tense is used.

[77] As Murat Taşkın reports, hazelnut is best grown in places with an average annual temperature of 13-16 centigrade degrees, where in winters there is no frost danger, and in summers the highest temperature does not pass 36-37 degrees. It also requires humid weather with at least seven hundred milimeters of annual rainfall distributed in a balanced manner throughout the year. Murat Taşkın, *Geçmişten Günümüze Fındık* (Trabzon, n.p., 2005), p.9.

[78] Hüseyin Kaptan, "Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi Fındık Kuşağında Kentleşme Sorunları,"*Ordu İli ve Yöresinin Tarımsal ve Sosyo-ekonomik Sorunları ve Çözüm Yolları Sempozyumu* (Ordu, n.p., 1983), p.241.

[79] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6285. A detailed analysis of hazelnut production is given below in a separate section.

In the second place, while there were no air and rail transportation opportunities in Ordu as a whole, these towns were located on the public highway which connected them to important regional centers such as Samsun and Trabzon, and from there to the major transportation systems of the country.[80] Other than the highway, navigation was also an option for transportation in these towns.[81] Moreover, there was also a considerable difference in communication services between these coastal towns and the inland areas. For instance, As Yayla states, by the beginning of the 1980s, in Fatsa, there were six Postal, Telephone, Telegraph (*Posta*, *Telefon*, *Telgraf - PTT*) branches in settlement centers, and seventy PTT agencies in villages. In addition, there was a telephone station with two thousand subscribers. Meanwhile in the town, there were 10,200 recorded radio receivers along with 8700 television receivers.[82] In other words, these towns were much more open to the outside world. As a consequence of all these, the coastal urban settlements in the region developed as agriculture-based commercial centers which marketed the crop produced in their hinterlands, and reproduced themselves with the share they took from this trade.[83] In this respect, Fatsa had further advantages since it had a very deep hinterland. It was a commercial center from which Aybastı, Kumru, Korgan, Gölköy, and even the Reşadiye town of Tokat were connected to markets, sold their crops, and satisfied their consumption needs. The Fatsa-Aybastı-

[80] Ibid., p.6296. The building of this highway began in 1943. İbrahim Dizman, *Ordu'nun 20. Yüzyılı 1900-1999* (Ordu: Ordu Belediyesi Yayınları, 2006), p.62. However, it reached Ordu in 1963. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6275. By the beginning of the 1980s, in Fatsa, there were several big bus companies with a hundred buses which had direct routes to such centers as İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Adana, Diyarbakır, Mersin, Antalya and Bursa, indicating a very active transportation. Yayla, p.143.

[81] Along with a fisherman's haven capable of holding five hundred boats, Fatsa had a concrete seaport built in 1967 to which two ships of 1,000-3,000 tons could board at the same time. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6297. However, the seaport in Fatsa was used for trade rather than transportation. Yayla, pp.143-4.

[82] Ibid., p.144.

[83] Kaptan, pp.242-7.

Reşadiye road, which was one of the three highways connecting Central Anatolia to coastal settlements in the region was also influential on this development.[84]

Indeed, dating from the 1950s, the town center began to develop as an area of commerce and consumption. By 1967 in Fatsa, there were 385 recorded commercial firms, and six hazelnut exporters who also owned hazelnut shelling factories.[85] However, most of the commercial firms in the town were small enterprises. At the same date, there were 258 members of the Fatsa Tradesmen Suretyship Cooperative (*Esnaf Kefaret Kooperatifi*), which was founded in 1964, and financed by the People's Bank of Turkey (*Türkiye Halk Bankası*) in order to help small tradesmen.[86] This development continued until the 1980s. As Oktay Güvemli states, the total number of the members of tradesmen and craftsmen chambers in the town rose from 332 in 1965 to 2,932 in 1985. Parallel to this commercial development, the number of banks in the town rose from two in 1965 to ten in 1985.[87]

In the town, the industrial sector, too, developed on the basis of hazelnut production, and depended on the income received from its exportation. Until the 1970s, besides some small manufacture workshops, the only significant industrial facilities were hazelnut breaking and processing factories. As already mentioned, by 1967, there were six hazelnut factories that belonged to private persons who were also involved in hazelnut exportation. Other than these, the Union of Agricultural Sales Cooperatives for Hazelnut (*Fındık Tarım Satış Kooperatifleri Birliği* -

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[84] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, pp.6295-6, 6303.

[85] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı,* pp.242-6. The exporters were the Cemalettin and Salim Koç Collective Company, Ali Rıza Yücel, İbrahim İbrahimoğlu, Ali Eriş, İsmail Eriş and Ertuğrul Yalçın. Ibid., p.243. Hazelnut was primarily exported from the seaport.

[86] Ibid., p.248.

[87] Oktay Güvemli, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde Sosyo-Ekonomik Açıdan Ordu İlinin 75 Yılı* (N.p.: Ordu Sanatevi Yayını, 1998). The two banks in Fatsa in 1965 were the Agricultural Bank and the Business Bank of Turkey (*Türkiye İş Bankası*). *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı,* p.244.

Fiskobirlik) also had hazelnut factories. In fact, by 1980, there were many hazelnut shelling workshops in every part of Fatsa.[88] The situation was similar in the entire region. According to the 1964 Census of Industry, in Ordu, there were only 31 facilities with more than ten workers. While two of these were public enterprises, 29 were private enterprises. Twenty-six of these enterprises were in the food sector, and almost all of them were hazelnut shelling, roasting, and packaging factories.[89] As stated in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, one reason for this relative underdevelopment of industry was that it was only in 1963 that the district was connected to remote internal markets with a highway. Inadeqaute state investments and the insufficiency of capital accumulation concentrated in the hazelnut trade were among other factors. However, in the 1970s, Ordu was included in Privileged Cities in Development (*Kalkınmada Öncelikli İller*), and as a result, industry revived to some extent. The most important industrial enterprise opened in Fatsa during this period was Demas Water Products Marketing Joint Stock Company which was operating in the fishing industry, and had a capacity of producing 1,500 tons of fish flour, three hundred tons of fish oil, and eighty tons of fish essence per year. Also, in 1971, the construction of the Fatsa Meat and Fish Corporation Fishing Complex was begun. However, the facility, which had approximately 180 workers, was unable to start operating until 1982.[90]

Other than these, fishing, corn production, apiculture, stockbreeding, and carpet making were some of the income generating activies in Fatsa. Especially fishing was a significant occupation for some of those people dwelling in the coastal

[88] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6303.

[89] Quoted in ibid., p.6292.

[90] Ibid., pp.6291, 6293.

areas of the town. However, since it was technically underdeveloped, and there were problems in marketing, fishing remained under its potential.[91]

The Rural-Urban Composition of the Population

As a result of the above-mentioned relative advantages, the population increase rates and densities of coastal towns were higher than those of inner towns. According to the 1980 Census of Population, the population density in Fatsa was 197 people per square kilometer. It was 214 in Perşembe, 174 in Ordu Center, and 171 in Ünye while it was 29 in Mesudiye, 74 in Akkuş, 89 in Aybastı and 103 in Kumru.[92] Yet, most of the population in Fatsa lived in the rural parts of the town. As shown in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, in 1980, the ratio of these people was 81.1 percent, and their number was 90,094 as opposed to 22,405 people living in the urban center. However, Fatsa was also experiencing a process of urbanization which gradually began in the 1950s, accelerated in the 1960s, and slowed down a little in the 1970s when migration to other cities gained more importance as a consequence of the fact that susbsistence opportunities in the town center were no more sufficient for the newcomers. During this period, the population of Fatsa city center was multiplied by 4.5.[93] The main reasons for the migrations from rural areas were inadequate agricultural incomes and high birth rates. Because of the characteristics of hazelnut production, mechanization did not play a significant role in migrations.[94] These demographic developments can be seen in Table 2.

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[91] Ibid., p.6279

[92] Quoted in ibid., p.6258.

[93] Ibid., pp.6298-9, 6303.

Table 2. The Population of Fatsa between 1927 and 1980, and Its Distribution among Urban and Rural Areas.

Years	Urban Population	Rural Population	Total Population
1927	2,504	35,383	37,887
1935	2,875	44,693	47,568
1940	3,242	69,672	72,914
1945	3,888	75,560	79,448
1950	5,025	84,334	89,359
1955	5,829	92,625	98,454
1960[95]	6,841	62,358	69,199
1965	9,738	71,238	80,976
1970	14,266	79,064	93,330
1975	19,758	83,747	103,505
1980	22,405	90,094	112,499

Source: Güvemli, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde*, p.120. Note: As noted above, the urban population is defined as the population in province and district centers.

Administratively, by 1980 there were seven municipalities in the town other than Fatsa municipality, which was founded in 1876. These were the *bucak* municipalities of Çamaş and Bolaman, and village municipalities of Çatalçınar, Eskiköy, Ilıca, Yalıköy and Sarıyakup. Bolaman municipality was founded in 1966, Ilıca municipality in 1970, Yalıköy and Sarıyakup municipalities in 1971, Çatalçınar and Eskiköy municipalities in 1973, and Çamaş municipality in 1975.[96] At the same date, Fatsa had 83 villages, two of which (Bolaman and Çamaş) were *bucak*. The average population of these villages were 1,085; however, only 29 of them had

[94] In 1950, there weren't any tractors in Ordu as a whole. In 1965, there were only eight tractors, while this number rose to thirty six in 1970, 105 in 1975, and 541 in 1980. Ibid., p.6286.

[95] The population decline in 1960 was stemming from an administrative change which separated Kumru and Korgan from Fatsa, and made these two settlements distinct towns on their own. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6257.

[96] Ibid., p.6303.

populations bigger than a thousand. The populations of twenty five villages were between 501 and 1,000, 20 villages between 201 and 500, and nine villages below 200.[97]

Mainly as a consequence of natural conditions, in these villages, houses and neighbourhoods are notably diffused as opposed to the town center, which has a quite dense settlement structure. However, as far as I can tell, the rural and urban areas of Fatsa are pretty much integrated. One reason is that some people have houses both in the urban center and in the countryside. Especially the younger generations and middle-aged people prefer living in the town center while their old parents stay in the villages. In addition, although they live in villages, some people work in the town center, or at least send their children to schools or *dershane*s[98] in the town center. Moreover, people dwelling in the villages often go to the town center in order to sell their crops in market places, or satisfy their consumption requirements. They also go to the center for their official and banking affairs as well as for medical services. Before 1980, too, the situation was more or less similar.

Together with a great amount of immigration stemming from the above reasons, the fusion of urban and rural areas like that brought about a very high degree of economic and cultural differentiation within the town. Indeed, while a minority was extensively enjoying the commercial development and advantages of the town, the living conditions of the broad masses of hazelnut producers and the urban poor were rapidly deteriorating. But what is more striking is that because of the fusion of urban and rural areas, these adverse developments were happening within the same space, making the exploitation clearly visible. In other words, there

[97] Ibid.

[98] Private establishments preparing students for various exams, the university exam being the most important one.

was widespread misery within great prosperity. Undeniably, this phenomenon played a key role in the emergence of social disturbances during the 1960s and 1970s.

The Gender Composition of the Population and Unequal Gender Relations

Until 1975, the number of women in Ordu was slightly higher than the number of men.[99] Similarly, in 1980 the total number of women in Fatsa was 57,022 while the number of men was 55,477.[100] However, there was a difference between the town center and rural areas. While in the countryside, the number of women was higher (46,378 to 43,716), the number of men was higher in the town center (11,761 to 10,644).[101] This was beacause of the fact that in some of the emigrations from rural areas, not the entire family but only the males were emigrating.[102]

On the other hand, similar to many other parts of the country, Fatsa and Ordu had an evidently patriarchal culture in the period under study. One sign of this was such common practices as *başlık parası*,[103] and arranged marriages. In the 1967 Ordu Yearbook the following is written:

> *Başlık parası* practices in villages erodes the happiness of married couples like a cancer. And because of this, the number of love matches is very low. … The marriage fate of the girl is bound to the word that comes out from the two lips of her father. It may be argued for all villages that girls are deprived of the right to choose their life-long companions.[104]

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[99] Ibid., pp.6258-9.

[100] DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, 12.10.1980, Ordu (Ankara: DİE, 1980), p.7.

[101] Ibid.

[102] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6259.

[103] The money given to bride's family by the male before marriage.

Another indicator of the patriarchal social structure was the difference in the literacy and schooling rates between men and women. In the 1966-1967 academic year, the number of girls in the village primary schools of Fatsa was 2,399 while the number of boys was 6,608.[105] Thirteen years later, in the town center, the situation was not much different. Although the total number of women at schooling age (six and above) was less than the number of men (8,999 to 10,075), the number of illiterate women was much higher than the number of illiterate men (3,714 to 1,428).[106] The distribution of graduates at different levels among men and women is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of Graduates at Different Levels Among Men and Women in Fatsa Town Center by 1980.

	Total Graduates	Primary School	Junior High School	Vocational Schools at J. High School Level	High School	Vocational Schools at High School Level	Higher Education and Faculties
Males	6,959	4,813	1,118	17	394	348	269
Females	3,738	2,821	493	10	180	170	64

Source: DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, 12.10.1980, Ordu (Ankara: DİE, 1980), p.19.

[104] "*Evlenen çiftlerin mutluluğunu köylerdeki başlık alma durumları bir kanser gibi kemirir. Bu nedenle de aşk ve sevgi üzerine kurulan evliliklerin sayısı pek azdır. … Kızın evlilik kaderi babasının iki dudağı arasından çıkan söze bağlanır. Tüm köyler için denilebilir ki; kızlar hayat arkadaşlarını seçmek haklarından yoksundurlar.*" *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, p.112.

[105] Ibid., p.166.

[106] DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı*, *Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, 12.10.1980, Ordu (Ankara: DİE, 1980), p.19.

A further mark of unequal gender relations was the sexist division of labor. As Sönmez puts it, with the expansion of hazelnut agriculture, the organization of the market-oriented side of the rural economy shifted into the hands of men, while the organization of the subsistence-oriented part was transferred to women. Both this division of labor, and the importance of cash income generated by hazelnut production for economic power in rural areas engendered such an idiom in the region: "Hazelnut month, men's month."[107] Actually, it was women and children who, in the role of unpaid family members, dealt with the agricultural side of hazelnut production such as hoeing the soil, and gathering and shelling the hazelnuts.[108] However, it was men who were in charge of the marketing of the hazelnuts, and controlling the income from it. As a matter of fact, in Ordu, in 1975, 94.2 percent of all working women had the status of unpaid family labor. Those who worked for themselves were only 3.6 percent. For men, these numbers were 36.6 and 46.1, respectively.[109] The 1967 Ordu City Yearbook stressed the same fact:

> The woman is the mother of her children at home, and the worker of her husband on the land. As a result of this, the village women get old at a young age. … The woman is rather used in service works. Her primary duties are having a child, digging land, gathering hazelnuts, bringing water, taking care of animals. In a word, the woman is a "PRODUCER."[110]

This disadvantageous position of women in almost all aspects of social life was a chief factor that directed them to actively participate in and perform a leading role in the social opposition after the 1960s. Indeed, a great number of pictures

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[107] "*Fındık ayı erkek* ayı." Sönmez, p.88.

[108] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6319.

[109] Ibid., p.6277.

[110] "*Kadın köyde çocuklarının anası, tarlada kocasının işçisidir. Onun içindir ki, köy kadınları genç yaşlarında ihtiyarlar. … Kadın daha çok hizmet işlerinde kullanılır. Onun başlıca konuları çocuk yapmak, tarla kazmak, fındık toplamak, su getirmek, hayvan bakımı yapmaktır. Tek kelimeyle* '*ÜRETİCİDİR*' *kadın.*" *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, p. 111.

reveal that women were more often than not at the front stage in social struggles in the region, particularly in Fatsa.

The Ethnic and Religious Composition of the Population

With regard to the ethnic and religious composition of the population, Fatsa has always been a very cosmopolitan town. As Cevat Erbil argues, Fatsa is a very old settlement area whose history dates back to ancient times. It witnessed a vigorous period during the era of the Pontos State, before being ruled over by first the Romans and then the Byzantinians. After the 1071 Manzikert War, the first Turkish settlements step by step began in Fatsa with the raids of Turkish tribes, especially the Çepnis who later united under the Hacı Emiroğulları principality. This principality was taken under the rule of the Ottoman Empire with the Canik military campaign of 1427/1428. Roughly at the same time, the power of the Genoese on the shores of the town, under whose rule Fatsa had become a prominent commercial center in the Black Sea, ended.[111]

As a result of Turkification and Islamification, beginning from this date, the number of Muslims considerably exceeded the number of non-Muslims. According to the 1881/1882-1883 Ottoman Population Censuses, Fatsa, which had a total population of 30,349, had 1,652 Orthodox Greeks, and 802 Gregorian Armenians.[112] Nonetheless, despite their relatively low number, as Erbil argues, they were fairly influential in the town center as a consequence of their mastery of commerce and various crafts as opposed to the Muslim population, who tended to live in villages and dealt with agriculture and stockbreeding. After the Tanzimat

[111] Cevat Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi* (Fatsa: Güneş, 2002), pp.15-7.

[112] Quoted in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6265.

(Reorganization) reforms in the early nineteenth century, they also took roles in the administration of the town. The Greek Lazeri Efendi and Armenian Kirkor Efendi were two non-Muslim mayors of the town in this century.[113] After the forced deportation and population exchange in the early twentieth century, the existence of non-Muslims in the town came to an end. However, at the beginning of the 1980s, Yayla claimed that there were still thirteen non-Muslims in the town.[114]

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Fatsa received a variety of immigrations which contributed to the cosmopolitan structure of the town. The first wave of immigrants were from Caucasia during the late nineteenth century as a result of the pressure from Russia. The pioneer of this movement was the immigration of Circassians in 1864. According to the 1870 and 1871 Trabzon Province Yearbooks, their number was 901.[115] Later, as a consequence of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, in 1878 the Abkhazians, and in 1880 and 1887 Georgians were settled in Fatsa.[116]

The coming of these people, a considerable section of whom were employed in municipal police (*zabıta*), brought life to the commercial activities in Fatsa; nevertheless, a range of disputes between these settlers and the native people are noted to have occured as well in this era.[117] The tracks of these clashes can be followed in the stories of well-known *eşkıya*s (bandit) of the town such as Hekimoğlu İbrahim. As Ayhan Yüksel writes, Hekimoğlu was a poor Turkish villager from Yassıtaş village of Fatsa who was working in the mill of the Georgian

[113] Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, pp.21, 23.

[114] Yayla, p.145.

[115] Quoted in Erbil, "Tarih," Cevat Erbil et al. (eds.), *Adanmış Bir Kentin Anatomisi* (Unpublished book).

[116] Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, p.24.

[117] Ibid., pp.26-7.

Sefer Agha. After having a love relationship with the agha's daughter Fadime (or another Georgian woman in some other sources), he clashed with the men of the agha (or the villagers) and became an *eşkıya.* Soon, the problem became a part of wider ethnic disputes in the region. While the Georgians were following him, the Turks who were complaining about the behaviour of the Georgians were protecting and hiding him. In a telegraph sent in 1908 to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the ministry was warned about the probability of bloody clashes between Turks and Georgians because of Hekimoğlu. After years of government chase, Hekimoğlu was killed in 1913.[118] A part of the *türkü* (folk song) written after him says: "Let not our *Aynalı martin* (the kind of rifle Hekimoğlu had) choose between Georgians / Let not the immigrants pass from here."[119]

In the early twentieth century, there were some other immigrations. When Russian forces entered Trabzon on 14 April 1916 in WWI, thousands of families started migrating towards the West, and some of them settled in Fatsa.[120] Also, in 1917-18 a further surge of Georgian immigrations took place as a reaction to the fall of Batum during WWI.[121] Moreover, as Erbil states, after the Lousanne Treaty, within the scope of population exchange, 801 Muslim immigrants from Greece were settled in Fatsa. However, because of different production patterns, most of them could not get used to living in Fatsa, and only thirty percent remained in the town. These people, in general, took over the handicrafts which were previously carried out by the Greeks.[122]

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[118] Ayhan Yüksel, *Doğu Karadeniz Araştırmaları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2005), pp.139-47.

[119] "*Aynalı martinimiz Gürcü seçmesin / Muhacir milleti burdan geçmesin.*" Ibid., pp.147-9.

[120] Fevzi Güvemli, *Bir Zamanlar Ordu: Anılar*, İbrahim Dizman (ed.) (Ordu: Orsev Yayınları, 1996), pp.33-5.

[121] Oktay Güvemli, *Doğu Karadeniz ve Ordu Üzerine* (Trabzon: Orsev Yayınları, 1995), p.77.

As a result of all these, Fatsa had a very rich and mixed population in terms of ethno-religious identities. By 1980, in the town, there were Turks, Georgians, Turkomen, Circassians, Trabzoners, and a few Laz. There was also a religious differentiation among the population. While most of the Turkomen were Alevi; Turks, Georgians and others, to a large extent, belonged to the Sunni sect of Islam.[123] As shall be seen in the next chapter, when social opposition gained strength in the 1960s and 1970s, these differentiations played their roles in the course of events.

Education and Health

On the whole, education statistics on Ordu were very poor. By 1975, the ratio of the literate people was only 49.7 percent while seventy percent of the population had not graduated from primary school.[124] However, probably because of the rising importance of education in a time of increased social mobility, the number of students and schools had begun increasing dating from the 1960s. For instance, while in the 1961-1962 academic year, there were 5,560 students in the village primary schools of Fatsa, this number had risen up to 9,007 in the 1966-1967 academic year. In the meantime, the number of teachers in these schools had climbed from 121 to 198.[125] On the other hand, in Ordu, in education, there were significant imbalances between coastal and inland towns, urban and rural areas, and

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[122] Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, pp.27-8.

[123] Yayla., p.145.

[124] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, pp.6306-7. In the same year, the ratio of the literate people in Turkey was 61.9. While this number was 48.3 percent among women it was 75.1 percent among men. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, Vol.1, p.650.

[125] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, p.166.

males and females.[126] For Fatsa, the difference in education between males and females has already been mentioned. Such a difference might be claimed for the urban and rural areas of the town. By 1980, despite a very rapid urbanization stemming from an enormous amount of immigration from rural areas, the ratio of the literate people at schooling age was 73 percent in Fatsa town center.[127] In fact, together with the urban centers of Ünye and Ordu, Fatsa town center had always had a good educational status compared with the region. There were many madrasahs together with Muslim and non-Muslim schools in the town in the nineteenth century.[128] Dumlupınar and Sakarya primary schools, which were opened in the Republican period, had a considerable impact on the development of education in the town.[129] Later in 1950 Fatsa Junior High School, and in 1966 Fatsa High School were opened.[130] According to Yayla, by the 1984-1985 academic year, there were seventeen junior high schools and 173 primary schools in the town as a whole, and seven of the primary schools were in the town center. Moreover, in the town center, there was a high school, a commercial high school, an *imam-hatip* (preacher) highschool, a girls' vocational school, and an industrial vocational high school.[131] This relatively rich and deep-rooted education tradition provided Fatsa with a significant amount of intellectuals and literate people, a considerable portion of

[126] *Yurt Ansilopedisi*, p.6306.

[127] Calculated from the figures in DİE, *Genel Nüfus Sayımı, Nüfusun Sosyal ve Ekonomik Nitelikleri*, (Ordu: 1980), p.19. The same number was 73.1 percent in Ünye town center and 80.9 percent in Ordu Center. On the other hand, it was 55.5 percent in Ordu as a whole. It was 66 percent when urban centers are taken together while the average of all *bucak*s and villages was 50.6 percent. Calculated from the figures in ibid., pp.16-8, 20-1.

[128] Yurt Ansiklopedisi, pp.6268-9.

[129] Nurcan Çakır and et al., "Eğitim," Cevat Erbil et al. (eds.), *Adanmış Bir Kentin Anatomisi* (Unpublished book).

[130] Ibid.; *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6308.

[131] Yayla, p.149.

whom not only embraced oppositional ideas, but also worked hard to diffuse them among wider social segments so that Fatsa became one of the most prominent centers of social opposition in the Black Sea during the 1960s and 1970s.

On the other hand, the health statistics on Ordu were not fine too. Despite a considerable development dating from the 1970s, the number of people per bed and doctor was well above the country average. Accordingly in 1980, the population per bed was 755 while it was 451 in Turkey. Moreover, the population per doctor was 11,149 while it was 1,642 in Turkey.[132] By 1985, in Fatsa, there was a public hospital with 75 beds along with only 22 doctors, one dentist, 55 midwives, and 39 nurses.[133]

To sum up, during the 1960s and 1970s, Fatsa had crucial relative advantages with regard to the region as a whole; however, in those years the town also had vital deficiencies in education, health, transportation and infrastructure statistics in proportion to the developed parts of the country. For instance, by 1967, there were only twenty villages in the town where drinking water networks had been established, and 27 villages did not have a road.[134] No doubt, in a time of increased social mobility and communication, these deficiencies became more problematic in the eyes of young people, who inevitably made comparisons between the social life in the big cities and the conditions in their town.

[132] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6310.

[133] Güvemli, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde.*

[134] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, pp.137-8, 254.

The Hazelnut Question

From Subsistence Economy to Hazelnut Production for the Market

Between 1810 and 1815, the *kaymakam* (head official) of Ordu district, İbrahim Bey, had hazelnut saplings brought from Giresun, and set up gardens in Ebülhayır (Gülyalı).[135] Sönmez claims that this date in the early nineteenth century signifies the transition to systematical production for market in the Eastern Black Sea region hazelnut production zone. For him, it was an attempt to direct villagers to produce a cash crop which could be exported so that the state policies aiming to get rid of the vicious cycle of debt by exporting agricultural products would be implemented.[136] On the other hand, Yüksel argues that the reason İbrahim Bey encouraged villagers to cultivate hazelnut was that he wanted to avoid the troubles caused by rice production, malaria being the most significant one. Therefore, hazelnut was offered as an alternative to rice, and in 1894, the production of rice was prohibited altogether.[137] Whatever the main reason was, despite this encouragement, by the end of the century hazelnut cultivation was not widespread in the region. According to Vital Cuinet, at the beginning of the 1890s, in Ordu, Ünye and Fatsa, the most produced agricultural crops were corn, bean, rice and cannabis.[138] The 1901 Trabzon Province Yearbook does not even mention hazelnut

[135] Yüksel, p.76.

[136] Sönmez, pp.69-70.

[137] Yüksel, ibid., p.77. According to the 1901 Trabzon Province Yearbook, rice was mostly produced in Fatsa and Terme. In 1879, 31,654 kgs of rice was produced in Fatsa. Rice cultivation was quited after drying up of swamps because of which people, in summers, moved to plateaues, and stayed there for four or five months . Quoted in Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, pp.30-1.

[138] Quoted in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* pp.6266-7.

production in Fatsa.[139] Cuinet's statistics, too, do not suggest a significant amount of hazelnut production in the town. Accordingly, in 1889, from the seaport of Fatsa 140,000 *kile*s (bushel) of corn, 1,000,000 eggs, and 170,000 kgs of cannabis were exported while the amount of exported hazelnut and walnut together was only 700-800 sacks.[140] According to the 1913 Census of Agriculture, in Fatsa 390 tons of hazelnut were produced, while in Ordu Center hazelnut production amounted to 4,863 tons.[141] As Erbil states, it's during the Republican period that hazelnut cultivation took an important role in the economy of the town.[142]

A key reason for the hesitancy of villagers to cultivate hazelnut was the characteristics of hazelnut agriculture. The hazelnut plant begins yielding a crop only after the fifth year of its planting, and on an average, it takes 12-15 years for a hazelnut garden to grow.[143] In other words, as Sönmez puts it, hazelnut cultivation requires a long-term investment and economic determination, and it is too costly to quit after starting. Therefore, from the beginning, only those who had the economic power to afford trying a new crop which was almost entirely produced for market, and thus had no direct relation with consumption, were able to switch to hazelnut cultivation. As Sönmez goes on to claim, in the nineteenth century, such power belonged only to big landowners who possessed extra land other than the amount required for subsistence production, or to Greek and Armenian farmers who, in case of a failure in production or marketing, had the opportunity to borrow money from

[139] Quoted in Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, p.30.

[140] Quoted in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* pp.6267-8.

[141] Ibid., p.6279.

[142] Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, p.30.

[143] Saydam Sarıhan, *Fındık* (Ordu: Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı Ziraat İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü Ordu Teknik Ziraat Müdürlüğü, 1981), p.15.; Sönmez, p.86.

urban merchants of the same ethnicity as themselves to compensate their costs.[144] In addition to this, Sönmez underlines some other factors discouraging villagers until the 1950s. One of these was the lack of modern inputs and technology that would ensure a regular productivity. The other and probably much more influential one was the unsafe conditions of hazelnut market, which, in the absence of strong credit and marketing organizations of producers, was controlled by merchants acting as intermediaries between the peasantry and the industrial capital of the West.[145] One may also add the negative effects of extraordinary times such as two world wars and the 1929 Depression to this picture. It is noted that during WWI, nutrition became a great problem, thus in order to have wheat, villagers uprooted hazelnut saplings, and began to produce corn.[146] It is quite likely that also between 1929 and 1932 hazelnut production dropped when the price of hazelnut, which was one of the five major export crops of Turkey, declined by 73 percent.[147] WWII, too, had a damaging impact on hazelnut production. During the war, exportation from the Black Sea seaports declined dramatically. For instance, while in 1938, the total volume of exportation from the seaport of Fatsa, most of which was composed of hazelnut, amouted to 881,989 liras, in 1940 it fell to 186,732 liras, and in 1945 to 61,743 liras.[148]

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[144] Ibid., pp.86, 88.

[145] Ibid., pp.86-8. During the First National Hazelnut Congress held in Ankara on 10 October 1935, such problems arising from the disorganized character of hazelnut producers were dealt with. On 28 July 1938, the Fiskobirlik was formed. Taşkın, pp.34-40, 56.

[146] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6319.

[147] Ronnie Margulies and Ergin Yıldızoğlu, "Tarımsal Değişim: 1923-70," Irvin C.Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak (eds.), *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003), p.290. Meanwhile, the focus of state policies shifted from farmers producing export crops to small and middle farmers in Central Anatolia who produced cereals. Ibid., p.291.

[148] Güvemli, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde*, p.78.

Nevertheless, as Sönmez stresses, there were also encouraging factors. First, worldwide hazelnut production was still in scarcity, and the net income from hazelnut was more than other crops produced in the region. Second, preventing soil erosion, hazelnut was the most suitable crop to the land conditions of the region as well as to its climate, hence it was encouraged by agricultural technicians. Third, hazelnut production was able to generate cash, which was a major indicator of one's economic power in rural areas.[149] As Sönmez argues, a villager's words which he has quoted from his father demonstrates how this feature of hazelnut production was perceived in the region: "If I had five steelyards of hazelnut, no one in this village could stop me."[150]

In addition to the factors above, increasing emigration to the big cities after WWII, which, to some extent, eased the high population pressure on the land, and the beginning of support purchases via agricultural sales cooperatives brought about the dispersal of hazelnut production.[151] This was, of course, in line with the commercialization of agriculture in Turkey beginning from the 1950s onwards. As Margulies and Yıldızoğlu argue, after WWII, both the class structure of Turkey on which merchant capital had supremacy, and the new international conditions forced the government to adopt an export-oriented free market economy based on agricultural development.[152] Therefore during the 1950s, the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti - DP*) strove to increase agricultural production with such mechanisms as opening up and distributing new lands for cultivation, fostering mechanization, specifying floor prices, carrying out support purchases, increasing

[149] Sönmez, pp.87-9.

[150] "*Beş kantar fındığım olsa bu köyde kimse benim önümde duramaz.*" Ibid., p.88.

[151] Ibid., pp.90-2.

[152] Margulies and Yıldızoğlu, pp.295-6.

the amount of agricultural credits and making infrastructural investments.[153] As Marguiles and Yıldızoğlu state, during the import substituting industrialization period, which was adopted in the 1960s after the economic and political crisis in the second half of the 1950s, the agricultural sector also undertook the role of providing the national industry with an internal market together with inputs. Therefore, the importance given to mechanization, irrigation, and fertilizer usage inreased. All these meant that, by the beginning of the 1970s, "the dynamics of commodity production had already dominated the agricultural sector in Turkey."[154]

The outcomes of this commercialization can be seen in the hazelnut sector. Despite fluctuations, on the whole, the total size of production areas, the amount of production and the volume of exportation rose dramatically.[155] As Sarıhan puts it, from 1961-1965 to 1976-1980, total hazelnut area, production and productivity rose by 53.3, 150.1 and 63.3 percent, respectively.[156] According to a report prepared by the Union of the Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (*Türk Mimar ve Mühendis Odaları Birliği - TMMOB*), considering the average of the period between 1969 and 1973, 77.2 percent of all cultivation areas in the world, 65.7 percent of total production, and 74.4 percent of all exports belonged to Turkey.[157] In 1966, in

[153] Number of households received land was approximately 312.600 during this period while it was only 33,600 in the Republican People's Party era. Keyder, p.175. On the other hand, the number of tractors which was 1,756 in 1948 rose up to 31,415 in 1952, and 42,136 in 1960. Margulies and Yıldızoğlu, p.308. In addition as Oktay Yenal states, total agricultural credits rose from 421 million Turkish Liras (TL) in 1950 to 820 million TLs in 1952. Also during the DP goverment, total length of highways increased by more than 30 percent, electricity production by 2.5 times, cement production by four times, and iron-steel production by 70 percent. Oktay Yenal, *Cumhuriyet'in İktisadi Tarihi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Sınai Kalkınma Bankası Yayınları, 2003), p.79.

[154] Margulies and Yıldızoğlu, pp.298-300.

[155] For detailed statistics year by year, see Taşkın, pp.99-125.

[156] Sarıhan, pp.18.

[157] *Fındık Raporu* (Ankara: TMMOB Yayınları:2, 1976), p.4.

Fatsa, 16,200 tons of crusty hazelnut was produced on 19,000 hectares of land.[158] An immediate consequence of this expansion of hazelnut production was the decline of all aspects of the subsistence economy. As a result, people became dependent on a single crop in order to meet their consumption needs, "from wheat to vegetables", which previously had been produced by themselves.[159] For instance, Kemal Özkara, a columnist in the local newspaper *Fatsa Güneş*, writes the following about the 1960s in Fatsa: "The people of Fatsa do not have a crop other than hazelnut, like others. Everything is dependent on it, everything waits for it. The education of the son, the trousseau of the daughter, nutrition requirements, sickness, birth and death, too, wait for the hazelnut."[160] This inclination might also be seen from the current agricultural production statistics in Fatsa as shown in the Table 4.

Table 4. The Agricultural Production Statistics of Fatsa in 2000/2005.

Name of Crop	Area (Hectares)	Production (Tons)
Hazelnut	24,440	34,738
Corn	3,200	8,500
Wheat	15	52.5
Bean	20	24
Pea	2.5	3.75
Potato	20	500
Oats	25	125

Source: Abdullah Yüksel and Yalçın Perçin, "Ekonomi," in Cevat Erbil et al. (eds.), *Adanmış Bir Kentin Anatomisi* (Unpublished book). Note: For hazelnut and corn, the year 2005 is considered. Figures for other crops belong to the year 2000.

[158] *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı,* pp.231.

[159] Kaptan, p.241. Sönmez claims this tendency also included stockbreeding which was a major part of the subsistence economy. As he argues, the decline of crops such as cabbage and bean caused a reduction in stems and foods that animals were eating, and the labor force within families was reorganized in a way that it was no longer possible to take animals to plateaus. Sönmez, p.89.

[160] "*Fındıktan başka ürünü yoktur Fatsa'lının diğerleri gibi. Her şey ona bakar, her şey onu bekler. Oğlanın okuması, kızın çeyizi, 'kör boğaz'ın doyması, hastalanması, doğum ve ölüm de sanki fındığı beklemektedir.*" Kemal Özkara, "Merhaba Fatsa," *Fatsa Güneş*, 23 March 2007.

The Structural Problems of Hazelnut Production

An important structural problem for hazelnut producers was the inadeqaute and unfair distribution of lands. According to a study carried out from 1972 to 1976 among the *Fiskobirlik* shareholders, 30,531 enterprises with below twenty decares of land composed 58.24 percent of all enterprises, but owned only 15.19 percent of all cultivated lands. However, 900 enterprises each having between 500 and 2,500 decares of land composed 1.71 percent of all enterprises, and owned 25.19 percent of all cultivated lands.[161]

Statistics on Fatsa and Ordu, too, suggest an unfair and unequal distribution though in a somewhat more balanced manner. In Ordu in 1970, 56 percent of all enterprises which owned 22 percent of all lands were smaller than ten decares. On the other hand, at the same time, there were only twenty families in Ordu with lands between 500 and 1,000 decares of land, and the average land size among them was 729 decares.[162] By the beginning of 1975, in Ordu, 87.64 percent of all households had lands smaller than thirty decares. These families were cultivating on 68.35 percent of total lands, and the average land size per family was 11.69 decares. On the other hand, lands between thirty and a hundred decares were owned by 12.36 percent of all households. These families were cultivating 31.65 percent of all

[161] *Destekleme Politikası Uygulamasının Çay, Şekerpancarı, Pamuk, Fındık Üreticileri Üzerindeki Etkileri* (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Sosyal Planlama Dairesi, Publication Number: DPT:1476 SPD:286, 1976), p.42.

[162] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* pp.6287-8. However, this does not mean that in the past there were no big landowners in the region. According to a list sent by the Governor Sırrı Pasha to İstanbul in the late nineteenth century, Süleyman Bey, Ali Bey and his brothers İbrahim and Osman Beys from the Hazinedaroğulları family from Ordu were among the most prominent people in the Eastern Black Sea region. They were noted to be of first degree in wealth and prestige. Yüksel, pp. 43-58. However, in the course of events, these big landowners were either dissolved or they turned into commercial, financial and industrial capital. For the example of Nasuhbeyoğulları family and Ferhat agha in Kayadibi village of Ordu see Sönmez, pp.80-5. In Fatsa, some of such notable families who are pretty influential in the economy and local politics of the town at the moment are Koçlar, Yüceller, Karamollalar, Topaloğulları, Dizdaroğulları, Yalmanlar, Dadyanlar, Yerebasmazlar, Erdemler, Çebiler, Erişler and Yahşiler.

hazelnut lands, and the average land size per family in this group was 38.44 decares.[163] In 1979, in Ordu, the ratio of enterprises smaller than twenty decares was 83.4 percent while these were running 50.3 percent of all cultivated lands. The ratio of households with lands bigger than a hundred decares were only 0.5 percent, yet 7.4 percent of all lands belonged to them.[164] As shown in Table 5, the 1981 statistics on the villages of Fatsa also indicate the dominance of small enterprises.

Table 5. Distribution of Lands to Households in the Villages of Fatsa.

Total Number of Households	Land Size (Decares)				
11965	0-25	26-50	51-100	101-200	201-500
Number of Families	10,430	1,243	290	2	-
Ratio of Families (%)	87.1	10.4	2.48	0.02	-

Source: Köy Envanter Etüdü (Ordu, 1981), pp.18-49, quoted in Yayla, p.327.

The weight of small commodity production in the region may imply, at first glance, a rather stable structure into which the dynamics of capitalism had not completely infiltrated, and that there was little differentiation between households. However, such a conclusion is misleading since in reality, all small enterprises in the region were strongly integrated into the market,[165] and under capitalist market pressures, each year many of them were dissolved.[166] Meanwhile, new ones were appearing because of high population pressure on relatively little land, and the

[163] *Fındık Raporu,* p.11.

[164] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6288.

[165] Almost 100 percent of hazelnut production in the region was for market. In potato, this ratio was over 70 while in wheat and corn it was at about 10 percent. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6287.

[166] In 1950, in Ordu, the ratio of households without land was 1.9 percent whereas the same ratio was calculated as 30.7 in the Village Inventory Etudes carried out between 1960 and 1968. These families were mostly in Fatsa, Ünye, Ordu Center and Mesudiye. Ibid.

divisions caused by the inheritance system.[167] It is also likely that the rugged geography of the region contributed to the dominance of small land ownership.

When productivity, the costs of production, and the price of hazelnut are considered, with these small lands, it was impossible for the majority of hazelnut producers to be guaranteed a proper living. The calculations done at the end of 1975 by the TMMOB on the basis of a study conducted in 1972 by the Hazelnut Research Institute (*Fındık Araştırma Enstitüsü*), found that in order to live in a humane manner as the constitution foresaw for all citizens, a hazelnut producer family of seven members had to own at least 44-50 decares of hazelnut gardens.[168] Another study carried out in 1990 calculated the required land size for a hazelnut family of five members as 45 decares; however, the average land size in Ordu in 1980 was 12.8 decares.[169]

Truly, in hazelnut production productivity was low. According to the average of the years between 1969 and 1973, productivity in Turkey was 63.8 kgs per decare while it was 142.6 kgs per decare in Italy. In Ordu, it was even lower: 60.4 kgs per decare as the average of the 1969-1975 period.[170] Here, a faithful neo-liberal may argue that such a low productivity is peculiar to small enterprises. Nonetheless, other things being equal, productivity was higher in small enterprises thanks to their labor-intensive character. In fact, the usage of the labor force and inputs such as

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[167] Sönmez, p.93. The high prevalence of land disputes in Fatsa might be regarded as an indicator of this. By the early 1980s, 384 out of 412 pieces of disputed land in Ordu was in Fatsa. Their size was equal to 2,639 decares out of 3,042 decares. Yayla, pp.334-5.

[168] For calculations see *Fındık Raporu,* pp.11-2. According to a research carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture, in Ordu, the average number of family members in enterprises taken into research was 7.79. *Giresun ve Ordu İllerinde Fındık Üretiminin Ekonomik Analizi (1969 – 1970)* (Ankara: T.C. Tarım Bakanlığı Planlama ve Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dairesi Başkanlığı, Publication Number:50, 1972), p.13. However, this number was less in urban centers where nuclear families were more common. *Ordu İli Yıllığı,* pp.111-2.

[169] Sönmez, p.94; *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6288.

[170] *Fındık Raporu,* pp.6-8.

fertilizer and pesticide had a very significant effect on productivity.[171] Since small producers did not have an adequate income and enough support from the relevant organizations, they could not sufficiently benefit from these inputs.[172] Therefore, the reasons for low productivity were to be found in the unequal distribution of wealth and resources, which was a direct consequence of the unfair social relations of hazelnut production.

On the other hand, the price of hazelnuts was never enough to meet both productions costs and consumption needs. Among the costs of production, labor force and fertilizer occupied the biggest share with an average of 60 percent. From 1970 to 1974, the costs of labor force had risen by 97 percent whereas fertilizer costs had risen by roughly 90 percent. During the same period, the rise of announced floor prices in *sivri* (sharp) and *tombul* (fat) hazelnuts were 83.3 and 80 percent, respectively. Therefore, without side revenues of hazelnut production, floor prices were far from compensating the costs.[173] In 1980, Lütfü Yılmaz, a writer in *Demokrat* newspaper, criticized the government for defining the floor price as 110 TLs instead of 160 TLs:

> The cost of a kilogram of hazelnuts, which was confirmed to be 40 liras last year, as a result of rising prices of fertilizer, drugs and such costs, has increased by two times, and the hazelnuts of the year 1980 appear at best to be 83 liras. "Price increases and devaluations" which have three times poisoned the lives of producers are not included in this calculation. … Only the rise of the prices of those elements that affect the cost of hazelnut is taken into consideration. Also, in this calculation, the labor force of the producer who … gave all his labor to his garden is not included in the costs. … Since the cost of hazelnuts was identified as

[171] *Giresun ve Ordu İllerinde,* p.24. For all factors influencing productivity in hazelnut production see ibid., pp.20-9.

[172] The report of the TMMOB argued that the amount of fertilizer used in the hazelnut region in 1973 had to be increased by three times while the amount of pesticide had to be increased by six or seven times. *Fındık Raporu*, p.21. Though not enough, from the 1960s until 1979 synthetic fertilizer usage rose regularly in Ordu. However, because of big price increases in 1980, the total amount of synthetic fertilizer use dropped from 125,000 tons to 20,000 tons. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6285.

[173] *Destekleme Politikası Uygulamasının*, pp.48, 50, 54.

> 80 liras, the floor price should have been 160 liras. However, having specified the floor price as 110 liras, the government has again surrendered producers to usurers.[174]

In line with Yılmaz's arguments, a producer who participated in the "End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meeting in Çatak town of Fatsa in July 1980, complained about the price of hazelnut:

> Last year, they sold the hazelnuts, which they had bought from us for 40 liras, for 200 liras abroad. This year they regarded 110 liras befitting. With this 110 liras they give us, shall we buy fertilizer, shall we buy drugs, or shall we have *patoz* (threshing machine) driven? Today, the daily fee of a worker is not less than 500 liras. Which one of these shall we meet?[175]

An old producer from Demirci village of Fatsa, Şükrü Demir, too, grumbled about the high costs of production:

> They have increased the prices of fertilizer too much. Fertilizer, which was 140 *kuruş* has risen to 680-700 *kuruş* this year. Therefore, we can't buy enough fertilizer, because the price given for hazelnuts does not compensate its cost. Fertilizer is bought by big landowners with cash. …If it goes like this, it seems that we also won't be able to use fertilizer for hazelnuts.[176]

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[174] "*Geçen yıl 40 lira olarak saptanan 1 kilo fındık maliyeti bu yıl artan ilaç, gübre vb. maliyet fiyatları ile iki katına yükselmiş ve 1980 ürünü fındığın en iyimser rakamlarla 83 lira olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu hesaplmaya üç kez fındık üreticisine yaşamı zehir eden 'zamlar, devalüasyonlar' dahil değildir. … Sadece fındığın maliyetini etkileyen unsurların fiyat atışı dikkate alınmıştır. …Yine hesaplamalarda tüm emeğini bahçesine veren üreticinin iş gücü de maliyete dahil edilmemiştir… Fındık maliyeti 80 lira olarak belirlendiğine göre fındık taban fiyatı en az 160 lira olmalıydı. Oysa hükümet fındık taban fiyatını 110 TL ilan ederek üreticileri yine tefecilere tutsak etmiştir.*" Lütfü Yılmaz, "Fındık: Karadeniz'in Canı, Kanı, Alınteri 7," *Demokrat*, 16 July 1980.

[175] "*Bizden geçen yıl 40 liraya aldıkları fındığı, dışarıya 200 liradan sattılar. Bu yıl ise 110 lirayı reva gördüler. Verdikleri 110 lira ile gübre mi alalım, ilaç mı alalım, yoksa patoz mu vurduralım? Bir işçinin yemiyesi bugün 500 liradan aşağı değil. Bunlardan hangi birini karşılayalım?*" "Gölköy ve Çatak'ta 'Fındık'ta Sömürüye Son' Mitingleri Yapıldı,"*Demokrat*, 8 July 1980.

[176] "*Gübre fiyatlarını çok arttırdılar.140 kuruş olan gübre bu sene 680-700 kuruşa yükseldi. Bu yüzden yeterli gübre alamıyoruz. Çünkü fındığa verilen fiyat maliyetini körlemiyor ki. Gübreyi peşin parayla büyük arazi sahipleri alıyor. … Bu gidişle fındıklara gübre de atamayacağız anlaşılan.*" "Fatsa'nın Demirci Köyünden Şükrü Demir: 'Bu Gidişle Fındıklara Gübre de Atamayacağız,'" *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980.

As already argued, the floor price of hazelnuts was also not meeting the ordinary consumption requirements of the producers. Especially high inflation and black marketing in the second half of the 1970s had a devastating impact on them. Saydam Sarıhan's comparison of the rise of hazelnut floor prices and the wholesale price indices is proof to this claim. Considering 1963 values to be a hundred, in 1980, the hazelnut floor price rose to 2,000 while the wholesale price indices rose to 2,604.[177] Şükrü Demir, the above-quoted villager, was angry with the prices of consumption materials, too: "One kilogram of soap has climbed up to 250 TLs. Three years ago when hazelnuts were 14.5 liras, one kilogram of soap was 7.5 liras. At the moment, hazelnuts are 50 liras, and soap has risen to 150 liras. … Now with three kilograms of hazenuts we can buy a kilogram of soap."[178]

Changing and increasing consumption habits made the situation more difficult in coastal towns such as Fatsa. One reason, as mentioned before, was the abandonment of the subsistence economy, and dependence on the market for basic needs. Another reason was the opening of the region to the outside or the increasing social mobility via such ways as emigration, sending students to big cities, and infrastructural investments including the building of roads, and the dispersal of electricity. As a result of its geographical position, Fatsa was more prone to these developments which brought about the transmission of the values and new consumption patterns of the recently emerging mass consumption society in the big cities to the region. These patterns included using electric goods such as

[177] Sarıhan, p.18.

[178] "*1 Kilogram sabun 250 TL'ye çıktı. Üç yıl önce fındık 14.5 lira iken sabunun kilosu 7.5 lira idi. Şimdi fındık 50 lira, sabunsa 150 liraya çıktı. … Artık üç kilo fındıkla bir kilo sabun alabiliyoruz.*" "Fatsa'nın Demirci Köyünden Şükrü Demir: 'Bu Gidişle Fındıklara Gübre de Atamayacağız,'" *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980.

refrigerators and televisions, and even following fashion.[179] Ascending cash income thanks to hazelnut production was making it possible for at least some sections of the people in urban centers to access these novelties, and then these were being diffused among the rest of the society through social relations such as those in market places, coffeehouses, and the neighbourhood meetings of women. Zeki Işık from a village of Kumru, who was a high school student in Fatsa in the early 1970s, and who later joined the Liberation (*Kurtuluş*) movement confirms this:

> In the past, there were no bottled gases. Corn bread would be cooked in ovens in houses. Now, there is bottle gas in every house. Daily bread comes from the bakery. Transportation has a big impact. … There is infrastructure, too. In the past, we used to go to those villages by horse in 2.5-3 hours. Now there are roads. It's ten minutes to go.[180]

Furthermore, the lack of a self-discipline of careful spending was a matter of concern. Kemal Şendur, an old man from Fatsa who during the mayoralty of Fikri Sönmez took part in the People's Committee (*Halk Komitesi*) of Kurtuluş neighbourhood argues: "People can't adjust their calculation. … In our age, shoes would be bought once a year at most. Clothes and trousers would be patched. Now the guy goes, buys on tick, wastes too much. As he wastes too much, he can't get over it."[181]

To underline it again, the floor price of hazelnuts was not high enough to provide producers with a decent living. So, it must be asked why it was determined

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[179] Sönmez argues that in the beginning of the 1980's, these goods became an inseparable part of the countryside as well. Sönmez, p.95.; *1967 Ordu İl Yıllığı,* p.111.

[180] "*Öyle aygazlar, tüpgazlar yoktu eskiden. Evde ocaklardan mısır ekmekleri pişerdi. Şimdi her evde aygaz var. Günlük ekmekler fırından geliyor. Ulaşımın çok etkisi var. …Alyapı da var. Eskiden biz o köylere atlarla giderdik 2.5-3 saatte. Şimdi yollar var. 10 dakikada gidiliyor.*" Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

[181] "*Millet hesabını kitabını ayarlayamıyor. … Bizim zamanımızda ayakkabı senede bir sefer anca alınırdı. Elbise, pantolon yama olurdu. Şimdi adam gidiyor, veresiye alıyor, fazla israf yapıyor. İsraf yapınca da altından kalkamıyor.*" Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

that low. According to hazelnut exporters the main reason was state subsidies, which broke down the supply and demand balance as a result of increased production. They argued that making it possible to earn money without working hard, subsidies directed villagers to laziness. Because of this opportunity for easy income, hazelnut production had spread in a very large territory and the supply of hazelnut had gone well beyond its demand.[182] Indeed, overproduction and accumulation in reserves were important problems;[183] however, a deeper examination of the dynamic nature of class struggles or alliances between producers, usurers, merchants, and the state is necessary for a better understanding of the issue.

The Social Relations of Hazelnut Production

A key fact was that although they were producing a great majority of all the hazelnuts in the world, producers did not take part in the determination of the price. As Yılmaz states, the price was specified by the Council of Ministers in collaboration with exporters, Fiskobirlik and several other institutions including the Hazelnut Research Institute, the chambers of Commerce and Industry, and the chambers of Agriculture. Actually, the IMF together with foreign monopolies such as Ludwigspies from Germany, Andre L. Causse from Canada and the USA, and Somercom from France intervened in the process.[184] A 65 year old producer in

[182] Ahmet T. Tunavelioğlu (ed.), *Ülkemiz Fındık Sorunu* (Giresun: Karadeniz Bölgesi Fındık İhracatçıları Birliği Yayınları:4, 1975-1976), pp.5-6, 9. This discourse of laziness claimed for hazelnut producers is a familiar one. One can hear the same allegation about the Gypsies and Kurds in Turkey, for Southerners in Italy, for Arabs in the West, and in general for the poor anywhere. Whenever the poverty of a social group is discussed, such a discourse is employed by the dominant classes to distract attention from structural problems and exploitation.

[183] Despite all efforts, only 3-4 percent of hazelnuts were being consumed in internal markets. In 1973, the amount of crusty hazelnuts remained from 1970, 1971 and 1972 was 94,500,000 kgs. Tunavelioğlu, pp.5, 14.

Fatsa, Mehmet Çürüksu, described the situation with the simple but illustrative language peculiar to villagers:

> When we go into a shop to buy a commodity, we ask the seller "how much is it?" We pay the price and buy it. However, no one comes to us asking "How much are your hazelnuts?" We deliver our hazelnuts, and sell them for as many liras as they give. … It's me who plants, it's me who struggles and develops, it's me who gathers and delivers, but it's someone else who sells. We give the hazelnut at 50 liras. We have heard, that abroad it is sold for 175 liras.[185]

Another hazelnut producer, Mehmet Aydın, suggested that the price be determined by the producer representatives from every village:

> The hazelnut floor price should be determined among producers themselves. However, a few merchants, compradors go to the ministry, they say "Let the hazelnut price be this much," it happens. Sure, they first care for their interests. When hazelnut season comes closer, all of the hazelnut factory owners, all usurer-merchants in Turkey crowd into the ministry. No doubt, no place is left there for us. At last, they get the price they want. They never pay attention to how much 1 kilogram hazelnut costs or with how much money the villagers can subsist on. From needle to yarn, the price of everything is being increased. Fertilizer has risen from 130 *kuruş* to 10 liras, the daily wage of a worker is at least 400 liras, the daily needs of producers such as flour and sugar has risen 3-4 times. All these should be considered when specifying the floor price. The hazelnut floor price should be determined by producer representatives elected from every village.[186]

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[184] Lütfü Yılmaz, "Fındık: Karadeniz'in Canı, Kanı, Alınteri 3," *Demokrat,* 12 July 1980.

[185] "*Biz bir mal almak için dükkana girdiğimizde, satıcıya kaça satıyorsun deriz. Neyse verip alırız. Ama bize gelip de fındığını kaça satarsın diyen olmuyor. Fındığı götürüyoruz. Kaç lira verirlerse satıyoruz. … Diken ben, uğraşıp geliştiren ben, toplayıp getiren ben, satan başkası. Biz fındığı 50 liraya veriyoruz. Dışarda 175 liraya satıldığını duyduk.*" "65 Yaşındaki Fındık Üreticisi Mehmet Çürüksu: 'Belediye Yanlış İş Yapmaz Biz Sorarız Her Şeyi,'" *Demokrat,* 7 May 1980.

[186] "*Fındık taban fiyatnı üreticiler kendi aralarında tespit etmelidir. Oysa birkaç tüccar, komprador gidiyor bakanlığa, fındık fiyatı şu kadar lira olsun diyorlar, öyle oluyor. Tabii onlar önce kendi çıkarlarını düşünürler. Fındık mevsimi yaklaşınca Türkiye'de ne kadar fındık fabrikatörü, ne kadar tefeci-tüccar varsa bakanlığa üşüşürler. Bize yer kalmaz tabii orada. Sonunda istedikleri fiyatı alırlar. Onlar, 1 kilo fındık kaça mal oluyor, kaç lira verilirse köylüler geçinebilir diye hiç düşünmezler. İğneden ipliğe her şeye zam yapılıyor. Gübre 130 kuruştan 10 liraya çıktı, işçi yevmiyesi en az 400 lira, üreticinin günlük ihtiyacı un, şeker vb. 3-4 misli pahalandı. Taban fiyat verilirken bütün bunlar gözönüne alınmalıdır. Fındık fiyatını her köyden seçilecek üretici temsilcileri tesbit etmelidir.*" "Karadenizli Fındık Üreticisi Mehmet Aydın: 'Fındık Fiyatını Her Köyden Seçilecek Üretici Temsilcileri Tespit Etmelidir,'"*Demokrat,* 15 July 1980.

Hüseyin Yaşar, a 70 year old producer in the Bolaman-Demirci village of Fatsa, asked for the same thing: "Hazelnut is our single crop that is once a year, and they keep its price low. Of course, they do in order to fill the pockets of the bosses. While they increase the prices of the products of the rich everyday, they buy our hazelnuts for almost nothing. We, not the bosses, ought to be remunerated for our labor."[187] An old women who participated in a hazelnut demonstration in Perşembe drew attention to the difference between the floor price announced and the actual price of hazelnut in exportation: "They declare the floor price of hazelnut, why don't they declare the price for which it is sold outside? … We, the producers, are aware of all these."[188]

As seen, low floor prices were a mechanism utilized by the intermediaries and the industrial capital of the West to expropriate the surplus generated by hazelnut producers. There were other mechanisms, too. As stated in the 1967 Ordu City Yearbook, the market in the city was alive mostly in September after the sale of hazelnuts. This dynamism lasted until November, and beginning from this month it gradually decreased. By the end of April, the market was completely stagnated since the producers ran out of cash. However, at the same time, the cash needs of the producers were increasing because of fertilizer and pesticides.[189] Together with these needs, ordinary consumption requirements, and events like the illness, death, or marriage of a family member forced producers to sell their hazelnuts before the

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[187] "*Fındık bizim yılda bir kez olan tek ürünümüz, onun da fiatını düşük tutuyorlar. Patronların cebi dolsun diye tabii. Zenginlerin ürettiklerine hergün zam yaparken, bizim fındığımızı ise yok pahasına satın alıyorlar. Alınterimizin karşılığını patronlar değil biz vermeliyiz.*" "Bolaman-Demirci Köyünden Hüseyin Yaşar: 'Bu Sene Mitinglerde Sesimizi Daha Fazla Duyuracağız,'" *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980.

[188] "*Fındığın taban fiyatını açıklıyorlar da dışarıya satış fiyatını neden açıklamıyorlar? … Biz üreticiler bunların hepsini biliyoruz.*" "Üreticiler: 'Fiskobirlik, Patrona Yemlik,'" *Demokrat,* 9 July 1980.

[189] *Ordu İli Yıllığı*, p.244. For a detailed hazelnut agriculture calendar see Taşkın, pp.11-6.

season while they were still not harvested. This type of sales were called *alivre* (to be delivered) sales. No doubt, in this kind of sale, merchants took advantage of the weakness and desperation of producers, and offered them very low prices. An illustration is presented by Özkara:

> -How many hazelnuts would you have?
> -I'd have roughly one or one and a half tons, Sir.
> -I will buy a ton of it for three liras.
> (Nevertheless, the price of hazelnut is five liras).
> -Sir, what about four liras?
> -If you wish.[190]

In fact, since the official hazelnut floor price was announced at harvest time, much later from these dates, in *alivre* sales producers were deprived of any bargaining chance against merchants who speculated about the price. As a result, merchants bought the hazelnuts from producers for low prices, and then sold them at higher prices when the official floor price was announced, or even later when the price rose further more. In other words, the support purchases of the state supported not the ordinary, small producers, but the merchants and big landowners who could afford to wait until the price rose.

The simplicity of *alivre* sales, and the advantage of receiving cash money immediately were also among factors channeling producers to this type of sales as opposed to complicated state purchases which kept producers waiting for a long time to get their money.[191] However, it was also very risky. If producers couldn't

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[190] "*-Ne kadar fındığın olur? /- Bir veya bir buçuk ton kadar olur Bey. /- Bir tonunu üç liradan aldım. (Halbuki fındık fiyatı beş liradır.) /-Bey dört lira yapsak? / İşine gelirse.* Kemal Özkara, "Merhaba Fatsa," *Fatsa Güneş*, 23 March 2007.

[191] Fikret Babuş, *68 Hareketi'nin Köy Eylemleri Devrim Havarileri,* 2nd ed. (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2004), p.94. Also the tradition of *emanetçilik* was influential. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century highway transportation was so poor in the city. Once a week in market days villagers used to carry their products by animals to urban centers. Since it was too difficult to bring them back, they used to sell their products immediately for low prices or leave them as a deposit (*emanet*) to a familiar mercant with whom they had been doing business for a long time. This type of trade was common mostly in hazelnut. *Yurt Ansiklopedisi,* p.6278.

deliver as many hazelnuts as they had promised to the merchant (for example because of climatic factors) then they were getting into debt.

Another exploitation mechanism in Fatsa and the hazelnut region was usury. Like merchants, usurers benefited from the desperation of the producers. In fact, more often than not, these were the same people. That is to say, usurers were also merchants and vice versa. When a producer was in urgent need of cash, he/she had no choice but to resort to a usurer. In exchange for the money they lent to producers, usurers applied pretty high interest rates, and demanded that the debts be paid in kind. These practices resulted in a vicious cycle of debt for producers, which often brought about the loss of their lands. Yaşar Durmuş, a village-origined member of the Ordu committee of the Dev-Yol, claims that though illegal, in Fatsa usurer-merchants even enforced open bonds in which they could determine the debt of producers as much as they wished:

> Even before the leaves of the hazelnuts turned green, citizens would be indebted to usurer-merchants. When they gathered their hazelnuts, they would just clear what they had borrowed. When they could not pay back, the bonds in their hands would be put into practice. And these bonds were open bonds. The producers were illiterate, they could not make calculations, they could not even dare to ask. They were doomed, they were going to request loan again.[192]

According to a field study conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture in Ordu and Giresun between 1969 and 1970, of all 134 credit receiving hazelnut enterprises only 27.2 percent were credited by the Agricultural Bank and the cooperatives, whereas 72.8 percent were credited by private persons.[193] Actually, credits were

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[192] "*Daha fındığın yaprakları yeşermeden vatandaş tefeci-tüccara borçlu hale gelirdi. Topladığında aldığını kapatmış olurdu. Ödeyemediği zaman elideki senetler işleme konurdu. Senetler de açık senetlerdir. Üreticilerin okuma-yazması yoktur, hesap kitap yapamaz, sormaya da cüret edemez. Eli mahkumdur, gene borç isteyecektir.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[193] *Giresun ve Ordu İllerinde*, p.30.

given to usurers and merchants who in turn lent them to producers. A producer from Çamaş *bucak* of Fatsa, Hüseyin Dayı, drew attention to this injustice:

> The state and Fiskobirlik contribute to the impoverishment of producers. Credits are given to merchants, we buy the fertilizer and pesticide from the black market. Because of this, the productivity of our hazelnuts is low, and we pay for the costs. ... Pesticide, fertilizer should be delivered to producers with cheap credit, and on time.[194]

No doubt, the hegemony of usurers and merchants in Fiskobirlik, the Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, the Agricultural Equipping Institution (*Zirai Donatım Kurumu*) and banks, which were supposed to protect producers, and provide them with agricultural equipments and credits, contributed to this fact.[195] Bureaucratic procedures in these institutions, such as the compulsion of finding a guarantor for transactions, were also a means for further exploiting small producers. For instance, as Yılmaz underlines, according to the laws, the Agricultural Equipping Institution was bound to give every producer fifty kilograms of fertilizer per donum of land. Nonetheless, the institution demanded title deeds from the producers in order to give them the fertilizer. Since deed-cadastre processes were not completed in villages, many small producers were unable to get their shares. On the other hand, even some usurers who owned small lands or did not have any received large amounts of fertilizer as fake producers, thanks to their relations.[196] The appraisal (*ekspertiz*) and weighing tricks in the *Fiskobirlik* should also be mentioned in this context. As Yılmaz argues, the experts in the *Fiskobirlik* split

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[194] "*Üretcilerin yoksullaşmasına devlet ve Fiskobirlik yardımcı oluyor. Krediler tüccara veriliyor, gübre ve ilacı karaborsadan alıyoruz. Bu yüzden fındığımızın verimi düşük oluyor, zararını da biz çekiyoruz. … İlaç, gübre üreticiye ucuz-kredili ve zamanında ulaştırılmalı.*" "Çamaş Bucağı, Danışman Köylülerinden Hüseyin Dayı: 'Fiskobirlik Kapılarında Haftalarca Bekletiliyoruz,'" *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980.

[195] By 1967, Fiskobirlik had 6,213 shareholders in Fatsa whereas Agricultural Credit Cooperatives backed by the Agricultural Bank had 5,847 shareholders. *1967 Ordu İli Yıllığı*, pp.248-9.

[196] Lütfü Yılmaz, "Fındık: Karadeniz'in Canı, Kanı, Alınteri 4," *Demokrat*, 13 July 1980.

hairs for ordinary producers, but when it came to big hazelnut sellers they were quite generous. The same discrimination also happened in the weighing.[197] On this matter too, Hüseyin Dayı had a word: "We are being kept waiting for weeks at the doors of Fiskobirlik. And wrinkled or low efficiency, we are robbed once more. … In hazelnuts, efficiency, wrinkled, outage tricks should be removed."[198] For such reasons, producers considered Fiskobirlik to be a "manger to the bosses,"[199] and indeed, as a study of the State Planning Organization claimed in 1972, the *Fiskobirlik* did not have any organization that could protect the interests of producers in internal and external markets.[200]

The Survival Strategies of Producers

Since it was impossible for producers to subsist on hazelnut production under these circumstances, they applied several survival strategies. Usually, the first thing they did was to increase their self-exploitation. For instance, instead of hiring workers with high fees in the harvest and threshing season, they would work longer. Besides, they would make use of various social mechanisms such as neighbourhood, kinship, and friendship relations in order to provide unpaid labor. No doubt, these were reciprocal relationships of which the declining tradition of *imece* (working collectively) was a good example. In addition, some of the households worked as

[197] Lütfü Yılmaz, "Fındık: Karadeniz'in Canı, Kanı, Alınteri 3," *Demokrat*, 12 July 1980.

[198] "*Fiskobirlik kapılarında haftalarca bekletiliyoruz. Bir de yok buruşuk yok düşük randıman bir kez daha soyuluyoruz. … Fındıkta randıman, buruşuk, fire oyunlarının kaldırılması gerekir.*" "Çamaş Bucağı, Danışman Köylülerinden Hüseyin Dayı: 'Fiskobirlik Kapılarında Haftalarca Bekletiliyoruz,'" *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980.

[199] "Üreticiler: 'Fiskobirlik, Patrona Yemlik,'" *Demokrat,* 9 July 1980.

[200] Nabi Dinçer, Necati Mutlu, Belgin Güney and Kazım Oksay, *Kooperatifçilik Sorunları Araştırması* (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Sosyal Planlama Dairesi, Publication Number: DPT: 785 SPD: 183, 1972), p.286.

agricultural workers for other households during harvest and threshing seasons. However, by the majority of the people this was not regarded as an esteemed job. Only the poorest households with very little or no land, most of whom were from inner areas such as Kumru, Korgan and Akkuş preferred this strategy. Indeed, the working conditions of these workers were extremely bad:

> Seasonal workers do not have any social security such as a trade union or insurance. … Working conditions are very hard. From the morning worship untill evening when the sun sinks, they work in mountainous regions, hillsides and rugged gardens. … Seasonal workers are unorganized. Hungry and sleepless, they wait in the backyards of mosques, in public parks for the garden owners to give them job. Since they are unorganized, they don't have any bargaining power. Benefiting from the multitude and unorganized state of seasonal workers, big hazelnut producers make them work for a full stomach.[201]

Sönmez identifies some other strategies exercised by villagers in the region. Accordingly, one of them was to diversify cash-generating activities. These included dairy farming, poultry raising, apiculture, craftmanship and such occupations. Opening small businesses or finding waged jobs in near urban centers were also among these strategies. One of the opportunities for those who opted for this strategy was jobs in public services such as transportation. Another chance was to work in the building sector which was developing as a result of increasing housing needs. These people were also able to find salaried jobs in small businesses as salesclerks or apprentices. Furthermore, there were seasonal or regular job opportunites in hazelnut factories and some other industrial facilities.[202]

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[201] "*Mevsimlik işçilerin ne sendika ne de sigorta gibi hiçbir sosyal güvenceleri de yoktur. … İş koşulları çok ağırdır. Sabah namazından akşam güneşin batışına kadar dağlık bölgelerde, yamaçlarda, engebeli bahçelerde çalışırlar. … Mevsimlik işçiler örgütsüzdür. Cami avlularında, Belediye parklarında kendilerine iş verecek bahçe sahiplerini beklerler, aç ve uykusuz. Örgütsüz oldukları için de pazarlık güçleri yoktur. Büyük fındık üreticileri, mevsimlik işçilerin çokluğundan ve örgütsüzlüğünden yararlanarak* [onları] *karın tokluğuna çalışmaya mahkum ederler.*" "Fındıktaki Sömürüyü En Ağır Biçimiyle Mevsimlik İşçiler Yaşar," *Demokrat,* 15 July 1980.

[202] Sönmez, p.96.

The 1981 Ordu Village Inventory Etudes show that in the villages of Fatsa, too, hazelnut producers had to diversify cash generating activities in order to be able to make proper livings (See Table 6)

Table 6: Distribution of Villages in Fatsa with Regard to Their First and Second Degree of Subsistence Sources.

A. First Degree Choice. B. Second Degree Choice.

Number of Villages	Degree of Subsistence Source	Field Agriculture	Stock-breeding	Handicrafts	Workmanship	Hazelnut Agriculture
76	A	-	-	-	-	76
	B	5	5	5	51	-

Source: *Köy Envanter Etüdü* (Ordu: 1981), p.30, quoted in Yayla, p.326.

As seen from the table, along with hazelnut agriculture, most of the villages in Fatsa (66 out of 76) were significantly occupied with another economic activity. Workmanship was by far the most common secondary source of income. However, it should be noted that, in reality, job opportunities in Fatsa town center were not plentiful enough to meet the high demand for new occupations. A sign of the absence of job opportunities and widespread unemployment was the high number of coffeehouses which were crowded day and night in all seasons.[203]

Definetly, seasonal or permanent migration to big cities or abroad was another alternative. As stated in *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, by 1975, 21.2 percent of all those who were born in Ordu had migrated to other cities. Accordingly, 44.5 percent of the

[203] Yayla, p.331. Even in 1949, the local newspaper *Demokrat Fatsa*, which was known for its affinity towards the Democrat Party, called Fatsa as "the land of coffeehouses." Accordingly, in those years, there were 30 coffeehouses in the town although the population was only 4,000. "İşte Bizim Diyar," *Demokrat Fatsa*, 24 January 1949.

emigrants had settled in İstanbul, and 35,000 of these settlers were male while 26,000 were female. This meant that in some of the cases, not the entire household but only males were emigrating. On the other hand, meanwhile, 7,665 individuals had gone to West European countries for work through official channels.[204] As might be understood from the declining population increase rates of Fatsa during the 1970s both in the town center and rural areas, there was a considerable number of people from Fatsa in these emigrations. As Zeki Işık argues, especially migrations to foreign countries brought about significant changes in some of the migrants' lives, and in the region as well.

> Going abroad changed the appearance of our poor villages. Those who could subsist, did not go. The poor went, and invested here with their incomes. They bought a house in the village, or they built shop in the nearest town center, and rented it. Now they all have cars. Why did Kurdish workers began to come here? Because, previously, these guys were gathering hazelnuts in our gardens. Afterwars, no natives were left to work in the gardens. Only a few wretches remained.[205]

Of course, for the producers and common people, there was a final alternative. It was the most courageous, the most daring, and the most satisfactory, but also the most dangerous alternative. A significant part of the rest of this thesis is reserved for the story of this alternative.

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[204] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6300.

[205] "*Yurt dışına gidiş bizim yoksul köylerin çehresini değiştirdi. Geçinebilenler zaten gitmedi. Yoksullar olanlar gitti, gelirleriyle burda yatırım yaptı. Köyde ev aldılar ya da en yakın kasaba merkezinde dükkan yapıp kiraya verdiler. Hepsinin altında araba var şimdi. Niye Kürt işçiler gelmeye başladı?* Çünkü eskiden o adamlar bizim bahçelerde fındık topluyordu. Sonra yerli kalmadı bahçelerde çalışacak. Gariban tek tük kaldı." Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

CHAPTER III

FROM UTOPIA TO THE STREETS[206]

The Enlightenment

In Turkey, the 1960s witnessed a quick diffusion of leftist and socialist ideas among intellectuals and the literate sections of the population who played considerable roles in the further politicization and radicalization of laboring classes that were already angry with the establishment, of course not in a top-to-down manner but in a mutual interaction. Partly, this stemmed from the domestic repercussions of external developments. As Aydınoğlu claims, after the inward-oriented years of the single-party era, intellectuals in Turkey begun to look more to the outside world, and interpret the problems of Turkey within a broader world context. When they looked to the outside world in those years, they saw the anti-colonial struggles and victories of the Third World countries from Cuba to India, probably Vietnam being the most influential. Meanwhile, they also met dependency theories and socialism as alternatives to the capitalist model for development. As a result, in this era, such concepts as Third World, dependency, underdevelopment, independence, development, industrialization, land reform and social justice occupied the agenda of intellectuals and students.[207]

[206] Inspired from Türkdoğan's phrase "Ütopyadan Reel Sosyalizme" (From Utopia to Real Socialism) in Türkdoğan, p.479.

[207] Aydınoğlu, pp.54-60.

On the other hand, internal developments were also decisive in intellectuals' acceptance of socialist and oppositional thoughts. In this sense, the growing number and increasing political activity of the working classes is worth mentioning in the first place. As Alpaslan Işıklı shows, the number of workers covered by the Labor Law rose from 329,463 in 1948 to 824,881 in 1960 and 1,142,912 in 1966. In addition to this, the number of workers organized in trade unions increased from 52,000 in 1948 to 282,967 in 1960 and 374,058 in 1966.[208] There were also scores of workers who were not covered by the law since they were working in small enterprises or in the informal and agricultural sector. Parallel to this, the working class actions also increased. At the beginning of the 1960s, the most significant working class action was the Saraçhane meeting organized by the Association of Istanbul Workers' Unions (*İstanbul İşçi Sendikaları Birliği*) on 31 December 1961. More than 100,000 workers participated in this meeting carrying placards some of which read "Everyone has meat in their plot, the workers have only trouble," and "No democracy without the strike."[209] There were also many other demonstrations and strikes in this period before the laws on trade unions, social contract and strike came into effect in 1963.[210] After this date, such actions radically increased, and on 13 February 1967, the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Trade Unions (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu - DİSK*) was founded as a rival to the so-called apolitical unionism of the Confederation of the Workers' Trade Unions of

[208] Alpaslan Işıklı, "Ücretli Emek ve Sendikalaşma," Irvin C. Schick and E.Ahmet Tonak (eds.) *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003), pp.351.

[209] Feroz Ahmad, "The Development of Working Class-Consciousness in Turkey," Zachary Lockman (ed.), *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East: Struggles, Histories, Historiographies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), p.147.

[210] For these actions see Y. N. Rozaliyev, *Türkiye'de Sınıflar ve Sınıf Mücadeleleri*, 2nd ed., trans. M. Anibal (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1979), pp.128-139; *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 6 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1988), pp.2008-9.

Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu - TÜRK-İŞ*) which had been set up in 1952.[211]

The foundation process of the Workers' Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi - TİP*) is a good example to show how closely intellectuals were watching these developments. As Artun Ünsal states, while the TİP was about to be established by twelve trade unionists on 13 February 1961, Mehmet Ali Aybar and several other intellectuals were also considering setting up a socialist party. However, when they learned about the preparations of the trade unionists, they dropped the idea of opening a separate party, and began to look for ways to establish a relationship with them. Although they were suspicious and hesitant towards intellectuals at the beginning, the trade unionists also became willing for such an alliance especially because of the fact that the party could not receive the interest they had hoped. As a result, many intellectuals joined the party and Mehmet Ali Aybar, an assistant professor who had been expelled in 1946 from the Faculty of Law at the University of Istanbul, became the chairman in February 1962.[212]

A key group among whom socialist ideas won lots of adherents was university students. In those years, as a response to the needs of a more mobile and differentiating society, education gained further importance as a means for climbing up the social ladder. This not only created tensions between older and younger generations in families, but also led to an increase in the number of students. However, with its own problems, high-education was not able to meet the high expectations of these students. Soon, the university youth began to problematize the

[211] For worker actions from 1963 until the foundation of the DİSK see Rozaliyev, pp.139-46; *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, Vol.6, pp.2013-6; *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Sendikacılık Hareketi* (Ankara: Genel-İş Yayınları, n.d.), pp.41-4.

[212] Artun Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa Türkiye İşçi Partisi (1961-1971)* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2002), pp.77-8, 88-95.

university, and then linked their discomfort to the country and world problems. For sure, the intellectual and social conditions mentioned above were influential, too. In fact, as Zafer Toprak maintains, universities had long been intermingled with politics. It was university students in the late 1950s, who publicly protested the DP; it was university professors who prepared the new constitution; and it was the university from which the new planned economy and the model of capital accumulation expected well-trained administrators. In other words, universities were the places where the social problems of the country first were expressed. What further contributed to this was the fact that university students were no longer composed only of the children of elite groups, but a significant portion of them were from middle-class or poor rural families so that the problems of these social groups were also carried to universities.[213] No doubt, the proliferation of leftist publications, the translation into Turkish of a substantial foreign political literature, and the relatively democratic character of the Constitution of 1961 which made these legally possible facilitated the diffusion of socialist ideas among literate people.

These developments had their reflections on the Central and Eastern Black Sea region as well. Native intellectuals supporting the TİP, teachers organized in the local branches of the Teachers' Trade Union of Turkey (*Türkiye Öğretmenler Sendikası - TÖS*) and the university-student children of indigeneous people became the actors of an enlightenment period in the region in the sense that they became much more sensitive to the problems of the laboring classes, and helped these already furious people express their troubles through the terminology and politics of class.

[213] Zafer Toprak, "1968'i Yargılamak ya da 68 Kuşağına Mersiye," *Cogito*, no.14 (Spring 1998), pp.154-9.

As Aydın Akyazı, who was a member of the Fatsa District Committee of the Dev-Yol at the end of the 1970s, maintains with regard to such dissident intellectuals and literate people, Fatsa was luckier than many towns in the area:

> Our mathematics teacher, Celal Çetin and Turkish teacher, Recep Atay at the junior high school. Adem Menteş, Mevlüt Korkmaz, Dudu Korkmaz, Mustafa Şengel who were teaching at the high school in the meantime. And, of course, most importantly Ertan Sarıhan. We had many teachers graduated from Beşikdüzü Village Institute such as Hüseyin Gümüş, Hasan Aslan, Recep Ali Kaymaz. … I remember a doctor named Turhan Halaççı. Lawyers Şener Şadi, Abdullah Çam. There was Ziya Yılmaz, who published *Yeşil Fatsa*. With regard to progressive, patriotic, pro-enlightenment people Fatsa did not have any trouble.[214]

One reason for that was the cultural accumulation dating back to the pre and early Republican eras. As Oktay Güvemli argues:

> Between the years 1925/45, there was a significant cultural infrastructure in Ordu along with Fatsa which was culturally the closest location to it. This cultural structure was constituted by the intellectuals of Ordu and Fatsa who had been to İstanbul and Ankara for some reason including education and military service, and who carried on cultural relationships with there in all aspects after their return. Without doubt, the excitement of the first years of the Republic and the revolutions of Atatürk were a significant factor in the making of this cultural texture. In Turkey, the first newspaper in village was published by these cadres in Uzunisa village of Ordu with the name "GÜZELORDU." The libraries in Public Houses (*Halkevleri*) and the rich libraries of these intellectual people were formed by these cadres too. The organization of public shows such as music and theatre were realized effectively also in these years.[215]

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[214] "*Ortaokuldaki matematik öğretmenimiz Celal Çetin, Türkçe öğretmenimiz Recep Atay. Gene aynı dönemde lisede öğretmenlik yapan Adem Menteş, Mevlüt Korkmaz, Dudu Korkmaz, Mustafa Şengel. Tabi en önemlisi Ertan Sarıhan. Beşikdüzü köy enstitüsü mezunu çok sayıda öğretmenimiz vardı Hüseyin Gümüş, Hasan Aslan, Recep Ali Kaymaz gibi. … Turhan Halaççı diye bir doktoru hatırlarım. Avukat Şener Şadi, Abdullah Çam. Ziya Yılmaz vardı Yeşil Fatsa'yı çıkaran. İlerici, yurtsever, aydınlanmacı insan konusunda Fatsa'nın bir sıkıntısı yoktu.*" Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

[215] "*1925/45 yılları arasında Ordu ili ve ona kültürel açıdan en yakın yer olan Fatsa'da önemli bir kültürel altyapı vardı. Bu kültürel yapı İstanbul, Ankara gibi yörelere tahsil, askerlik gibi nedenlerle giden ve döndükten sonra oralarda kültürel ilişkileri her yönü ile devam ettiren Ordulu ve Fatsalı aydınlar tarafından oluşturulmuştu. Türkiye'de köyde ilk gazete bu kadrolar tarafından Ordu iline bağlı Uzunisa köyünde 'GÜZELORDU' adı ile yayınlamıştır. Halkevlerindeki kütüphaneler ve bu aydın kişilerin kendilerinin zengin kütüpaneleri yine bu kadrolar tarafından oluşturulmuştur. Müzik, tiyatro gibi topluma dönük gösteri organizasyonunun yine bu yıllarda etkin bir şekilde yapıldığı gözlenmektedir.*" Güvemli, *Doğu Karadeniz*, p.161.

The legacy of the Greeks and Armenians were also important in the making of this cultural accumulation during the period. This was especially valid for theatrical and publishing activities. In an age of increasing nationalism among various minorities within the Ottoman Empire, it was non-Muslims who carried out the first theatrical performances and set up the first printing houses in Ordu.[216] Inspired by and competing with them, Turkish intellectuals and young literate people also started to engage actively in cultural and publishing activities beginning from the end of WWI.[217] The memoirs of Fevzi Güvemli, an intellectual who worked as a public servant in various districts of Ordu including Fatsa, confirms this:

> During the armistice and the following two years, the Greeks in the town [Ordu] were quite happy. … They had turned a wooden Greek school near the church in Düzmahalle into a theatre, and were organizing performances in Greek between themlselves. We, the Turkish young people, began to envy this social development. A desire arose within us. Could not we do this too? Yes, but we first needed a building, where could we find it? … An idea was brought forward: Could not we borrow the theatre building from the Greeks sometimes? …One day, we visited the Metropolite at his house afternoon. …When we told him our wish, he welcomed, and promised to give us the key. … He kept his word, and two days later we entered the building. … Our first performance in this building was a work named "İntibah-ı Milli" (the National Awakening).[218]

It might be argued that these literate people in the first half of the twentieth century were the historical antecedents of the dissenter intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, despite the fact that an absolute majority of these intellectuals frankly

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[216] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, pp.6328-9.

[217] For a brief story of the development of theatrical and publishing activities in Ordu from this date onwards see ibid., pp.6328-30.

[218] "*Mütareke ve onu izleyen iki yıl içinde kasabadaki Rumlar'ın keyifleri pek yerindeydi. … Düzmahalle'deki kilisenin yanında ahşap bir Rum okulunu tiyatroya çevirmişler, Rumca temsiller veriyorlardı kendi aralarında. Biz Türk gençleri imrenir olduk bu sosyal gelişmeye. İçimizde bir heves uyandı. Biz de yapamaz mıydık? Evet ama önce bina gerekti, nerde bulacaktık? … Bir düşünce atıldı ortaya: Rumlar'dan tiyatro binasını ara sıra ödünç alamaz mıydık? … Bir gün öğle sonrası evinde ziyare ettik Metropolit'i. … Dileğimizi anlatınca hoş karşıladı ve anahtarın verilmesi için gerekeni yapacağını vaadetti. … Adam sözünde durdu ve iki gün sonra binaya girdik. … Bu yapıdaki ilk temsilimiz 'İntibah-ı Milli' (Ulusal Uyanış) adında bir eserdi.*" Güvemli, *Bir Zamanlar Ordu*, pp.63-5.

believed in Kemalist principles, they would not hesitate to raise their complaints about the concrete problems of their region, and criticise the Republican Peoples' Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi - CHP*) government. For instance, Fevzi Güvemli was a faithful Ataturkist who initiated a campaign to make the women in Fatsa remove their headscarves; however, when the CHP deputies came to Aybastı in 1950 to request the votes of villagers, his criticisms of them were pretty harsh:

> There was little time left for the 1950 elections. Ordu deputies Yusuf Ziya Ortaç and Topaloğlu Atıf came. … First, Ortaç got out of the jeep. There was mud on his topcoat, showing it to me he said "Mr. Warden, we came here to look for democracy." I was shocked. Work for months, open the road, and this is the response! In reality, you even don't deserve to step on the soil of this beloved homeland! What did you do as their deputy while the villagers of this homeland worked hard on this soil so that you could drive through with your jeep? Probably you even did not hear about; now you regard it as an act of altruism to come here. They stayed two days in Aybastı. On the 6th of May, sitting in the office of the subdistrict wardenship, they were discussing what speech they would make that day. "First we should specify what we have given the villagers recently so that we could ask them for something" said Ortaç. What had they given? "You gave…" I said. Immediately they were awakened, and looked at me with hope. I went on: "Did you forget, you gave every village a six-arrowed flag."[219]

The relatively high importance given to education, which was touched on in the second chapter, was undoubtedly another factor contributing to the good fortune of Fatsa as regards the oppositional intellectuals and literate people. Really, along with teachers, especially those graduated from village institutes, university students or graduates composed a significant portion of the oppositional intellectuals in Fatsa

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[219] "*1950 seçimine pek az kalmıştı. Ordu Milletvekili Yusuf Ziya Ortaç ve Topaloğlu Atıf geldiler. … Önce Ortaç indi jipten. Pardesüsüne çamur sıçramıştı, bana göstererek 'Müdür Bey, buralara demokrasi aramaya geldik' dedi. Başımdan aşağı kaynar sular dökülmüş gibi oldum. Aylarca çalış çabala, yolu aç, gördüğümüz karşılık bu olsun ha! Sen aslında bu aziz yurt toprağını çiğnemeye bile layık değilsin! Sen jipinle geçesin diye bu yurdun köylüsü, bu toprağa alınterini akıtırken, onların milletvekili olarak sen ne yaptın? Haberin bile olmamıştır; şimdi buralara kadar gelmeyi fedakalık sayıyorsun. Aybastı'da iki gün kaldılar. 6 Mayıs günü nahiye müdürlüğü odasında oturmuş o gün ne nutuk atacaklarını konuşuyorlardı. Ortaç: 'Önce son yılarda bu köylüye ne verdik, onu tesbit edelim ki, onlardan bir şeyler isteyelim' dedi. Ne vermişlerdi? 'Verdiniz ya…' dedim. Canlandılar hemen ve umutla baktılar bana. Devam ettim: 'Unuttunuz mu, her köye altı oklu birer bayrak hediye ettinizdi.*" Güvemli, *Bir Zamanlar Ordu*, pp.117-20, 139-41.

who not only embraced leftist ideas, but also played key roles in the distribution of them among people. Doğan Çelebi, who was previously a member of a left-wing faction called People's Liberation (*Halkın Kurtuluşu - HK*), and who now leads the Fatsa branch of the Association for Ataturkist Thought (*Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği - ADD*), stresses the significance of the teachers graduated from Samsun Akpınar and Trabzon Beşikdüzü Village Institutes for the enlightenment in Fatsa:

> Here, there is an education army loyal to the fundamental values of the Republic which spreads the light of the village institutes. We, as the AAT, gather together the graduates of village institutes here. Last year, we assembled seventeen people. Cevat Türe, İsmail Hakkı Mutlu, Hakkı Şen, Kadir Şen, Halis Yüksel… At the moment, none of us have the passion and revolutionary struggle that exists inside those men. … There are two village institutes here: Samsun Akpınar and Trabzon Beşikdüzü. And the teachers they have grown are really outstanding. … Everyone used to say "I'll be a teacher" while we were young. … It's him who wears smart ironed trousers; it's him who plays the mandolin, *saz*; it's him who sings well.[220]

Along with the obvious exploitation of hazelnut producers explained in the second chapter, this historical and social background made it easier for left-wing ideas based on social justice and equality to form an ideological hegemony among broad social segments in Fatsa in the 1960s. Ahmet Becioğlu, a relative of Fikri Sönmez who worked for a while as an assistant to M. Kemal Çamaş, the mayor of Fatsa from the ANAP between 1994 and 2004, offers a depiction of the early days of this process:

> It was around 1965. At that time, I was 12-13 years old. Leftists wouldn't take part in fights, beat or mistreat people at that time. Some of them were university students, some had graduated, and some were teachers. Usually, they would come to Fatsa in summers. Even though

[220] "Burada *Cumhuriyet'in temel değerlerine bağlı kalmış, köy enstitülerinin ışığını yayan bir eğitim ordusu. Biz ADD olarak köy enstitüsü mezunlarını topluyoruz burada. Geçen sene 17 kişi topladık. Cevat Türe, İsmail Hakkı Mutlu, Hakkı Şen, Kadir Şen, Halis Yüksel… Şu anda o adamların içindeki ateş ve devrim mücadelesi bizim hiç birimizde yok. … Bu bölgede iki tane köy enstitüsü var: Samsun Akpınar ve Trabzon Beşikdüzü. Ve yetiştirdikleri öğretmenler de gerçekten mükemmel.* … Herkes öğretmen olacağım diyordu bizim gençliğimizde. … Gıcır gıcır ütülü pantolonu giyen o; mandolini, sazı çalan o; sesi güzel olan o." Doğan Çelebi, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 11 April 2007.

> they were poor, all used to wear ties and always ironed clothes. They used to look in the eyes of the people and express their ideas impressively. Of course, they used to talk in a leftist language. Everybody would regard them as communists. If somebody was talking about leftism he was certainly a communist. At that time, there was Bahçeli restaurant. They, as 4-5 friends, -there would be Fikri *Agabey* (elder broher) [Sönmez], Ziya Agabey [Yılmaz], Ertan Sarıhan, İsmet Duman, Kemal Kara, our English teacher Ersin Agabey used to talk between themselves while eating. Everyone in the restaurant would prick up their ears to learn what they were talking about. They had a very polite fashion reflecting the İstanbul education. … The birth started this way in Fatsa. … Things began to develop while talking within a small cirle in restaurants, wedding feasts, feast days, shops and tailor's shop of Fikri Agabey called Olimpiyat.[221]

In the local newspaper *Fatsa Güneş*, Kemal Özkara gives a picture of how the high number of oppositional intellectuals shaped the political outlook of Fatsa in favor of the left:

> People such as Ziya [Yılmaz], Ertan [Sarıhan], Zeki [Sarıhan], Şener Şadi were among those who went before us. Şener Şadi was working as a lawyer in his homeland of Fatsa after he had graduated from Ankara Faculty of Law. For the first time, Fatsa intensively embraced its university graduate young people, and became a place for them to work and make a living. … In this way, a transformation was initiated in the social structure of Fatsa. The '68 generation took its place in Fatsa. Beginning from 1970, together with me, our Social Democrat friends including lawyers Abdullah Çam, Hasan Aydın, Muhsin Bostancı, Kemal Burnaz also took their places in Fatsa. And others… Of course, there were friends who did not share our ideas. Valuable people such as Şener Yıldıran, Faik Orhan, Cevat Eraslan, Kemal Emiralioğlu. And lawyer agabeys Nail Dervişoğlu, Güney Yalın, Lütfü Topaloğlu. … The number of leftist and social democrat intellectuals broke the balance in favor of the left. The time was such a time.[222]

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[221] "*65'li yıllardı. Ben o zaman 12-13 yaşlarındaydım. … Solcular o zaman kavga, dövüşe karışmaz adam dövmez, insanlara kötü davranmazdı. Kimisi üniversitede okurdu, kimi bitirmişti, kimi öğretmendi. Genellikle yazın gelirlerdi Fatsa'ya. Fakir olsalar da karavat takar, hep ütülü elbise giyerlerdi. İnsanlarla göz teması sağlar, düşüncelerini güzel izah ederlerdi. Onlar tabi sol tandanslı konuşurlardı.* Herkes onlara komünist diye bakardı. Bir insan solculuktan bahsediyorsa muhakkak komünistti. *O zaman Bahçeli Lokanta vardı. Onlar 4-5 arkadaş -Fikri Abi olurdu, Ziya Abi olurdu, Ertan Sarıhan olurdu, İsmet Duman olurdu, Kemal Kara olurdu, İngilizce öğretmenimiz Ersin Abi olurdu- yemek yerken konuşurlardı kendi aralarında. Lokantadaki bütün insanlar onlar ne konuşuyor diye kulak kabartırdı. Çok kibar, İstanbul terbiyesini yansıtan bir tarzları vardı. … Doğum böyle başladı Fatsa'da. … Lokantada, düğünde, bayramda, dükkanlarda, Fikri Abi'nin Olimpiyat Terzihanesi'nde küçük bir çevrede konuşurken giderek filizlenmeye başladı olay.*" Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

In the Central and Eastern Black Sea region as a whole, there were three main pillars of this enlightenment process: the Village Improvement or Villagism Associations (*Köy Kalkındırma Dernekleri* also known as *Köycülük Dernekleri - KD*), the local branches of the TİP, and oppositional local newspapers. The KDs which were formed to deal with various problems of villages were so crucial for the development of social opposition in the region that Yeşilyurt claims that the peasant movement started with them in the Black Sea.[223] There were a number of them in Fatsa, but perhaps the most influential was the Beyceli Improvement Association founded by teachers Zeki and Ertan Sarıhan, who also began to publish a newspaper in January 1966 called *İleri Köy* to serve the targets of the association.[224] By means of this newspaper and with the aid of other KDs, the association carried out a number of activities such as preparing public meetings in Beyceli, Yassıtaş, Yukarıtepe, Sarmaşık and some other villages about village improvement; realizing campaigns for book donation to open libraries in villages; and making an *Örnek Muhtar* (Model Headman) campaign in the villages of Fatsa.[225] Moreover, in the Spring of 1966, together with the teachers of Yassıtaş, Meşebükü, Duayeri, Yukarıardıç, Örencik and Demirci villages, the Sarıhan's organized village festivals

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[222] " *Ziya, Ertan, Zeki, Şener Şadi, gibi isimler bizim önümüzde gidenlerdi. Şener Şadi Ankara Hukuk Fakültesi'ni bitirdikten sonra memleketi Fatsa'da avukatlık yapıyordu. Fatsa ilk defa yoğunluklu bir şekilde üniversiteli gençlerini bağrına basıyor onlara iş ve ekmek kapısı oluyordu. … Böylelikle Fatsa'nın sosyal yapısında bir gömlek değişimi başlamıştı. Altmış sekiz kuşağı Fatsa'da yerini alıyordu. 1970 senesi ile beraber; benimle birlikte, avukatlık mesleklerini yapacak olan Abdullah Çam, Hasan Aydın, Muhsin Bostancıoğlu, Kemal Burnaz gibi sosyal demokrat çizgideki arkdaşlarımız da Fatsa'daki yerlerini alacaklardı. Ve diğerleri… Bizim düşüncelerimizi paylaşmayan arkadaşlarımız da vardı elbet. Şener Yıldıran, Faik Orhan, Cevat Eraslan, Kemal Emiralioğlu gibi değerli isimler. Ve ağabey durumundaki Nail Dervişoğlu, Günay Yalın, Lütfü Topaloğlu gibi avukat ağabeyler. … Sol, sosyal demokrat bir anlayıştaki aydın sayısı ölçüyü ve dengeyi sola doğru kaydıracaktı. Zaman böyle bir zamandı.*" Kemal Özkara, "Merhaba Fatsa," *Fatsa Güneş*, 13 April 2007.

[223] "*Köycülük dernekleriyle başladı köylü hareketi Karadeniz'de.*" İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 January 2007.

[224] Zeki Sarıhan quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.19.

[225] Ibid.

in which each school presented their artistic works.[226] Actually, in all these village activities teachers played a major role. İsmail Yeşilyurt, the son of a powerful big landowner family in the Alaçam district of Samsun, who took an active part in the Black Sea organization of small tobacco producers, the THKP-C, and finally the Liberation faction, emphasizes the key part played by teachers in the dispersal of leftist thoughts among villagers throughout the region:

> People used to have respect for intellectuals and teachers. In villages we had a saying: 'headman, *imam*, teacher.' We would strive to be at the top of this trio. … In that period, with the members of the old Workers' Party and with our teacher agabeys graduated from village institutes, we focused on the organization of teachers. And through teachers we tried to organize villagers.[227]

The second pillar, as we have put it, was the local branches of the TİP. Almost all of the leading socialist figures in the region were more or less in relation with the TİP. Most of them were founders or administrators of these local branches. As HüseyinYavuz, a university student who participated in the village practices in the Black Sea region including Fatsa argues, they did not completely lose their connection with the TİP even when factional divisions dominated the party in the late 1960s. In fact, thanks to the solidarity the life itself dictated upon them, in the countryside socialists were much less prone to the factional disputes and divisions that were widespread among socialists in big cities.[228] In Fatsa the TİP was founded in 1965[229] after the opening in 1964 of the Fatsa Idea Club (*Fatsa Fikir Kulübü*), a

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[226] Ibid., p.20

[227] "*Toplumun* aydınlara ve *öğretmenlere sayıgısı vardı. Köyde şöyle espiri yapıyorduk: Muhtar, imam, öğretmen. Biz bu üçlemede birinci olmaya çalışıyorduk. … O dönemde eski işçi partililerle, köy enstitüsü mezunu öğretmen abilerimizle öğretmenlerin örgütlenmesine ağırlık verildi. Öğretmenler aracılığıyla da köylerin örgütlenmesine çalışıldı.*" İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 and 17 January 2007.

[228] Hüseyin Yavuz, *İsyan Günleri I Bir Uzun Koşuydu* '68 (İstanbul: Biz Anadolu Kültür Yayınları, 2005), p.407.

university youth organization which had close ties with the TİP by university students from Fatsa studying in Istanbul and Ankara.[230] Ziya Yılmaz, Fikri Sönmez, Ahmet Sesişen, Ahmet Atasoy and Mazhar Yerebasmaz were only a few of the chief members of the Fatsa branch of the TİP, which really had a pretty influential organization. That is why when the senior members of the TİP including M. Ali Aybar, Behice Boran, Rıza Kuas and Çetin Altan came to the Black Sea for the Central Black Sea Meeting in 1966,[231] they also visited Fatsa. Becioğlu narrates the incidents when they came:

> Initially, leftism was within a small circle. As soon as it made some progress, backing came from İstanbul. … When Behice Boran came here in 1966, the first incidents occured. She was to make a speech in the Park Cinema. The rightists did not let her speak to the people. They stoned the car, threw eggs, and insulted Behice Boran. … Those men who attacked her did not do it due to an idea, but because they ignorantly thought communists were coming. He doesn't know who Behice Boran is. He has just heard that she is a communist. It was like that at that time. There was a notion that communism must be destroyed wherever it was seen..[232]

Indeed as Sezai Sarıoğlu, a revolutionary from Ünye, claims, in the Black Sea region there was a strong anti-communist tradition especially based on the Georgians despite the fact that the TİP was able to bring about an important rupture among them.[233] In reality, since the end of WWII, thanks to the Cold War era, anti-communism had been propagated by various governments to direct the reactions of

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[229] Gülten Akın, "Fatsa Olgusu Fatsa Halkının Mücadele Geleneği," *Demokrat*, 07 May 1980.

[230] Zeki Sarıhan quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.19.

[231] Sarıoğlu, p.166.

[232] "*Solculuk önce küçük bazdaydı. Biraz gelişince İstanbul'dan destek geldi. … 66 yılında buraya Behice Boran geldiğinde ilk olaylar oldu. Park Sineması'nda konuşma yapacaktı. Sağcılar halka hitap etmesine izin vermediler. Arabayı taşladılar, yumurta attılar, Behice Boran'a hakaret ettiler. … Ona saldıran adamlar bir fikirden dolayı değil, bilinçsiz bir şekilde komünistler geliyor diye üzerlerine saldırmışlar. Tanımıyor Behice Boran'ı. Adını duymuş sadece komünist diye. O zaman öyleydi. Komünizmin görüldüğü yerde başı ezilmelidir anlayışı vardı*." Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[233] Sezai Sarıoğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 12 December 2006.

the masses who were unhappy with the ongoing social and economic transformations against oppositional and leftist social movements that threatened the existing power relations.[234] To be a communist was such a big accusation in those years that even the most faithful followers of it did not publicly accept this label.

The third pillar was oppositional local newspapers, as already mentioned. There were many of them in the Black Sea constituting a rich tradition.[235] Most were published by local TİP supporters. Among them were *Yeşil Fatsa* (Green Fatsa) published by Ziya Yılmaz, and *İleri Köy* (Advanced Village) published by Ertan and Zeki Sarıhan in Fatsa, *Alınteri* (Hard Work) published by İsmail Yeşilyurt and Harun Sarıhan in Alaçam, *Savaş* (War) published by Atilla Aşut and his friends in Trabzon, *Çaltı* (Thornbush) published by Mübeccel Koyutürk in Samsun, *Uyanış* (Awakening) published by Kemal Aksoy in Ordu as well as the newspapers published by the Savaş-İş Trade Union in Sinop, and Müslüm Tunaboylu in Çorum.[236] In reality, *Yeşil Fatsa* was not the first newspaper published in Fatsa. As Erbil states, the first newspaper published in Fatsa was the weekly *Fatsa*, which was supporting the CHP government. Its initial copy was published on 28 December 1948. The second one was the weekly *Demokrat Fatsa* (Democrat Fatsa) favoring the DP opposition the first issue of which was published on 10 January 1949.[237] After these rival newspapers were closed, in the 1960s and 1970s several others were opened including *İsmet Yolu* (Honesty Way), *Hakikat* (Truth), *Fatsa Güneş*

[234] Mehmet Ali Ağaoğulları, "Aşırı Milliyetçi Sağ," Irvin C.Schick and E. Ahmet Tonak (eds.), *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, 4th ed. (İstanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2003), p.207.

[235] Sarıoğlu, p.166.

[236] Ibid., pp.166-7; İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 17 January 2007; İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Turhan Feyizoğlu in Turhan Feyizoğlu, *Mahir On'ların Öyküsü*, 9th ed. (İstanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2005), pp.235-6.

[237] Erbil, *Fatsa Tarihi*, p.9.

(Fatsa Sun), *Şafak* (Dawn), *Hamle* (Move) and *Devrim* (Revolution)[238] following a relatively rich publishing tradition to which *Yeşil Fatsa* belonged too.

Through these newspapers and the local branches of the TİP, gradually strong relationships developed between socialists in the Black Sea.[239] Yeşilyurt states that Ziya Yılmaz and Ertan Sarıhan from Fatsa were very effective in the organization of these relationships: "The Sinop, Samsun, Ordu, Giresun, Trabzon, Alaçam, Çarşamba branches of the TİP were acting together. We were exchanging ideas and acting jointly, but it was a spontaneous movement. Ertan Sarıhan and Ziya Yılmaz attempted to make this organized."[240] Also İsmet Öztürk (also known as Çörtük İsmet) from Çarşamba district of Samsun, a quite distinguished revolutinary who had vital contributions to the organization of left in the Black Sea, claims that besides himself, Ziya Yılmaz and Ertan Sarıhan were the most important people in the Black Sea with regard to the organization of social opposition.[241] Along with some other prominent figures such as Fikri Sönmez and Ahmet Atasoy, they made Fatsa a major center of social opposition in the Central and Eastern Black Sea region.

A factor that had a considerable effect on this organization process was the individual abilities and charismatic personalities of these leading figures. Özkara's depiction of Ziya Yılmaz is a proof of this:

> Ziya Yılmaz … was the first financial advisor of Fatsa. He had moved to Fatsa after graduating from the Academy of İstanbul Commercial Sciences. He was already Fatsa origined. Tall, with a wide forehand and an always present smile together with a warm approach towards people, he was loved by everyone in his environment. His large,

[238] *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, p.6330.

[239] Sarıoğlu, p.166.

[240] İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Turhan Feyizoğlu in Feyizoğlu, p.236.

[241] İsmet Öztürk, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 27 December 2006.

> thick, black beard would make him seem majestic. … He was our ideologist.[242]

Various informal social relations also contributed this process. One of them was ethno-religious communal ties. Indeed, each of the major leaders in Fatsa belonged to a different one of the main ethno-religious groups of the town. As Yeşilyurt states, Ziya Yılmaz was a Georgian from Kabakdağ village who played a significant part in the inclination of many Georgians including Fikri Sönmez towards socialist ideas while Ertan Sarıhan was a Turkoman from Beyceli village.[243] On the other hand, Ahmet Atasoy was a poor Alevi nomad from a distant village of Fatsa called Sarıhalil.[244] His local relationships in rural areas especially among the Alevis were very significant for the organization of social opposition. However, of course, this does not mean that the socialists stressed ethno-religious identities during the organization process. On the contrary, more often than not, they didn't even ask each other from which ethno-religious origin they came. Yet, these identities were at work in the background in the course of organization within the people. For instance Yeşilyurt states:

> A significant portion of those who participated in the movement were from Alevi villages. I realized this later. We did not approach people like that. We tried to prevent inter-ethnic clashes. We did not stress ethnic identities but they were influential. … After the 12 March, … we founded the Association of the Tobacco Producers' Union of Sinop (*Sinop Tütün Üreticileri Birliği Derneği*) in the Kabalı subdistrict of Sinop. We made Birinci's father the chairman. He was from the Eastern Black Sea. The secretary was a Circassian. The accountant was a Georgian. … When I come everbody follows me. We visit villages. I

[242] "*Ziya Yılmaz … Fatsa'nın ilk mali müşaviriydi. İstanbul Ticari İlimler Akademsini bitirdikten sonra Fatsa'ya yerleşmişti. Aslen Fatsa'lıydı zaten. Uzun boyu geniş alnı ve eksik olmayan gülüşü, insanlara sıcak yaklaşımı çevrede kendisini hemen sevdirmişti. İri, kalın siyah bıyıkları ayrı bir heybetli gösterirdi onu. … Bizim ideoloğumuzdu.*" Kemal Özkara, "Merhaba Fatsa," *Fatsa Güneş,* 13 April 2007.

[243] İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 January 2007.

[244] Abdullah Yılmaz, interview by Koray Düzgören in Koray Düzgören, *THKP-C ve Kızıldere* (İstanbul: BDS Yayınları, 1988), p.24.

> come back a month later and ask "What have you done?," "Nothing." The secretary said, "Here, certainly there is a dispute among the Georgians, the Circassians and the Laz. Land dispute, girl dispute… When you come we gather together, when you go we start quarrelling." "Agabey," he said "If we unite with the Georgians, then the Turks and Turkomen would follow us, too. There are only a handful of the Laz. Birinci has to come, too." … We had to pay attention to ethnic identities.[245]

As Feyizoğlu maintains, another social relation affecting the politics was familial powers. Both Ziya Yılmaz and Ertan Sarıhan were members of well-known and powerful families that had extensive social connections.[246] Ertan Sarıhan was the son of Lütfü Sarıhan, who had for almost twenty years held the chair in the Fatsa branch of the CHP.[247] On the other hand, two hundred armed men were said to come down from Kabakdağ when anyone dared to slap Ziya Yılmaz.[248] It could be argued that this familial power was not increased their influence within their own communities, but also discouraged any possible enemies.

Actually, there were many other social relations that might be recalled with regard to the organization and development of social opposition in Fatsa. For instance, Nihat Yılmaz played a significant role in the strengthening of the Fatsa

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[245] "*Harekete katılanların önemli kısmı Alevi köylerindendi. Sonradan ben bunu bilince çıkardım. Biz yaklaşırken öyle bi' şeyle yaklaşmadık. Biz etnik çatışmaya engel olmaya çalıştık. Etnik kimlikleri vurgulamadık ama etkili olmuştur. … 12 Mart'tan sonra, … Sinop Kabalı'da SİTÜB-DER'i kurduk. Birinci'nin babasını başkan yaptık. Doğu Karadenizli. Sekreter Çerkes. Sayman Gürcü. … Ben geliyorum herkes peşimde. Köy köy dolaşıyoruz. Bir ay sonra geliyorum 'Ne yaptınız?,' 'Bir şey yok.' Sekreter dedi ki 'Burda Gürcüler, Çerkesler, Lazlar… Mutlak aralarında bir dava var. Toprak davası, kız davası… Sen gelince toplanıyoruz, gidince birbirimize düşüyoruz.' 'Abi,' dedi 'Gürcülerle biz birleşirsek Türklerle Türkmenler de gelir peşimize. Lazlar zaten bir avuç. Birinci de mecbur gelecek.' … Etnik kimlikleri dikkate almak zorunda kaldık*." İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 January 2007.

[246] Feyizoğlu, p.237.

[247] Doğan Çelebi, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 11 April 2007.

[248] "*Şöyle Ziya Yılmaz'a bir tokat vurdun mu Kabakdağ'dan iki yüz silahlı adam inermiş*." İsmail Yeşilyurt, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 January 2007.

branch of the TİP in rural areas as he was a minibus driver organizing regular journeys to Kumru, Korgan and Aybastı.[249]

The Initial Steps in the Streets

After some time, these developments brought into being a somewhat political consciousness which was exhibited in various political actions through which people sought their rights. The first significant one of these was the Beyceli March in July 1967, which was organized in order to urge the officials to build a road to the village. Zeki Sarıhan describes it:

> On Friday, after the Friday *namaz*, we discussed the issue in front of the mosque. We took a poll. The majority voted for a march. In Fatsa the march committee was set up. … We were to walk behind a placard reading "Beyceli Villagers Are on the Road March." There were slogans such as "We begged for a road, [but] listened to lots of stories" and "They [go] to the Moon, we [go] on foot." … On the morning of 27 July 1967, the drummer walked around the neighbourhoods, and the villagers set out on the march. Perhaps it was the first villager march. … They went down to Fatsa. Monday was the market day for Fatsa, and under the curious glances of the people, the Beyceli villagers walked to the front of the Governmet Mansion. After eating lunch here, they moved to Ordu. … The total length of the road to be walked was eighty-two kms. … There were approximately a hundred people. On the morning of 28 July, they continued to walk. A group greeted them in Perşembe and gave them oil and bread. They arrived in Ordu in the afternoon. … The governer demanded representatives from the villagers. Beyceli villagers chose ten people from themselves. The Governor Orhan Mirkelamoğlu talked to them. … In conclusion, the Beyceli villagers could not get the bulldozer, but its promise. … The governorship provided them with two trucks. Singing songs, the villagers returned to Fatsa.[250]

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[249] Abdullah Yılmaz, interview by Koray Düzgören in Düzgören, p.26.

[250] "*Cuma günü Cuma namazından sonra caminin önünde konuyu tartıştık. Oylama yaptık. Çoğunluk yürüyüş istedi. Fatsa'da yürüyüş komitesi oluşturuldu. …* '*Beyceli Köylüleri Yol Yürüyüşünde*' *pankartı arkasında yürünecekti.* '*Yol yol diye inledik, çok martaval dinledik*,' '*Eller aya biz yaya*' *gibi yazılar vardı. … 27 Temmuz 1967 sabahı davul mahalleleri dolaştı ve köylüler yola çıktı. Belki de ilk köylü yürüyüşü idi. … Fatsa'ya inildi. Pazartesi Fatsa'nın pazarı idi ve Beyceli köylüleri halkın meraklı bakışları altında Hükümet Konağı önüne kadar yürüdü. Burada öğle yemeği yendikten sonra Ordu'ya hareket edildi. … Toplam 83 km yürünmesi gerekiyordu. … Yaklaşık 100 kişi vardı. 28 Temmuz sabahı yola devam edildi. Perşembe'de bir grup köylüleri karşılayıp zeytin ekmek sundu.*

In the same year, another march was held in Fatsa against poverty, and the representatives of 33 villages declared a manifesto against usury.[251] Moreover, as Gülten Akın states, the Fatsa branches of Fiskobirlik and the Ziraat Bankası were occupied by producers. Owing to these occupations, they saw that their products were stolen by some merchants who added sand and stones to the hazelnuts. Seventeen of these merchants were arrested, but also the judge Remzi who punished them was exiled. As Akın goes on to argue, at this time, the administrators of the Villagism Association were arrested, and the association lost its function. Nontheless, this gap was filled by the TÖS which played an important role in the foundation of committees on hazelnut exploitation in 50 villages. According to Akın, this provided the revolutionaries with considerable respect.[252]

In 1968, the headmen of 24 villages issued a communique entitled "Amerika'ya İlk İhtar" (The First Warning to the USA),[253] and in 1969 the "Hazelnut Prices and Democratic Rights" meeting was organized after the distribution of an invitation to all villages.[254] The invitation was signed by İsmet Duman, Ahmet Sesişen, Fehmi Akar, Şükrü Güleç and Nazım Dervişoğlu, and it read "The hazelnut grown by villagers feeds usurers."[255] During the meeting, producers carried placards reading, "Food to usurers, thanksgiving to villagers,"

Ordu'ya öğleden sonra varıldı. … Vali köylülerden temsilci istedi. Beyceli köylüleri aralarından on kişi seçti. Vali Orhan Mirkelamoğlu köylülerle görüştü. … Sonuçta, Beyceli köylüleri dozeri alamamışlardı ama sözünü almışlardı. … Valilik iki kamyon sağlamıştı. Köylüler türküler söyleyerek Fatsa'ya döndüler." Quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.20-1.

[251] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.21.

[252] Gülten Akın, "Fatsa Olgusu Fatsa Halkının Mücadele Geleneği," *Demokrat*, 07 May 1980.

[253] "Anadolu'nun Mücadele Tarihi Kanla Yazılmıştır, Silinmez! Karadeniz (1)" censored article in *Bağımsızlık ve Demokrasi Yolunda Kurtuluş,* no.22 (19 March 1999). Available [online]: http://www.ozgurluk.org/kitaplik/webarsiv/kurtulus/eskisayilar/b-yolunda22/karadeniz.htm. [19 June 2007].

[254] "Fatsa Köylüleri Tefecilere Baş Kaldırdı," *Türk Solu*, no.89 (29 July 1969).

[255] "*Köylünün yetiştirdiği fındık tefecileri ve faizcileri beslemektedir.*" Ibid.

"Open your eyes, see what happens, where is your share ask the thief," "They let foreigners in the homeland, together with them robbed it, and made us poor," "We are masters in the elections, we are slaves in the livelyhood," "The *Ziraat Bankası*, the cash box of the rich," "Independent Turkey," and "No to American exploitation."[256]

The last two placards indicated a shift during the late 1960s in the language of social opposition, namely the increasing weight of the National Democratic Revolution (*Milli Demokratik Devrim - MDD*) notion the most prominent advocator of which was Mihri Belli. In fact, the MDD was brought forward against the Socialist Revolution (*Sosyalist Devrim - SD*) strategy supported by the TİP leaders which gave priority to an anti-capitalist struggle led by the proletariat through democratic ways. Claiming that Turkey was a semi-feudal, underdeveloped, and dependent country with a weak working class, the proponents of the MDD strategy envisioned, before the socialist stage, an anti-imperialist and anti-feodal struggle carried out by a national front including the national bourgeoisie, and led by military and civil intellectuals.[257] As Aydınoğlu maintains, this stagist approach reflected the official theses of the communist international, and the experiences of the communist parties of various Third World countries such as Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Indonesia and Sudan.[258]

Actually, this view had been presenet within the TİP at least since the second party congress held in 1966; however, beginning from 1968 it gained much more strength as a reaction to the ineffective, pacifist and parliamentarist stance of the TİP

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[256] "*Faizcilere şapır şupur, köylülere yarabbi şükür,*" "*Aç gözünü gör olanı, hakkın nerde sor çalanı,*" "*Eli yurda soktular, birlik olup soydular, bizi yoksul koydular*," "*Seçimlerde efendiyiz, geçimde köleyiz,*" "*Ziraat Bankası, zengin kasası,*" "Bağımsız Türkiye," and "Amerikan sömürüsüne hayır." Ibid.

[257] Aydınoğlu, pp.82-3, 113-4; Belge, pp.168, 170-1.

[258] Aydınoğlu, pp.114-5.

against the increasing radical activities of university students and other non-parliamentary social movements.[259] This directed a significant part of the university students towards the MDD idea; therefore, the most dynamic section within the TİP was detached from the party.[260] As a sign of this, the TİP supporters were purged from the Federation of Idea Clubs (*Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu - FKF*), and in its fourth general assembly on 9-10 October 1969, it was renamed the Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey (*Türkiye Devrimci Gençlik Federasyonu - Dev-Genç*).[261] However, the MDD front was not free from internal tensions and divisions. As Feyizoğlu states, in the 12th issue of *Aydınlık* magazine (October 1969), the Doğu Perinçek group published a manisfesto entitled "Proleter Devrimci Safları Çelikleştirelim" (Let's Strengthen the Proletarian Revolutionary Ranks), and condemned what they called as left-wing anarchism. By this, they criticized the radical activities of university students, especially those of Deniz Gezmiş and his friends. Also in the same issue an article of Şahin Alpay was published with the heading "Türkiye'nin Düzeni Üzerine" (On the Order of Turkey) where he argued that the proletariat was not meeting the objective and subjective conditions to lead the revolution, therefore Doğan Avcıoğlu was right to give priority to nationalist revolutionaries. These developments sharpened the tensions between the Perinçek group on the one hand and Mahir Çayan, the feature leader of the THKP-C, and his friends on the other. At last, *Aydınlık* magazine was divided into two as *Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergi* (ASD) (Light the Socialist Magazine) published by the Çayan

[259] Ibid., p.111; Feyizoğlu, pp.88-9; Ünsal, p.6-7, 9, 15.

[260] Ünsal, p.9

[261] *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, Vol.7, pp.2139-40.

group, and the *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık* (PDA) (the Proletarian Revolutionary Light) of the Perinçek group.[262]

In the 15th issue of ASD dated January 1970, Mahir Çayan refreshed the debates within the MDD by writing an article entitled "Sağ Sapma, Devrimci Teori ve Pratik" (Rightist Deviation, Revolutionary Theory and Practice). In this article, Çayan first criticized the notion of the pacifist transition to socialism supported by the TİP leaders. Then he decried those who defended the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie within the anti-imperialist front. Rejecting the establishment of a mechanistic relationship between the level of industrial development and the revolutionary subjectivity of the working class, he argued that the MDD was an adoption by Mao of the Leninist Permanent Revolution (*Kesintisiz Devrim*) thesis to colonial countries which envisioned a peasant uprising under the leadership of the working class to realize continuously in the first place the democratic revolution, and then the socialist one. According to Çayan, there were two intermingled responsibilities before the proletarian revolutionaries in a semi-feudal country under the hegemony of imperialism: To come together with all national classes to form an anti-imperialist front, and to bring consciousness to the working class, and make it the leading force of the revolution. He maintained that the latter was the primary duty at that time. Although he stated that the leadership of the working class was not an actual, but potential one when its current level of political consciousness and organization was considered, he also claimed the recent working class movements indicated a transformation of the proletariat from a class in itself to a class for itself.[263] Six months later, he wrote "Yeni Oportunizmin Niteliği Üzerine" (On the

[262] Feyizoğlu, pp.159-176.

[263] Mahir Çayan, "Sağ Sapma, Devrimci Teori ve Pratik," Mahir Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, ed. M. Ali Mugultay (İstanbul: Evren Yayınları, 1976), pp.76-130.

Quality of New Opportunism) in the 20th issue of the same magazine dated June 1970. In this article, Çayan developed his previous ideas and claimed that the MDD was a peasant revolution under the ideological leadership of the working class for which a People's War (*Halk Savaşı*) based on the countryside was an inevitable stage. In addition, he severely condemned those who stayed within the legal limits drawn by the constitution.[264] This emphasis made by Çayan on the leadership of the working class (though with some reservations and a step backwards in the second article) and the subjectivity of the peasants in the MDD unlike those who granted precedence to civil and military intellectuals over wider social classes should be evaluated with reference to the increasing social movements in the country in those times. Indeed, the period between 1967 and 1971 was quite fruitful in terms of peasant actions and working class movements among which the June-July 1969 Alpagut incidents where 786 mine workers occupied and acquired the management of the lignite enterprise, and the 15-16 June 1970 resistance where hundreds of thousands workers fought against the proposed change in the Trade Unions Law that aimed to eliminate the DİSK were the most significant ones.[265]

Soon after the inclination of university students towards the MDD, the idea also gained strength among socialists in the Black Sea region. As Feyizoğlu states, on 21 December 1969, the Central Black Sea branches of the TİP arranged a meeting in which they decided that the TİP had to adopt the MDD as its strategy. Among those who signed this decision were attendees from the Fatsa branch including Fikri Sönmez as the chairman, Ahmet Sesişen as a member of the board of

[264] Mahir Çayan, "Yeni Oportünizmin Niteliği Üzerine," Mahir Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, ed. M. Ali Mugultay (İstanbul: Evren Yayınları, 1976), pp.131-185.

[265] For peasant movements in this period see Babuş, pp.146-172; *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi,* Vol.7, pp.2136-9, 2151-2. For the working class movements see Ibid., pp.2146-9, 2155-6, 2161; *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Sendikacılık Hareketi,* pp.49-61.

directors, and Ahmet Atasoy and Ziya Yılmaz as members.[266] To a degree, internal divisions within the MDD were also reflected in the region. As Feyizoğlu expresses, the congess of the TİP Fatsa branch on 25 January 1970 was turned into an arena of the conflicts between the ASD and PDA groups. While Doğu Perinçek and Hasan Yalçın attended the congress on behalf of the PDA group, İrfan Uçar and Mustafa Ulusoy, a member of the General Board of Directors of the Dev-Genç, attended in the name of the ASD group. During the Congress, Fikri Sönmez, Ziya Yılmaz, İsmet Öztürk and Cem Eroğul made a speech, too. After the congress, Uçar and Ulusoy met Ziya Yılmaz, the natural leader of the MDD-leaning cadres in the Black Sea region, who asked them to send a few people from the Dev-Genç to explain to them the divisions within the MDD. Yılmaz also told them that they would be pleased to meet Mahir Çayan, the writer of "Sağ Sapma, Devrimci Teori ve Pratik." So, at the beginning of the March 1970, together with Mustafa Kemal Kaçaroğlu and Mehmet Beşlioğlu, Mahir Çayan went to Fatsa. There, in the *Yeşil Fatsa* printing house, he explained his ideas to 25-30 people most of whom were from the TİP. After long discussions, they were convinced by his arguments.[267] All these people who participated in the Fatsa TİP congress and the meeting in *Yeşil Fatsa* printing house were fairly influential figures within the revolutionary youth movement, and this was an indicator of the importance given to the relationships in Fatsa.

Actually there were some factors easing the acceptance of the MDD strategy and the more militant version of it materialized by Çayan in the Black Sea region. One of them, as Sarıoğlu argues, was the deep-rooted weapon culture in the region. Unlike the SD, the MDD implied a direct connection between the weapon and the

[266] Feyizoğlu, pp.183-4.

[267] Ibid., pp.184, 215.

revolution.[268] On the other hand, the impact of the revolutionary students who made village practices[269] in the region was significant, too. According to İsmet Öztürk, they were an inseparable part of the region:

> Like almost everwhere in Turkey, the members of the Dev-Genç who were making village practices were pretty influential. Some used to stay until the end of village practices, some used to stay longer since they were runaway. Therefore, they had become a component of the region. Nurettin Öztürk, Hüseyin Cevahir, Sinan Kazım Özüdoğru and Sabahattin Kurt were a few of them. … Among them, there was almost no one supporting the central TİP policies. … I think that this played a part in my being a MDD proponent.[270]

Indeed, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many revolutionary university students took part in these village practices in the Black Sea region. According to Yeşilyurt, one of the reasons for that was the fact that in the Black Sea region, the contradiction between the producers and the state was very clear compared with many other regions where the contradiction with big landowners were more evident. Indeed, tobacco, hazelnut and tea producers had obvious contradictions with the state through Tekel, Fiskobirlik and Çaykur, respectively. Another reason was the NATO bases in the region such as the Samsun Toptepe and the Sinop radar bases which created a suitable environment for an anti-imperialist sentimality.[271] In addition, as Feyizoğlu states, the geographical conditions of the region which were

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[268] Sarıoğlu, p.169.

[269] These were the practices carried out by revolutionary students in accordance with the MDD idea in villages throughout the country to organize meetings with small agricultural producers and landless peasants, and thereby increase their political consciousness. For detailed information see Babuş.

[270] "*Türkiye'nin hemen her yerinde olduğu gibi köy çalışmaları yapan Dev-Genç'liler de çok etkiliydi. Bir kısmı köy çalışmaları olduğunda iş bitene kadar kalıyor, bir kısmı kaçak durumda olduğundan uzun dönem kalıyordu. Dolayısıyla onlar artık bölgenin bir parçası haline gelmişlerdi. Örneğin Nurettin Öztürk, Hüseyin Cevahir, Sinan Kazım Özüdoğru, Sabahattin Kurt bunlardan birkaçıdır. … Bunların içinde hemen hemen Tip'in merkez politikasını destekleyen kimse yoktu. … Benim MDD'ci olmamda bunun önemli etkenlerden biri olduğunu düşünüyorum.*" İsmet Öztürk, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 27 December 2006.

[271] İsmail Yeşilyurt, interiew by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 08 January 2007.

appropriate for hiding, protection and sheltering had an effect, too. Moreover, the TİP was very strong in the region so that there were lots of people with whom they had connections, and it was easier to achieve mass support.[272]

In the summer of 1970, producers organized a number of remarkable hazelnut demonstrations with the help of the village practices of these young people. Babuş states that the primary region where revolutionary students carried out village practices in the hazelnut area around May and July 1970 was Fatsa. He also says that some villagers in the hazelnut area compared them to the Turkish gangs who fought against the Greek gangs during the National Struggle (*Milli Mücadele*) period.[273] In fact, the villagers established a connection between the *eşkıya* culture prevalent in the region and the modern guerilla image.[274] They considered these revolutionary students, like the *eşkıya*s, as heroic people who fought against injustice and the ruthless on behalf of the weak and the poor. Similar to what they did for the *eşkıya*s, they produced legends about these young people in which they were depicted as very tall and handsome.[275] Yavuz, who participated in these practices, states that in the Friday speeches, most of the preachers spoke in favor of them, and even a de facto fatwa was declared letting them eat from those hazelnuts hanging from trees near roads.[276]

Although they believed that they brought political consciousness to villagers from above, in reality these young revolutionaries were in a mutual process of

[272] Feyizoğlu, p.237.

[273] Babuş, pp.95, 101.

[274] Sarıoğlu, p.169.

[275] Ibid., p.186. For a work on such *eşkıya*s in the Eastern Black Sea region see Yaşar Küçük, *Doğu Karadeniz Bölgesi Eşkıya ve Kabadayıları Türküler-Destanlar* (Trabzon: Serander Yayınları, 2006).

[276] Yavuz, p.423.

teaching and learning.[277] While they were trying to increase the politicization of the producers, they were also learning the concrete problems of the villagers, and the local social life from them. Moreover, as Yavuz shows, sometimes the villagers brought forward more radical suggestions than themselves, such as burning hazelnuts in village squares.[278]

After these practices, hazelnut meetings were organized in Fatsa on 1 June, in Bulancak and Görele on 2 June, in Ünye on 3 June, in Perşembe on 4 June, in Vakfıkebir on 5 June, in Çarşamba on 1 July and in Ordu on 8 July.[279] Babuş states that the day before the Fatsa meeting, a village headman named Nazım who was in the organization committee was taken into custody to prevent the meeting. However, a crowded group of villagers blocked the Ordu-Fatsa-Samsun highway for a while. Some of them also gathered infront of the police station and threatened to raid it unless the headman was let free. At last, the man was released. This was important because by this villagers through their actions became successful at forcing local administrators to make a concession.[280] On the other hand, the Ordu meeting on 8 July turned out to be a crucial turning point in the struggle of hazelnut producers:

> The crowd waited impatiently for the end of the speeches, as if the words they had heard many times did not satisfy them. Suddenly people rushed to the coast. … In a few minutes, nobody was left in the meeting area except the old and children. On the coastal highway, there were a barricade to Fatsa made by the cars from Fatsa; a barricade to Bulancak composed of the cars from Bulancak; and thousands of people between these two barricades. The Black Sea coastal highway was closed to traffic though it had not been planned before. [They said:] "Either the Minister of Commerce will come and declare the floor price or the

[277] Sarıoğlu, p.170.

[278] Yavuz, p.420.

[279] Feyizoğlu., p.253.

[280] Babuş, pp.104-6.

> highway will not be opened. If needed, they would die. Actually, they were not living like a man, at least they would die like a man." … The first intervention to the situation came from the Governor of Ordu. … He promised to bring the Minister to Ordu provided that they opened the road. … After being booed by thousands, he and his official car were stoned. After a few hits, without any serious harm he got in his car and moved away from there. … The situation was exceeding the local police and gendarmerie. A commando unit came from Merzifon. … The Colonel was standing like a statue on his jeep. … "The most important thing for a soldier," he shouted "is to accomplish the duty he is given. My duty is at any price to open this road!" This determined speech was responded to by a more determined old villager: "Do you order the sons to attack their fathers? Are these people the enemy? But if you bring the situation to that point, do you believe that you can get out of here alive?" … "I," said the Colonel "can open this road if I want, but I would not like to go down in history as a black spot."[281]

In the end, after blocking the road for thirteen and a half hours, the producers ensured that the floor price was increased from 575 kurus to 850 kurus.[282] In this resistance people from Fatsa played the principal role as the pejorative words of Sıtkı Çebi shows: "In the 8 July events, it's said that the anarchists who were the protagonists of those who encouraged the people to ravages and blocked the highway were some people from Fatsa; and the leftists from Bulancak, Perşembe

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[281] "*Konuşmaların sona ermesini sabırsızlıkla bekliyordu kitle, sanki defalarca duydukları benzeri laflar onları kesmiyordu. Sahile doğru bir akın oldu birden bire. … Birkaç dakika içinde hiç kimse kalmamıştı miting alanında, yaşlı, çoluk çocukların dışında. Sahil yolunda, Fatsa arabalarından oluşan bir barikat, Fatsa tarafında; Bulancak araçlarından oluşan bir barikat, Bulancak tarafında; iki barikat arasındaki boşluk ise binlerce insanla doluydu. Önceden planlanmayan biçimde Karadeniz sahil yolu trafiğe tamamen kapatılmıştı.* '*Ya Ticaret Bakanı gelip taban fiyatını açıklayacak ya da yol açılmayacaktı. Gerekirse bu uğurdu ölünecekti, zaten adam gibi yaşadıkları yoktu, bari adam gibi ölsünlerdi.*' *… Duruma ilk müdahale Ordu Valisi'nden geldi. … Bakan'ı Ordu'ya getireceğine söz veriyodu, tek ki yol açılsındı. … Binlerce insanın ağzından çıkan yuuuuh! Sesinin arından makam aracı, Vali ayırt etmeksizin taş sopa yağmuruna tutulmuştu. Zaten tetikte bekleyen vali yediği birkaç darbeden sonra önemli bir hasara uğramadan hızla araca atlayıp oradan uzaklaşmıştı. … Yerel polis ve jandarmayı aşan bir durum vardı ortada. Merzifon'dan komando birliğine kaldı iş. … Albay cipinin üstünde bir heykel gibi duruyordu. …* '*Bir asker için en önemli şey,*' *diye bağırdı* '*kendisine verilen görevi yerine getirmektir. Bana verilen görev bu yolu ne pahasına olursa olsun açmaktır!*' *Bu kararlı nutka daha da kararlı yaşlı bir köylüden geldi karşılık:* '*Evlatlarını babalarının üzerine mi saldırtıyorsun! Düşman mı buradaki insanlar! Ama yok işi o raddeye getirirsen, sen buradan sağ çıkacağını mı sanıyorun?*' … '*Ben*,' *dedi Albay* '*bu yolu açmasına açarım, ama tarihe de kara bir leke olarak geçmek istemem.*'" Yavuz, pp.459-61.

[282] Lütfü Yılmaz, "Fındık: Karadeniz'in Canı, Kanı, Alınteri 8," *Demokrat*, 17 July 1980. In this article Yılmaz states that the meeting was in 1969, but it should be 1970.

and Ordu with the same anarchist aim joined them."[283] This was really a remarkable moment because for the first time producers saw that they were able to achieve notable gains when they acted in an organized and collective manner. As the victory of the producers was great, so were the reaction of the dominant classes. For instance, in *Haber* newspaper, which was published in Ordu, Tarık Özsoy lost control while swearing badly about the organizers of the meeting:

> This country is not the toy of some bast…s and son of b…..s, neither does it belong to those forgers who drive them here and there behind the scene, and whose sauce-colored brains and hearts are inferior to those of dirty worms. Of course, those who deny their moms and dads can't know at what costs this homeland was founded. There may be disloyal, vile, coward treators within society. To be deceived by them, and to take into consideration their blackmail and vomit wouldn't solve any of our problems. It is a national duty to know those who continuously abuse the tolerance and the requirements of democracy making it look like the pants of their moms, and … to chase them with a fly swatter.[284]

Nonetheless, the meeting was not completely successful. As Yavuz states, unlike the tobacco producers in Alaçam, they failed to establish a permanent organization based on producers after the village practices and meetings in the hazelnut region. According to him, the chief reason for that was the overly cosmopolitan structure of the practice area within which significant class and other differentiations and conflicts were gathered together.[285] In addition, the incidents

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[283] "*8 Temmuz olaylarında halkı tahribata teşvik eden ve yolu kesenlerin ele başılığını yapan anarşistlerin, Fatsa'lı bazı şahıslar oldukları; bunlara Bulancak, Perşembe ve Ordu'daki aynı anarşik gayeyi arzulayan solcuların katıldıkları söylenmiştir.*" Sıtkı Çebi, *Ordu Tarihi ve 50. Yılda Ordu Şehri* (Ordu: Ordu Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Yayınları, 1973), pp.106-7.

[284] "*Bu memleket p.. kuruları ile birtakım o….u çocuklarının oyuncağı olmadığı gibi, bunları piyon yapıp öteye beriye süren perde arkası salça renkli, kalp ve beyinleri pislik solucanlarından daha aşağılık sahtekarların hiç değildir. Bu memleketin neler pahasına kurulduğu, nelere mal olduğu, herşeyi ile anasını babasını inkar edenler tarafından elbette bilinemez. Toplum içinde satılık, aşağılık, kansız, memleket ve vatan hainleri olabilir. Bunlara aldanmak, bunların şantaj ve kusmalarına dönüp bakmak, nemizi çözümler? Demokrasinin müsamahasını ve icaplarını durmadan iğfal edip, analarının donuna benzetenleri tanımakla … bu zibidileri sinek raketi ile kovalamak ulusal görevdir.*" [The original text was not censored]. Quoted in Çebi, p.107.

[285] Yavuz, pp.456-7.

inside the city during the meeting had a negative effect, too. As Yavuz states, while the producers were blocking the highway, some spontaneously appeared gangs ravaged whatever came infront of them within the city center. Yet, the main targets were the houses and businesses of merchants. At a moment of panic, a merchant shot at the crowd around his house and killed an old man.[286] These events discouraged a considerable number of producers, and estranged them from such collective actions in the future.

The Road to Kızıldere

Along with the working class actions, these peasant meetings were the peak point of mass movements until that time, and they persuaded some revolutionary students that it was time to form a Marxist-Leninist party to guide these social uprisings, and gradually initiate a People's War leading to a socialist revolution. As Laçiner states, especially after the 15-16 June events, the revolutionary youth began to see society like a volcano that was about to explode, and regarded themselves as the ones to set fire to the detonator.[287] In other words, it was assumed that an armed struggle would initiate a wider social uprising. With this intention, Mahir Çayan, Sebahattin Kurt and Hüseyin Cevahir went to Fatsa several times to make observations in the region, and established relationships for their struggle.[288] As Ziya Yılmaz stated in his testimony to the military prosecutor, after the hazelnut meetings they also set up camps, and conducted educational programs in rural

[286] Ibid., p.461.

[287] Ömer Laçiner, "THKP-C: Bir Maceranın Başlangıcı," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.78 (Autumn 1998), p.16

[288] İsmet Öztürk, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 27 December 2006.

areas.[289] Finally, the THKP-C was founded around December 1970. The organizational structure was designed as a firm party with a more loose front around it,[290] and this was in accordance with Çayan's strategy of a People's War to be led by a Marxist-Leninist party.

After that, in January 1971, Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, Ertuğrul Kürkçü and Münir Ramazan Aktolga published a booklet and broke their ties with Mihri Belli, whom they accused of reformism and depending on other actors than the subjective forces of the revolution. According to them, while the peasantry was the primary force of the revolution, the working class was the leading force. Therefore the revolution was to be initiated from the countryside, and extended towards urban areas.[291] As Feyizoğlu states, meanwhile, the People's Liberation Army of Turkey (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu - THKO*) established by Deniz Gezmiş and his friends started urban guerilla activities such as bank robberies, which generated considerable sympathy within the revolutionary youth movement. With the pressure of this, after the 12 March military memorandum, the THKP-C, too, was drifted away from mass practices towards urban guerilla activities that it had not planned before. Of course, the stagnation and decline of social movements after the summer of 1970 was a major factor in this tendency. Moreover, the guerilla struggles in the Third World, and the translation, in that period, of the books of such guerilla leaders as Douglas Bravo, Carlos Marighella, Alberto Bayo and Regis Debray had an

[289] Sinan Doğan (ed.), *THKP-C Doğuşu ve İlk Eylemleri (1969-1973)*, 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1987), pp.14-5.

[290] Yayla, p.256.

[291] Mahir Çayan and et al., "Aydınlık Sosyalist Dergiye Açık Mektup," Mahir Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, ed. M. Ali Mugultay (İstanbul: Evren Yayınları, 1976), pp.189-211.

effect.[292] Soon, this development brought about uneasineass among some leaders of the organization, including Küpeli and Aktolga.[293]

In April 1971, Çayan wrote "Kesintisiz I" (Permanent I) where he explained in detail the Permanent Revolution thesis and the revolutionary organization understanding of Lenin.[294] As Feyizoğlu explains, in May 1971, the organization kidnapped Efraim Elrom, the consul general of Israel, and then killed him after a widespread search was started by the security forces. This initiated an extensive state operation as a result of which Ulaş Bardakçı, Ziya Yılmaz and Mahir Çayan were arrested and Hüseyin Cevahir was killed. These operations further sharpened the divisions within the THKP-C. On 29 November 1971, together with Ömer Ayna and Cihan Alptekin from the THKO, Çayan, Yılmaz and Bardakçı escaped from Maltepe Prison. In December, Küpeli and Aktolga were dismissed from the THKP-C.[295]

In this period Çayan wrote "Kesitisiz II-III" (Permanent II-III) which is, together with "Kesintisiz I" the most significant and extensive theoretical text left from the THKP-C. In this text, Çayan put forward a detailed revolution strategy, too. He claimed that Turkey was an underdeveloped country where capitalism had been developed by external powers. A foreign-dependent local industry, hence a monopolistic local capital, was built so that imperialism had become an internal, not external phenomenon. According to Çayan, with this hidden occupation (*gizli işgal*), the imperialist powers were able to utilize a less costly way of exploiting the country in the third general depression period of imperialism during which a war between

[292] Kamil Dede, interview in Doğan (ed.), pp.133-4.

[293] Feyizoğlu, pp.321-2, 354-69.

[294] Mahir Çayan, "Kesintisiz I," Mahir Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, ed. M. Ali Mugultay (İstanbul: Evren Yayınları, 1976), pp.237-303.

[295] Feyizoğlu, pp.384-494.

the imperialists was no longer possible to solve the competition among them. He also defended that as a consequence of this dependent development of capitalism, there was an always-present national crisis (*milli kriz*) which lay down the objective preconditions of an armed struggle. However, he also argued that this dependent development seemingly softened the contradictions, and an artificial balance (*suni denge*) had been set up between the masses and the oligarchy. On the other hand, since the local monopolistic capital was not strong enough to protect the existing relations of production, it had to make an alliance with feodal powers. Together with the relative weakness of the working class, this made the country prone to a colony-type fascism (*sömürge tipi faşizm*), which made it compulsory for the proletarian party to fight from the beginning. Therefore, it was impossible to realize the revolution through a peaceful democratic transition or after a long evolution period during which laboring masses would prepare for a general uprising. Along with the always-present national crisis, this meant that in dependent countries such as Turkey, the evolution (*evrim*) and revolution (*devrim*) stages that Lenin had distinguished for revolution were intermingled. Çayan maintained that because of all of these, the revolutionaries in Turkey had to give priority to an armed struggle carried out by the vanguards of the proletariat (*öncü savaşı*), which would break the passivism of the broad masses, and make them join the revolutionary combat. This struggle was to be guided by a Marxist-Leninist party which had to perform also non-military practices to ensure mass support for the revolution, and achieve the essential stage of the People's War. Çayan called this strategy the Politicized Military War Strategy (*Politikleşmiş Askeri Savaş Stratejisi - PASS*). In this strategy, the peasantry composed the major force whereas the working class was the leading

force. The Kemalists and the international socialist block were regarded as auxiliary forces.[296]

As Feyizoğlu states, after they escaped from prison, the revolutionaries decided to undertake an impressive action to save the imprisoned THKO leaders Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Aslan and Hüseyin İnan, who were to be hanged. However, because of widespread state operations during which Ziya Yılmaz was caught and Ulaş Bardakçı was killed, it became almost impossible for them to stay in İstanbul and Ankara. After the insistence of Ertan Sarıhan they decided to go to Fatsa.[297] Mahir Çayan, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Ömer Ayna, and Cihan Alptekin were brought by Hasan Pekbüyük, the nephew of Ziya Yılmaz, to the Yapraklı village of Fatsa and settled in Mehmet Atasoy's house[298] while Sinan Kazım Özüdoğru, Hüdai Arıkan, Saffet Alp, and Sebahattin Kurt stayed at Hüseyin Gümüş's house.[299] The relationship between them was provided by Ahmet Atasoy, and Harun Sarıhan was sent to Ankara to find money and meet some other requirements.[300] As Feyizoğlu explains, on 25 March lawyer Şener Şadi took Çayan, Kürkçü and Ertan Sarıhan to Ünye where they had decided to kidnapp foreign technicians from the NATO radar base. That night, Çayan, Kürkçü, Arıkan and Alptekin stayed in the office of lawyer Ali Kaynar. Meanwhile, Fikri Sönmez and his apprentice Avni Kayacı were taken into custody, and brought to Ankara. Jeweller Turan Külünk informed Çayan and his friends via Ali Kaynar about these arrests.

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[296] Mahir Çayan, "Kesintisiz II-III," Mahir Çayan, *Bütün Yazılar*, ed. M. Ali Mugultay (İstanbul: Evren Yayınları, 1976), pp.307-381.

[297] Feyizoğlu, pp.498-508, 520-30.

[298] Ibid., pp.522-3.

[299] Emrullah Aslan, interview by Koray Düzgören in Düzgören, p.107.

[300] Feyizoğlu, pp.524-5.

On 26 March, around 19:00, they kidnapped two English and a Canadian technician from their apartment above Kaynar's office, and since they had nowhere else to go, on 28 March they went to the village house of Emrullah Aslan, an Alevi headman, in Kızıldere. After the kidnapping, Ali Kaynar, Şener Şadi, Turan Külünk, Abdullah Yılmaz and Hasan Yılmaz were taken into police custody, too. After a while Hasan Yılmaz (also known as Yüncü Hasan) brought security forces to Kızıldere, and Emrullah Aslan gave them a confession letter he had written earlier.[301] As a result of an operation conducted by the security forces, along with the three foreign technicians, Çayan, Kurt, Özüdoğru, Arıkan, Alp, Ayna, Alptekin, Ertan Sarıhan, Ahmet Atasoy and Nihat Yılmaz were killed while Kürkçü was caught alive.[302] After Kızıldere events, which is considered to be one of the most important moments in the history of the socialist left in Turkey, the first period of the social struggles in Fatsa came to an end.

Reorganization and the Anti-Fascist Struggles

The social struggles in the second half of the 1960s and early 1970s left behind a significant legacy in the town. First of all, there was a more or less strong tradition of struggle among hazelnut producers by the mid-1970s. As Zeki Işık argues, in the previous period socialists had carried out extensive practices and set up deep relations in the villages among producers. Therefore, the villagers were not so apolitical.[303] In a corresponding manner, Aydın Akyazı states that thanks to the

[301] Ibid., pp.527-30, 532-3.

[302] Ibid, pp.533-541. It is still debated whether the foreign technicians were killed by the security forces during the clashes or by the revolutionaries after the operation began.

[303] Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

earlier struggles, they met enlightened producers in almost every village of Fatsa during their village practices after 12 March.[304] The preceding period of social struggles had had an encouraging impact also on the intellectuals and the youth in the town. In the first place, this was a consequence of the fact that three of the "revolution martyrs" who died in Kızıldere, namely Ertan Sarıhan, Ahmet Atasoy and Nihat Yılmaz, were from Fatsa. Zeki Işık claims that since these were very well-known and respected people in the town, despite their malicious representation by the press, by many people they were regarded as heroes who undertook the risk of dying in the name of their struggle to help the poor.[305] In addition to the legendary inheritance of these heroic people, as Sebahattin Akyazı, a young revolutionary in the 1970s, explains, there were many other leading figures in the town left behind from the TİP and THKP-C processes, who influenced and guided the youth.[306]

Indeed, these advantages eased the reorganization of social opposition and the revolutionary youth movement in Fatsa in the second half of the 1970s; however, the earlier period had some discouraging effects, too. As Pertev Aksakal states, after the Kızıldere events, Fatsa became one of the principal targets of the establishment, and great pressure was applied on the progressive, democratic and revolutionary people in the town.[307] The fear stemming from this pressure and the preceding incidents were negatively affecting the reorganization process. For instance, in an unrecorded conversation Ahmet Özdemir, a primary school teacher and a member of the Fatsa District Committee of the Dev-Yol, told me that until the social opposition reached considerable strength at the end of 1978, they were unable to get organized

[304] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

[305] Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

[306] Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[307] Pertev Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği* (Ankara: Penta Yayıncılık, 2007), p.23

throughly in villages where the THKP-C had previously been influential. Likewise, Sedat Göçmen, a member of the Central Committee of the Dev-Yol, who was in charge of the Black Sea region, states that during their hazelnut meeting practices in the villages, they met some villagers who reminded them of the violent events in the 1970 Ordu meeting and refused to take part in the practices.[308]

After 12 March, like everywhere in Turkey, an intensive left-right polarization especially among the youth emerged in Fatsa. The fascist right organized in the town through the Fatsa branch of the Hearths of Ideal (*Ülkü Ocakları*),[309] the Union of *Ülkücü* Teachers (*Ülkücü Öğretmenler Birliği - Ülkü-Bir*) and various martial arts schools.[310] On the other hand, as Naci Sönmez, the son of Fikri Sönmez, and a young revolutionary in those years, states, the socialist left organized primarily via the Fatsa People's House and the Association of All Teachers' Unification and Solidarity (*Tüm Öğretmenler Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği - TÖB-DER*). Once again teachers played a crucial role in this process:

> All young people were going to the People's House. There used to be seminars, theatrical rehearsals. Teachers were coming. Skillful people from the neighbourhood were coming. … The People's House was a center where social, artistic and political activies were carried out. Although it was not a political organization, it had more political functions than today's parties. … What was decisive were the People's House and TÖB-DER. Teachers were very important in those days. Not like today. They were pretty much interested in politics. … There was Selahatin Özakın. He was our English teacher. There was his wife, Gülsüm Özakın. She was our Turkish teacher. There was Şenal Sarıhan, my Turkish teacher. There was Zeki Sarıhan. There were other teachers, too. The political struggle in Fatsa was pulling those teachers who had a little leftist culture to the focal point of the cause. … My English teacher used to come to the People's House to explain social classes to us. …

[308] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[309] The youth organization of the MHP. The Fatsa branch of the Hearths of Ideal is said to have been opened in the 1970s by Nail Dervişoğlu, and Aydın Akın is told to have been one of the leading members of it.

[310] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007; Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007; Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.33-4.

> And it was very crowded. There were different sessions. The first, second and third classes were separate. We were not as small as today.[311]

According to the indictment of the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial, the Fatsa TÖB-DER was opened on 8 December 1974 by Bekir Yerli, Selahattin Özakın, Haşim Sarıhan, Bekir Sarıhan and Mehmet Özdemir. The Fatsa People's House was founded on 13 September 1975 by Vural Soytekin, Dursun Mehmet Can and student A.Salih Şatıroğlu. In these organizations teachers and students gathered together regularly, carried out educational activities, read oppositional publications, and discussed the problems of the common people in the region. When Fikri Sönmez was released from prison in 1974, his tailor's shop also became one of the main places for the organization of the socialist left.[312]

Soon, the tension between the leftists and rightists increased, and it turned into fights between these two groups. Fatsa High School was one of the major places of this conflict:

> During the Nationalist Front (*Milliyetçi Cephe - MC*) period, there was an intensive *kadrolaşma* (cadre appointment) in schools. Where they were weak, as in Fatsa High School, Çarşamba and Terme, they performed transfers from outside, brought *ülkücü* students and appointed those teachers who were inclined towards the MHP as school managers.

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[311] "*Bütün gençler Halkevi'ne gidiyordu. Seminerler, tiyatro çalışmaları oluyordu. Öğretmenler geliyorlardı. Mahallede yetenekleri olan insanlar geliyordu. … Halkevi sosyal, sanatsal, politik faaliyetlerin yürüdüğü bir merkezdi. Politik bir örgüt olmamasına rağmen günümüz partilerinden çok daha fazla politik işlevi vardı. … Esas belirleyici olan Halkevi ve Töb-Der'di. Öğretmenler çok önemliydi o zaman. Şimdiki gibi değil. Politikanın çok içindeydiler. … Selahattin Özakın vardı. İngilizce öğretmeniydi. Eşi Gülsüm Özakın vardı. Türkçe öğretmenimizdi. Gene Şenal Sarıhan vardı, Türkçe öğretmenimdi. Zeki Sarıhan vardı. Başka öğretmenlerimiz de vardı. Fatsa'daki siyasal mücadele az bir şey sol kültür almış öğretmenleri işin odağına çekiyordu. Halkevi'nde benim İngilizce öğretmenim gelir toplumsal sınıfları anlatırdı. … Çok da kalabalık oluyordu. Seans seans oluyordu. Birinci, ikinci, üçüncü. sınıflar ayrı. Şimdiki gibi parmakla gösterilecek kadar az değildik*." Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[312] *İddianame, Kovuşturmaya Yer Olmadığı ve Soruşturmanın Geçici Olarak Durdurulması Kararı, Fatsa İlçesi Yasadışı THKP/C DEVRİMCİ YOL Davasıdır* (Ankara: T.C. 3. Ordu ve Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı Askeri Savcılığı Erzincan, Evrak No: 1981/1299, Esas No: 1981/1019, Karar No: 1982/196, 1982), pp.153-7. In this thesis, the indictment is referenced as a reliable source of data as long as the arguments in it are backed by the congruent statements of various actors who participated in the processes mentioned.

> … In the course of time, the *ülkücü*s started to crowd together in front of the school and make demonstrations of power to intimidate us. The MHP, which was trying to get organized via karate and taekwondo courses, started to utilize this street power as a means for discouraging us. This became an external factor which directed us to solve the problem of life security, and assure further solidarity. … The tension in the entire country, and the polarization within the youth began to spread to our Fatsa district as well. As a precaution, we began to go to and return from school collectively, and tried to shape our lives in a way as to ensure our safety.[313]

As a response to the increasing attacks from *ülkücü*s, at the beginning of the 1977-78 academic year, the revolutionary students at Fatsa High School arranged a march where they buried ethics books, and shouted slogans such as "Fascists will go, education will continue!" "Fascist headmaster, resign!" and "Long live democratic education!"[314] At last, the headmaster Abdullah Barın was removed from office during the CHP government, and Ahmet Ersan was appointed in his place on 19 April 1978.[315]

The clashes between the two sides reached their climax in June 1977 when Kemal Kara, an esteemed Alevi and the chairman of Fatsa People's House, was killed by fascists backed by a policeman named Necati Budak.[316] It might be claimed that the murder was one of the first demonstrations of the civil-war strategy

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[313] "*Milliyetçi Cephe döneminde okullarda yoğun bir kadrolaşma yaşanıyordu. Zayıf olunan yerlerde dışardan nakil kanalları çalıştırılarak, örneğin Fatsa Lisesi'nde, Çarşamba'da, Terme'de, Ülkücü gençler okullara yığınak yapılıyor, yönetici kadroları MHP'ye yakınlığıyla bilinen öğretmenlerden oluşturuluyordu. … Zamanla ülkücü kesim okul önlerine yığılmaya, bize gözdağı vermek için güç gösterisi yapmaya başladı. Karate, tekvando kurslarıyla örgütlenmeye çalışan MHP bu sokak gücünü bizim üzerimizde yıldırma aracı olarak kullanmaya başladı. Bu, bizi de can güvenliği sorununu ortadan kaldırmaya, daha çok dayanışma içinde olmaya iten bir dış etmen oldu. Ülkenin genelindeki gerilme, gençlikteki saflaşma bizim Fatsa ilçemize de yayılmaya başladı. Biz tedbir olarak okula toplu gidip gelmeye, can güvenliğini çözme babında bir yaşam şekli oluşturmaya çalıştık.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, Fatsa, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[314] "*Faşistler gidecek, eğitim sürecek,*" "*Faşist müdür istifa,*" and "*Yaşasın demokratik eğitim.*" Quoted in "Fatsa Lisesi Faşistleştirilemez," *Devrimci Yol*, no.12 (1 January 1978), p.7

[315] *İddianame*, p.168.

[316] "Fatsa Halkevi Başkanı Kemal Kara Faşist Katiller Tarafından Katledildi," *Devrimci Yol*, no. 5 (1 July 1977), p.3.

of the MHP aiming to initiate an inter-secterian violence between the Sunnis and Alevis, which was to cause hundreds of deaths later in several places including Malatya, Sivas, Kahramanmaraş and Çorum. Nonetheless, this strategy failed in Fatsa thanks to the fact that the Alevis and Sunnis had always lived together in a mixed manner in the town.[317] In this togetherness the attitude of left was influential, too. For instance, although he was an Alevi, Kemal Kara worked as an apprentice near Fikri Sönmez, who was a Georgian of the Sunni sect.[318] Aydın Akyazı and Cumhur Yavuz, a Dev-Yol member sent to Fatsa in 1979 from Ankara state that like other places in Turkey, there were politicized tensions between different ethno-religious groups in Fatsa, yet to a great extent, the left was successful at forming a higher community embracing all identities in the town:

> There were Sunnis, Alevis, Circassians. But this never turned into an Alevi-Sunni-Georgian conflict. The Georgians were rather Turkish nationalists. There were Turkish nationalist Circassians. In that politicization process, ethnic divisions did not become a reason for clashes; however, fascist militants emerged more from the Georgians. They were more prone to chauvinist propaganda.[319]

> There was somewhat a differentiation based on such concepts as natives and foreigners. Foreigners were Sunni Georgians. Natives were Alevis in some places. Those who came from the Soviets were settled in the richest sections of the coast. Most of them were fascist. There were Alevis in the most infertile and rural mountain villages. Those who participated in the revolutionary movement were mostly them. However, in Fatsa, there were revolutionaries from all groups going beyond ethnic differentiations.[320]

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[317] Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[318] İkrami Çelebi, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.36.

[319] "*Sünnisi de Alevisi de Çerkesi de var. Ama bu hiçbir zaman bir Alevi-Sünni-Gürcü çatışmasına dönmedi. Gürcüler daha çok Türk milliyetçisiydi. Türk milliyetçisi Çerkezler vardı. O siyasallaşma sürecinde etnik ayrımlar çatışma sebebi olmadı, ama faşist militanlar daha çok Gürcülerden çıktı. Onlar şoven propagandaya daha yatkındı.*" Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

[320] "*Yerli yabancı gibi kavramlar üzerinden bir ayrım yer yer vardı. Yabancılar Sünni Gürcülerdi. Yerliler bazı yerlerde Alevilerdi. Sovyetlerden gelenler sahilin en zengin yerlerine yerleştirilmişler. Çoğu da faşist. En çorak ve en kırsal dağ köylerinde Aleviler var. Devrimci harekete de en çok*

Kara's killing was the first political murder in the town, and it became a decisive moment in the history of the social opposition in Fatsa. First of all, the majority of the people showed a strong reaction to this dirty killing, and thousands gathered at Kara's funeral which turned into an impressive anti-fascist rally.[321] As Yaşar Durmuş explains, the great magnitude of this social reaction encouraged the revolutionaries to extend the scope of their struggle in a way as to exceed the anti-fascist struggles among young people and form deeper relationships within the broad masses. Moreover, after this bloody event, the revolutionaries realized that the fascist attacks were not the work of a few vagrants, but were systematic assaults in which the state forces took part, too. Therefore, they decided to establish stronger organizations to realize a more active resistance against fascism. As a result, they gradually broke the power of the *ülkücü*s, most of whom had to leave the town by mid-1978.[322] After that, revolutionaries found a more suitable atmosphere to get organized within wider social segments.

The Massification of Social Opposition:
Struggles Against the Black Market and the Exploitation in the Hazelnut

As noted above, beginning from 1978, revolutionaries started to focus on the concrete problems of wider social segments in Fatsa, and to develop deeper relations

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katılan onlardı. Ama onun dışında Fatsa'da etnik ayrımları aşan, her kesimden devrimci vardı." Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

[321] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007; Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007; Doğan Çelebi, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 11 April 2007.

[322] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007. However, fascist attacks did not completely come to an end in Fatsa after this date. From time to time, they infiltrated in the town and made assaults on known leftists. For instance, in May 1979, Oktay Orbey who disguised himself as a woman killed a revolutionary young man named İsa Aydemir. "İsa Aydemir," *Devrimci Yol*, no.28 (25 May 1979), p.7.

with the laboring classes. Sedat Göçmen states that they started these practices first in the coastal parts of the town: "In Fatsa, the class base was the poor peasantry, but would we begin from the poor peasantry or the coastal section? It was more animated, more crowded, the literacy rate was higher, we could grow cadres faster. Therefore we decided to focus on the coastal section first, and go to higher parts later."[323] The principal problem of the laboring classes in the coastal part of the town was black marketing: "In that period, there were shortages in the country. Employers were boycotting the Ecevit government. As a result, stockpiling had become a reality of the country. Fatsa extremely took its share from this. Basic needs such as oil, fuel-oil, cigarette, sugar and margarine were sold on the black market."[324] Soon, the revolutionaries began to deal with this problem, and owing to their mutual relationships with the common people and small tradesmen, in the course of time, they became more effective at preventing black marketing:

> At that point, we, the Revolutionary Youth,[325] began in an organized manner to make operations to black marketers. When we raided those black marketing canteens, we told the owners sitting in front the cash box to sell their products for a normal price. Since the district was small, it was heard quickly. … Immediately, queues used to appear where we raided. We used to inform the municipality police and deliver products to them. Products used to go to the municipality, but since we couldn't watch the process well enough, they used to be sent back to their influential owners at night about one or two o'clock. In the course of time we began to receive complaints from our canteen owner friends. They said "Is your power only enough for us? We're petty tradesmen. Here, the center of the black marketing are big businessmen

[323] "*Fatsa'da sınıfsal temel yoksul köylülük ama yoksul köylülükten mi başlayacağız yoksa sahildeki kesimden mi? Daha fıkır fıkır, daha kalabalık, okuma yazma oranı daha yüksek, daha hızlı kadrolaşabiliriz. O yüzden dedik ki önce sahil kesimine odaklanacağız, yüksek kesime daha sonra gideceğiz.*" Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[324] "*O dönem ülkede yoklukların olduğu bir dönemdi. İşverenler, Ecevit hükümetini boykot ediyordu. Bunun sonucu olarak stokçuluk ülkenin bir gerçeği olmuştu. Fatsa da bundan fazlasıyla nasibini alan bir yerdi. Temel ihtiyaç maddeleri; yağ, mazot, sigara, şeker, margarin gibi, karaborsa satılıyordu.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[325] Devrimci Gençlik *or* Dev-Genç as the abbreviation for the Federation of Revolutionary Youth Associations (*Devrimci Gençlik Dernekleri Federasyonu*) founded in August 1976. On the other hand, literally Dev-Genç means the Giant Youth, creating a legendary image for the organization of being powerful and everywhere.

> and those people who own large stores. Products are distributed to the market from there. Can't the Dev-Genç beat them, but us?" We re-evaluated the situation and decided that they were right. Because, they couldn't buy at a normal price either. They were buying from the centers of stockpilers. Then, we began to get informations. The addresses of stockpilers were given to us. … We raided a silo belonging to a pilgrim. He closed the silo and fled after he heard that the Dev-Genç was coming. There was a considerable stock of margarine inside. Our friends got him from his home. We didn't exercise violence. Perhaps because of the power of the Dev-Genç, we didn't see any serious response from those we caught, hence we didn't apply violence to anybody. The Dev-Genç did not touch that thing called money. We gave the price of every product to its owner.[326]

During these raids, the revolutionaries also confronted security forces of the state who were called by store owners, and this provided them with a great opportunity to show the people the alliance between the exploiters and the state. In other words, by their own experiences, people realized that while the revolutionaries were struggling for them, the state forces were protecting the black marketers who were robbing them mercilessly:

> When we caught that margarine, I climbed up an electricity pole. Two or three thousands of people crowded together. Of course, they were those citizens who had rushed to meet their needs. I made a speech to them. [I said] "The hands of those blackmarketers who steal the bread of the people will be broken. From now on the Dev-Genç is on your side." The gendarmerie raided that crowd, and shot in the air. Shouting slogans, we retreated towards the hillsides of Çullu. The citizens threw

[326] "*Biz bu noktada Dev-Genç örgütlülüğü olarak organize biçimde, hangi noktada kim karaborsa yapıyor, bunlara operasyonlar düzenlemeye başladık. Karaborsa satılan büfelere baskın yaptığımızda kasanın başında oturan mal sahibini kaldırmadan bunu normal fiyattan satacaksın dedik. İlçe küçük olduğu için hemen duyuluyor zaten. … Anında kuyruklar oluşurdu bastığımız yerlerde. Ve biz belediye zabıtalarına haber verir, malı teslim ederdik. Mal belediyeye gider, tabi biz o zincirin halkalarını o kadar takip edemediğimiz için gece 1'de 2'de belediye ambarlarından hatırlı sahiplerine iade edilirdi. Zaman içerisinde büfeci dostlarımızdan şikayetler almaya başladık. 'Gücünüz bize mi yetiyor. Biz küçük esnafız. Burada karaborsanın merkezi büyük işadamlarıdır, büyük mağazaları olan falanca insanlardır. Bu piyasaya mal buralardan dağılır. Dev-Genç'in gücü bunlara yetmiyor da bize mi yetiyor?' dedikleri noktada biz durumu yeniden değerlendirdik ve küçük esnafın haklı olduğuna karar verdik. Çünkü o da normal fiyattan alamıyordu. İstifçinin merkezlerinden alıyordu. Artık bize ihbarlar gelmeye başlamıştı. Karaborsa mağazalarının, stkoçuların olduğu adresler bize veriliyordu. … Bir ambar bastık, hacıydı sahibi. Kapatıp kaçmış Dev-Genç geliyor denince. Hatırı sayılır bir margarin deposu içerde. Arkadaşlarımız evinden aldı geldi. Biz şiddet uygulamıyoruz. Ve bu süreç içerisinde, belki Dev-Genç'in gücünün etkisindendir, yakalananlaran ciddi bir karşılık görmediğimiz için hiç kimseye cebir, şiddetin bir örneği yoktur. Para denilen şeye Dev-Genç hiçbir zaman elini sürmemiştir. Her malın ücreti sahibine ödenmiştir.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

> whatever they could get their hands on, stone or soil, at the gendarmerie. It was like a mass uprising against the reaction of the gendarmerie. Even unpoliticized people shouted, "Go and crush the heads of black marketers, you are our sons!" And when I got down from the pole, people whom I did not know hugged and kissed me. This spread quickly.[327]

In the meantime, the revolutionaries also began to go to villages and carry out activities to organize hazelnut producers. For this aim, a special edition of *Devrimci Yol* about the hazelnut question was published on 27 June 1978, and 40,000 copies were handed out in the hazelnut region including Fatsa besides 10,000 posters, and handbills.[328] There were eight essential demands in the journal:

1. Hazelnut floor price should be at least 40 TLs.
2. Credits should be given to small producers and poor peasants.
3. Hazelnut producers should ensure their own organization directly led by themselves.
4. Producers should have a word in price, credit, fertilizer and marketing issues.
5. Fascists, the enemies of the people, should be expelled from Fiskobirlik and the corrupt practices in Fiskobirlik should be investigated.
6. Enough fertilizer and pesticide should be given to producers in time, cheaply and on credit.
7. Hazelnut producers and workers should be provided with all sorts of social security.
8. The workdays of hazelnut workers should be lowered to a normal level, and they should be granted health, social security and other guarantees.[329]

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[327] "*O margarini yakaladığımızda elektrik direğine çıktım. Kalabalık 2-3 bin kişi toplandı. Bunlar elbetteki ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için hücum eden vatandaşlardı. Onlara bir konuşma yaptım.* '*Karaborsacıların, halkın ekmeğine el uzatanların elleri kırılacaktır. Dev-Genç bundan sonra sizin yanınızdadır.*' *Jandama bastı o kalabalığı, havaya kurşun attı. Biz Çullu eteklerine kadar slogan atarak çekildik. Vatandaş jandarmaya eline geçirdiği taş, toprak neyse attı. Bir kitlesel başkaldırı gibi oldu o jandarmanın tepkisine karşı. Politize olmamış insanlar bile* '*Gidin karaborsacıların kafasını ezin, siz bizim evlatlarımızsınız*' *diye bağırdı. Ve ben direkten indiğimde de hiç tanımadığım insanlar kucaklayıp öptü. Bu dalga dalga yayıldı.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[328] "Fındık Sömürüsüne Son!," *Devrimci Yol,* no.20 (31 July 1978), p.8.

[329] "*1.Fındık taban fiyatı en az 40 TL olmalıdır. 2. Krediler küçük üreticilere ve yoksul köylülere verilmelidir. 3.Fındık üreticisi doğrudan kendi yönetimindeki örgütlenmesini sağlamalıdır. 4.Fiyat, kredi, gübre, pazarlama konularında üretici söz sahibi olmalıdır. 5.Halk düşmanı faşistler Fiskobirlik'ten atılmalı, Fiskobirlik'teki yolsuzlukların hesabı sorulmalıdır. 6.Gübre ve ilaç üreticiye zamanında, yeterli miktarda, ucuz ve kredili olarak verilmelidir. 7.Fındık üreticileri ve işçileri her türlü sosyal güvenceye kavuşturulmalıdır. 8.Fındık işçilerinin işgünü normale indirilmeli; sağlık,*

As a result of such practices, several "End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meeting were organized in Fatsa, and thousands of hazelnut producers attended. These included the meetings in Fatsa town center on 17 July 1978 and in July 1979, in Çamaş on 8 July 1978, and in Ilıca in July 1979.[330]

Another major aspect of the practices against the exploitation in the hazelnut was the struggles against usury. As Yaşar Durmuş expresses, when they got stronger, the revolutionaries also performed raids on known usurers and took the deeds from their hands. Undoubtedly, this brought about a considerable relief for many producers who had been crushed under the heavy burden of debt until then, thus it further strengthened the sympathy for the revolutionaries.[331]

The revolutionaries touched on various other problems, too. For example, together with small fishermen who asked them for help, they sent those big fishing boats hunting with trawls that undermined the livelyhood of small fishermen away from the seaport of Fatsa.[332] Similarly, they strongly backed Fatsa canal workers whose resistance of eight days resulted in the acceptance by their boss of all their demands, which included increasing the wages, improving the working conditions, providing every worker with insurance, and granting them a holiday during the hazelnut season.[333]

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sigorta ve diğer güvenceleri sağlanmalıdır." "Fındıkta Sömürüye Son!," *Devrimci Yol*, Fındık Özel Sayısı no.22 (27 June 1978), p.1.

[330] "Fındık Sömürüsüne Son!," *Devrimci Yol,* no.20 (31 July 1978), p.8; "Çamaş'ta 'Fındık'ta Sömürüye Son' Mitingi Yapıldı," *Devrimci Yol*, no.29 (18 July 1979), p.9; "Fatsa, Ünye, Çamaş, Ilıca, Espiye, Keşap'ta 'Fındık'; Pazar'da 'Çayda Sömürüye Son' Mitingleri Yapıldı," *Devrimci Yol*, no.31 (October 1979), p.6.

[331] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[332] "Trolcüler Limanlara Yaklaşamıyor Karadeniz Balıkçılarının Trolcülere Karşı Mücadelesi Yükseliyor," *Devrimci Yol*, no.23 (24 October 1978), p.6.

[333] "Fatsa Kanal İşçilerinin Direnişi Başarıya Ulaştı," *Devrimci Yol*, no.29 (18 July 1979), p.9.

As Sedat Göçmen states, all these practices were going in hand with the anti-fascist struggles:

> While you make hazelnut practices, they shoot at you. You have to protect yourself and the people around you. At that point, while working for the hazelnut, we are also driving fascists out from the villages. … That is to say, all are intermingled, not separate. But the hazelnut is the dominant point. … There is a municipal place named Çamaş. In Aşağı Çamaş leftists, in Yukarı Çamaş fascists are effective. … Şehittin Tırıç was one of our militant friends in Çamaş. We have Black Sea guns in our pockets, but Şehittin has a *Dokuzlu Star*. Its hammer is up, and his hand is on it. … He is a clerk at the Junior High School. They organize a football tournament between villages in Çamaş. After the matches, [he says] "Let's go to Yukarı Çamaş and drink tea." Gunned men will protect [people], himself being the first. In six months we acquired the control of the region including Yukarı Çamaş. … On the one hand, you do sports and get socialized, on the other hand you make a demonstration of power.[334]

Legitimacy and Power

Two vital features of all these struggles were legitimacy and power. Although a significant part of these activities were illegal, they were considered to be legitimate by the majority of the people. This might be explained with reference to Thompson's concept of moral economy, which he defines as "a popular consensus grounded upon a consistent traditional view of social norms and obligations of several parties within the community" determining "what are legitimate and what

[334] "*Sen fındık çalışması yaparken sana kurşun atıyorlar. Sen de kurşuna karşı kendini ve çevrendeki insanları koruyacaksın. O noktada biz fındık için çalışırken faşistleri de sürüp atıyoruz köylerden. … Yani hepsi iç içe. Tek tek kopuk şeyler değil. Ama hakim nokta fındık. … Çamaş diye belediyelik bir yer var. Aşağı Çamaş'ta solcular, Yukarı Çamaş'ta faşistler etkin. Şehittin Tırıç Çamaş bölgesinde militan arkadaşlarımızdan birisiydi. Cebimizde Karadeniz tabancaları, ama Şehittin'de bir tane Dokuzlu Star. Horozu kalkık, eli üstünde. … Şehittin ortaokul katibi. Çamaş köyleri arasında bir futbol turnuvası düzenliyorlar. Maçlar yapıldı bitti, 'Haydi gidelim, Yukarı Çamaş'a çay içelim.' Silahlı adamlar koruyacak, ama kendisi en başta. Altı ay gibi bir sürede bölge Yukarı Çamaş da dahil olmak üzere bizim kontrolümüze geçti. … Bi taraftan sosyalleşiyorsun, sporunu yapıyorsun, öbür tarafan da gövde gösterisi yapıyorsun.*" Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

are illegitimate practices in economic activites." [335] In this sense, it could be argued that the actions of the revolutionaries intersected with the historical sentiments of the people such as solidarity, justice and virtue. The words of Selçuk Hazinedar, a revolutionary from Aybastı who studied at Fatsa High School and later took part in the Revolutionary Left (*Devrimci Sol - DS*) faction, confirms this argument:

> In that period when rising, money, and even occupation and personal emancipation notions were spreading; sharing, solidarity and socialistic aspiration was already present in this society as a unique historical and cultural code. Because of this, calls and actions received a great return where the capitalist individual had not emerged and partaken in capitalist emancipation. The soil and the climate were suitable.[336]

Hüseyin Uygun, a worker in the municipalities of first Nazmiye Komioğlu and then Fikri Sönmez, stresses the strength of this notion of justice in Fatsa via the reactions of tradesmen to black market raids:

> A great majority of the tradesmen too were not tolerating black marketing. Because it's not moral. You try to earn more than your right at the expense of the poor's buying the half of the amount they would have bought otherwise. Fatsa has such a tradition too, the feeling of justice is developed. Because of this, they didn't slander revolutionaries later as well.[337]

A demonstration of this cultural atmosphere was the dislike of the rich in the region. For instance, Ali Gürsoy (also known as Gavur Ali), a revolutionary from Bulancak district of Giresun, asserts that they were already uneasy with the lives of

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[335] Edward Palmer Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, no. 50 (1971), pp.78-9.

[336] "*Yükselme, para ve hatta meslek ve kişisel kurtuluş fikirlerinin yaygınlaştığı o dönemde; paylaşma, dayanışma ve sosyalizan özlem özgün bir tarihsel, kültürel kod olarak bu toplumda zaten vardı. Bu nedenle çağrılar ve eylemler, kapitalist bireyin oluşmadığı ve kapitalist kurtuluşa dahil olamadığı noktada büyük karşılık buldu. Toprak ve iklim müsaitti.*" Selçuk Hazinedar, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, p.111.

[337] "*Karaborsacılığı esnafın da büyük çoğunluğu hoş karşılamıyordu. Çünkü ahlaki olmayan bir şey. Hakkınızdan fazla bir şey kazanmaya çalışıyorsunuz, yoksulların alacağı şeylerin yarısını alması pahasına. Fatsa'nın böyle bir geleneği de vardır, adalet duygusu gelişmiştir. O yüzden daha sonra da devrimcileri tu kaka etmediler.*" Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

the rich long before they participated in leftist politics.[338] Owing to this historical and cultural structure, the leftists became the representatives of justice in the region. They were the ones from whom the people expected to accomplish justice. That is why when a leftist cheated during an Okey game in a coffeehouse, a villager berated him: "You cheat even though you're a leftist."[339] Surely, their way of dealing with problems had an affect on this strong trust in the revolutionaries. In this context, Cumhur Yavuz emphasizes the impact of their fair manner in black market raids: "You sell for a suitable price and give the money to the owner. You don't confiscate [the products]. This generates an awesome impact. You are not a looter, you get what you need. You play the role of arbitration between the people and merchants."[340]

The word "arbitration" here recalls the warning of Thompson not to fall into an "uncontextual moralistic rhetoric" when talking about moral economy. As he maintains, the concept should be placed within class and power relations by recognizing the notions of "social reciprocity or mutual obligations" and "the bargainining between unequal social forces" it implies.[341] In other words, moral economy is not only a set of moral values, but also a collection of norms that define the mutual obligations and ensure a somewhat stable balance between the weak and the strong, that is to say, between different social classes.

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[338] Ali Gürsoy, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, p.442. This dislike of the rich by the broad masses was also touched on by Mahir Çayan. Çayan, "Kesintisiz II-III", p.363.

[339] "*Hem solcusun hem de daş çalıyorsun.*" Selçuk Hazinedar, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, p.113.

[340] "*Uygun fiyata satıp parasını adama veriyorsun. El koymuyorsun. Bu korkunç etki yaratıyor. Çapulcu değilsin, ihtiyacın olanı alıyorsun. Hakem rolü görüyorsun halkla tücar arasında.*" Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

[341] Thompson, "The Moral Economy Reviewed," pp.341-5.

This is evident in the Fatsa case, too. For instance, an old woman from Fatsa named Fatma said to a reporter of *Demokrat* asking questions about the mayoralty of Fikri Sönmez that, "Chairmen should know and protect the weak. The chairman should look after the poor or he cannot hold the presidency here."[342] As it is clear, in these words there is not a direct questioning of the existence of the poor and the rich, or the governed and the governors, but there is a demand from the strong that they look after the weak. In fact, some of the local notables in the town were aware of this, and they were against such activities as black marketing and usury which violated the popular consensus within the community, thus undermining their "legitimate" privileges. Sıtkı Pazarbaşı, a writer in the local newspaper *Fatsa Güneş* which was inclined towards the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi - AP*), accused those who infringed the line drawn by moral economy, of making Fikri Sönmez, the revolutionary candidate, stronger before the 14 October 1979 local elections. With this article he also took a clear picture of Fatsa in those days:

> Those profiteers lacking commerce ethics who say "I don't have it" and on the third day sell for 50 liras the product they sold for 10 liras the day before; those factory owners who grudge a sack of crust to the people whose children tremble because of the cold in winters, and send trucks of crust to other districts and cities for prices much higher than the amount specified by the municipality; those heartless black marketers who forget the holiness of Ramadan, and care for the opportunity of a kilogram of oil; those gas station owners who smuggle fuel despite the drivers who can't find fuel to take their patients to the hospital; those black marketer gas companies which say "We have run out of gas" and disband people waiting in gas queues until late hours; those stockpilers who fill their silos with the most important foods and create artifical shortages from time to time; and those municipality officials and other authorities who do not check the market prices they specified as if all they have to do is to determine prices; … ALL THESE WILL MAKE FİKRİ SÖNMEZ BE ELECTED CHAIRMAN.[343]

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[342] "*Reis kısmısı düşeni kalkanı, öleni kalanı bilecek, sahip çıkacak. Reis fakiri tutmalı, yoksa başkanlık yapamaz burda.*" "'Reis Kısmısı Fakiri Tutmalı,'" *Demokrat*, 08 May 1980.

[343] "*Bir gün evvel on liraya sattığı malı bir gün sonra '**Yok**' deyip, üçüncü günü 50 liraya satan ticaret ahlakı yoksunu vurguncular; kış aylarının dondurucu soğuğundan çoluk-çocuğu tir tir tireyen halkın başvurularına rağmen bir çuval kabuğu çok görüp, yok diyerek, belediye rayicinin çok*

Nonetheless, they were also against the interventions of the revolutionaries, who threatened their power altogether. In other words, as Thompson claims for England, the moral economy of the crowd in Fatsa supporting direct actions and "illegal" interventions had differed from that of paternalists.[344] For instance, lawyer Lütfü Topaloğlu, the chairman of the AP in Fatsa, said in an interview after the military operation to Fatsa that:

> The prevention of black marketing and usury was good, but it should have been done by the state. There was an uneasiness among people since those who were not authorized were doing it. There were those who were pleased with what was done. To be honest, there were some events with which we were pleased, too. For example, when it was impossible to find oil, we were happy with the detection of three or five hundred tins of oil.[345]

The second feature of social struggles in this period involved power, which was complementary to legitimacy. As already noted above, during their struggles, the revolutionaries clashed with either state forces or civil fascists. In these confrontations, they proved that they were strong enough to protect themselves and the people around them. More often than not, they resorted to displays of power so that they not only disheartened their enemies, but also gradually broke the fear

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üstündeki fiyatlarla kamyonlar dolusu kabuğu başka il ve ilçelere sevk eden fabrikatörler; bir kilo yağ için fırsatı ganimet bilerek, Ramazan ayının kutsiyet ve mukaddesatını unutarak, vicdanlarını körleştiren stokçu karaborsacılar; hastalarını doktora yetiştirebilmek için benzin bulamayan şöförlere rağmen benzin kaçakçılığı yapan benzin istasyonu sahipleri; gaz kuyruklarında geç saatlere kadar sıra bekleyip, sonunda gaz bitti diyerek halkı dağıtıp karaborsa gaz aktaran şirketler; en önemli gıda maddelerini 'yok' diyerek, zaman zaman suni buhran yaratıp, depolara dolduran istifçiler; hele hele rayiç vermekle sanki bütün işleri bitmiş gibi, verdiği rayiçleri dahi kontrol etme lüzumunu duymayan belediye yetkilileri ve diğer ilgililer; … İŞTE BUNLAR FİKRİ SÖNMEZ'i BELEDİYE BAŞKANI SEÇTİRECEKLERDİR." [Capitalizing belongs to the original text]. Sıtkı Pazarbaşı, "Hangi Adayın Kazanacağını Soruyorlar Bize!," *Fatsa Güneş*, 20 July 1979 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.71.

[344] Thompson, "The Moral Economy of…," p.98.

[345] "*Karaborsanın önlenmesi, tefeciliğin engellenmesi güzel şeylerdi. Ama, devletin yapması gereken işlerdi bunlar. Sorumlu olmayanların yapması halkta bir tedirginlik yaratıyordu. Yapılanlardan memnun olan kesim vardı. İçtenlikle söylemem gerekirse, bizim de memnun olduğumuz olaylar oldu. Örneğin yağ bulunamazken, üç beşyüz teneke yağın ortaya çıkarılmasından sonra hep birlikte seviniyorduk.*" Lütfü Topaloğlu, interview by Erbil Tuşalp in Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 5," *Cumhuriyet*, 19 August 1980.

among the people. For sure, this accelerated the massification of social opposition. However, this was not the sole face of their power. The more important one was the ability of the revolutionaries to produce urgent and concrete solutions to the urgent and concrete problems of the laboring classes. Owing to this, they demonstrated their difference from traditional politicians, who just talked but did nothing, and gained the trust and support of the people. For example, Ahmet Özdemir maintains that the black market raids in the Ramadan of 1978 and 1979 played a significant role in their winning the hearts of the broad masses:

> In that period, struggles against the black market ensured that people further believed in and trusted the revolutionaries. What remained in the memories of the people is the Ramadan period in 78 and 79. Since people were more interested in basic needs during Ramadan, but many products did not exist or sold for black market prices, they were experiencing great trouble. They trusted those who eradicated this trouble. "Revolutionaries" is the name of trusted people in that period. … Those who supported the National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi - MSP*) (There was a religious sect organization coming down from Korgan led by a hodja called Kiraz Hoca) … recognized the real faces of the revolutionaries, too. In the following period, they backed the revolutionaries' struggles against the black market. … Social consensus, in fact, is a consensus grounded upon social needs.[346]

As a result of these two features, the revolutionary youth movement emerged as a fair and effective power in the eyes of the people.[347] As Yaşar Durmuş states, because of this, people began to carry all their problems including even family issues to them. For instance, women were reporting their gambling or alcoholic

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[346] "*O dönemde halkın devrimcilere daha çok inanmasını, güvenmesini sağlayan somut örnektir karaborsayla mücadele. İnsanların belleklerinde kalan da 78 ve 79'daki Ramazan ayı dönemidir. Ramazan ayında insanlar daha çok temel ihtiyaç maddelerine ilgi duyduklarından, bir çok ürün de o dönemde olmadığından ya da raf altlarında karaborsa fiyatlarla satıldığından halk büyük bir sıkıntı çekiyordu. Bu sıkıntısını kim ortadan kaldırıyorsa ona güven duyuyordu. Devrimciler güven duyulan insanların adıdır o dönemde. … Milli Selamet Partisi'nden yana olanlar da (Korgan'dan aşağılara doğru inen bir tarikat örgütlenmesi vardı o dönemde, Kiraz Hoca dediğimiz hocanın liderliğinde) … devrimcilerin gerçek yüzlerini tanıdılar. Daha sonraki süreçte devrimcilerin karaborsaya karşı mücadelesinde yanlarında yer aldılar. … Toplumsal mutabakat aslında böyle toplumsal ihtiyaçlardan örülü bir mutabakattır.*" Ahmet Özdemir, quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.147-8.

[347] This point is admitted by Oktay Ekşi, who regarded this development as a vital threat to the state authority. Oktay Ekşi, "Fatsa'dan Ders Almalı," *Hürriyet*, 12 July 1980. We shall return to this article in the next chapter.

husbands who beat them to the revolutionaries.[348] That is why when Fikri Sönmez won the local elections, Hikmet Altıntaş, the owner of *Fatsa Güneş*, claimed that:

> Our people sought an authoritarian chairman. They saw the gap in the government. They wanted to find the municipality which they had not seen for years for various reasons. Since the majority of the people believed that Fikri Sönmez would meet this desire, an absolute majority voted for him.[349]

Actually, it could be argued that the revolutionaries more or less focused on the tangible problems of the broad masses not only in Fatsa, but almost everywhere in Turkey in those years. In many places, they tried to solve the actual problems of the laborng classes and organize within them. There were many such places in the Black Sea region where they were quite successful. These included Ayancık of Sinop, Alaçam and Çarşamba of Samsun, Aybastı of Ordu, and Bulancak of Giresun. Nonetheless, in this context, Fatsa had some further advantages compared to the others. In the first place was the relatively richer tradition of struggle dating back to the mid-1960s, and a higher number of qualified local revolutionary and democrat cadres among the people. As Sedat Göçmen argues, the elimination of fascists to a great extent, and the non-existence of another effective leftist faction in the town were among other factors that contributed to their ability to efficiently deal with the concrete problems of the people.[350] Thanks to these, as Yaşathak Aslan, one of the leading figures in the Dev-Yol, argues, Fatsa became more prominent among other places:

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[348] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[349] "*Halkımız otoriter bir başkan aramıştır. Yönetim boşluğunu görmüştür. Yıllardır Fatsa'mızdaki türlü nedenlerle göremediği belediyeyi bulmak istemiştir. Çoğunluk bu isteğini Fikri Sönmez'de bulacağına inandığı içindir ki ezici bir çoğunlukla oyunu ona vermiştir.*" Hikmet Altıntaş, "Seçimler ve Fatsa," *Fatsa Güneş*, 26 October 1979 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.81.

[350] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

> In all aspects, we were much stronger and had more mass support in Kars. But, since we couldn't raise the anti-fascist struggle, whose actuality was declining, to another struggle, that is to say making Kars Fatsa, within the borders of the city; internal dissolution and degeneration occured in Kars. In this sense, Fatsa was also a solution to our own internal "crisis."[351]

In addition to these, the flexible organizational structure and the revolution strategy of the Dev-Yol which granted a considerable weight to the decisions and actions of local subjects played a vital role in this process. This will be explained in the next section.

The Dev-Yol

> "Once, there was a pretty hot debate between revolutionaries. Was the revolution going to happen from the countryside towards the urban areas or from the urban areas towards the countryside? "It is going to happen on the way" I used to say, and raise the options to three."[352]

In the early 1970s, there was widespread ideological and organizational disorder within the socialist left as a result of the previous defeat following the 12 March military memorandum, and the reflections on Turkey of the increasing rivalry between the Communist parties of China and the Soviet Union.[353] An important aspect of the debates was about the evaluation of former struggles. The followers of

[351] "*Biz Kars'ta her açıdan daha güçlü ve kitleseldik. Ama il sınırları içinde güncelliği azalan anti-faşist mücadelenin yerine bir başka mücadeleyi, Kars'ı Fatsa yapma çabasını geçiremediğimiz için Kars'ta iç çözülme ve dejenerasyon yaşandı. Fatsa, bu anlamda kendi iç* '*krizimiz*' *için de çözümdü.*" Yaşathak Aslan, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.275.

[352] "*Bir zamanlar pek ateşli bir tartışma vardı devrimciler arasında. Devrim kırdan kente mi, kentten kıra doğru mu olacak diye.* '*Yolda olacak*' *diye seçeneği üçlerdim aklımca.*" Can Yücel, "Kendini Kurtarmış Bir Yer," *Demokrat*, 05 May 1980.

[353] *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, pp.2245-6.

the THKP-C were suffering from this situation, too. Some rather small bands were advocating to continue the armed struggle of the THKP-C from where it had left. These included the *Acilciler* circle mainly composed of Middle East Technical Universtiy (*Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi - ODTÜ*) students, some of whom later established the Revolutionary Vanguards of the People (*Halkın Devrimci Öncüleri*); the THKP-C Unity of Action (*THKP-C Eylem Birliği*) founded by some THKP-C followers in İzmir; and the Union of Marxist Leninist Armed Propaganda (*Marksist Leninist Silahlı Propaganda Birliği*) which was set up in İstanbul.[354] On the other hand, another THKP-C-rooted group which later formed the People's Path (*Halkın Yolu*) faction in İstanbul, began to publish a maganize called *Militan Gençlik* (Militant Youth) in which they accused the THKP-C of neglecting mass movements, and suggested carrying out practices within the working class and broad masses before starting an armed struggle.[355]

As stated in *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi* (the Encyclopedia of Socialism and Social Struggles), similar discussions soon took place within the remaining cadres of the THKP-C who were released from prison in 1974. That circle who later published *Kurtuluş Sosyalist Dergi* (Liberation the Socialist Magazine), and set up the Liberation faction which rejected such notions of Mahir Çayan as the fusion of evolution and revolution stages, artificial balance, and vanguards' war. Thus, they argued that prior to initiating an armed combat, they should get organized within the working class in a long evolution stage. In addition to these, they also criticized the THKP-C for its positive view of Kemalism, and regarded the Kurdish region as a colony of Turkey.[356]

[354] Ibid., pp.2264-5.

[355] Ibid., pp.2245-6, 2248.

On the other hand, the other party led by Nasuh Mitap, which Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu's group joined later, began to publish *Devrimci Gençlik* (Revolutionary Youth) in which they embraced the major theses of the THKP-C, and adopted them to the anti-fascist struggles of that time.[357] Claiming that the country was drifting towards a civil war (*iç savaş*), *Devrimci Gençlik* regarded the anti-fascist resistance as the key component of the revolutionary struggle, and proposed an active defence against fascism that was to be organized within broad masses.[358] Indeed, fascist attacks had risen dramatically after the coming to power of the MC government in 1975. As claimed in *Devrimci Gençlik* magazine, these attacks were not targeted only at the revolutionary youth, but also at the broad segments of the society. According to the magazine, since the beginning of the MC government till November 1976, fascists had made 347 bloody attacks which had killed 73 and wounded 1,893 people. While 253 of these assaults were on workers, teachers and civil servants; in 192 cases students were attacked.[359] As a consequence of this, the active defence strategy of *Devrimci Gençlik* against fascism quickly gained popular support surpassing student circles, and this resulted in a search for a mass

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[356] Ibid., pp.2253, 2265, 2268.

[357] *THKP-C ve Devrimci Yol'dan Bugüne Geçmiş Değerlendirmesi Bu Tarih Bizim* (İstanbul: Devrim Dergisi Yayınları, 2006), p.50.

[358] *THKP-C ve Devrimci Yol'dan*, pp.50-1. Also see "Anti-Faşist Mücadele Karmaşık Bir Görevler Bütünüdür," *Devrimci Gençlik*, no.2 (8 December 1975), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye Karşı Devrimci Gençlik'ten Seçmeler*, 2nd ed. (İstanbul: Bireşim Yayınları, 1997), pp.27-30; "Faşist Saldırılar Karşısında 'Sol'daki Yanlış Eğilimler," *Devrimci Gençlik*, no.4 (16 January 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, pp.31-3; "Mevcut Demokratik Ortamı Korumak Anti-Faşist Mücadelede Temel Alınamaz!," *Devrimci Gençlik*, no.5 (12 February 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, pp.34-8; "Anti-Faşist Eylemlerimizi Ülke Çapında Bir Program Doğrultusunda Yükseltelim!,"*Devrimci Gençlik*, no.12 (12 September 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, pp.39-41; "Faşizme Karşı Mücadele Devrimci Eylemi Güçlendirecek! Devrim, Faşizme Karşı Mücadeleyi Zafere Ulaştıracak!," *Devrimci Gençlik*, no.13 (6 October 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, pp.42-4; and "Bugünkü Siyasi Durum Üzerine," *Devrimci* Gençlik, no.16 (24 January 1977), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, pp.45-9.

[359] "Faşist Saldırılar Karşısında Demokratik Haklarımızı ve Can Güvenliğimizi Savunalım," *Devrimci Gençlik*, Özel Sayı (29 November 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye*, p.61.

organization, which led to the genesis of the Dev-Yol by the publication of *Devrimci Yol Bildirgesi* (the Dev-Yol Manifesto) in April 1977.[360]

The manifesto regarded the foundation of a proletarian revolutionary party and ensuring the ideological unity of left as the chief duty in a time when spontaneous social movements were rising, but left was divided and disorganized. Most of the contentions in the manifesto were taken from "Kesintisiz I" and "Kesintisiz II-III" of Mahir Çayan, such as the Leninist permanent revolution thesis, hidden occupation, colony-type fascism, the fusion of evolution and revolution stages, artifical balance, the PASS, and the necessity of a People's War for the revolution. The only significant novelty was that anti-fascism was considered to be a determining constituent of the anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic revolution to which other struggles had to be adopted. According to the manifesto, the reasons for the defeat of the THKP-C were to be found in its practice not ideology. The organization had defended that the revolutionary struggle should be guided by a proletarian party which would carry out non-military practices besides the military ones, and connect the struggle of vanguards to mass movements. However, in practice the THKP-C leaders were not able to create such a party capable of fulfilling multiple functions, and ideological divisions stemming from different struggle areas had arisen among them in a critical historical moment making the defeat inevitable.[361]

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[360] "Devrimci Yol'un Kısa Öyküsü I," *Devrim*, no.11 (March 1998), quoted in Semra Ocak (ed.), *Dünden Yarına Kalan: Devrimci Yol ve Devrim Dergilerinden Seçmeler 1* (İstanbul: Devrim, 2006), pp.269-70.

[361] *Devrimci Yol Bildirgesi* quoted in *Devrimci Yol ve Devrim Dergilerinden*, pp.133-170. For the evaluation of the THKP-C by the Dev-Yol, also see "Kızıldere'nin Yıldönümünde Geçmiş Değerlendirmelerine İlişkin Bazı Notlar," *Devrimci Yol*, no.17 (1 May 1978), pp.10-2; "Kızıldere'nin Yıldönümünde Geçmiş Değerlendirmelerine İlişkin Bazı Notlar (2)," *Devrimci Yol*, no.18 (22 May 1978), pp.12-3; and "Geçmiş Hareket, Bugünkü Görevler ve Devrimci Hareketin Geleceği," *Devrimci Yol*, no.19 (20 June 1978), pp.10-1, 19.

What the Dev-Yol proposed to get over the practical flaws of the THKP-C was the *Partileşme Süreci* (the Partification Process). In the manifesto, the *Partileşme Süreci* was defined as a conscious effort to create a party that was capable of fulfilling multiple functions and carrying out the policies laid down by the political program. To achieve this target, enough numbers of qualified cadres had to be trained. Thus, the *Partileşme Süreci*, in its essence, was a matter of cadres. According to the manifesto, qualified cadres could only be formed inside the political practice of the masses. Therefore, the conscious effort meant increasing the political activities of the broad masses, and at the same time forming skilled cadres within these masses.[362] By the Dev-Yol, this approach was abstracted as the principle of "En Geniş Kitle Çalışması İçinde En Dar Kadro Çalışması" (The Narrowest Cadre Practice within the Broadest Mass Practice), which suggested that the party be formed within the struggle and in interaction with the broad masses.[363] To put it in other words, the Dev-Yol did not identify itself as a complete party, but as a movement towards it. Hence, its institutionalization was not finished, and it did not have an absolute ideology that all cadres shared. For that reason, Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu described the *Partileşme Süreci* as a stage of defective political struggle (*eksikli siyasal mücadele*).[364]

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[362] *Devrimci Yol Bildirgesi*, pp.164-8. Also see "Partileşme Sürecine İlişkin Bazı Eleştiriler ve Parti Sorunu," *Devrimci Yol*, no.15 (21 February 1978), pp.8-9, 15. The stress made on practice by the Dev-Yol is quite strong in this context. In the manifesto it was said: "Our practive will be the touchstone of our revolutionary character." "*Pratiğimiz bizim devrimciliğimizin mihenk taşı olacaktır.*" *Devrimci Yol Bildirgesi*, p.168. A demonstration of the importance given to practice was the usage of the term "revolutionaries" for identifying the Dev-Yol cadres instead of such labels as "socialists" or "Marxists" since it implied active subjects. Uğraş Ulaş Tol, *Halkçı Söylem-Sınıf Söylemi Türkiye'de Sosyalist Sol Söyleminde 1977-1980 Tarihleri Arasında Demokratik Popüler Adlandırmalar ve Sınıf Adlandırmaları* (M.A. Thesis, Ankara University, Social Sciences Institute, Public Administration (Political Science) Department, 2001), pp.45-6.

[363] *THKP-C ve Devrimci Yol'dan Bugüne*, pp.71-2.

[364] Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, "Devrimci Yol Üzerine Notlar," *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeler Ansiklopedisi*, p.2251.

However, this "deficiency" which was to be "fixed" in the course of time, became, at least in the beginning, a key advantage for the Dev-Yol as it granted local actors a considerable level of autonomy and initiative. Owing to this flexibility, broad social segments found a suitable organization to be smoothly articulated to without being completely absorbed and assimilated. Along with the social atmopshere in the country, this provided the Dev-Yol with an extensive massification. This large and quick massification surpassed the control of the Dev-Yol center, further extending the *Partileşme Süreci*.

On the other hand, what was a greater fortune for the Dev-Yol was that this stage of "defective political struggle" also included learning from the masses as much as teaching them. This was a direct consequence of the notion that qualified cadres could only be trained within mass struggles. For instance, in *Devrimci Gençlik*, it was argued that "The education of cadres is the process of gaining the ability to … educate the masses for revolution within the revolutionary practice, … and to learn from them those things benefitial for revolution, then to take them to action by giving these things back to them in a simple and comprehensible way."[365] This brought about a dialectical relationship between the revolutionaries and the people. According to Dirlik this is an essential condition for a revolutionary leadership that has a truly liberating potential:

> In other words, the revolutionary, too, must be "listening" all the time and must not merely impose his abstractions upon the revolutionary process. … While the revolutionary is in the process of leading, … his leadership must be defined in terms of the dialectic between the revolutionary consciousness and the consciousness of the social present with which he must integrate himself if the revolution is to issue in a new culture of liberation. This dialectic, too, has no center, and it is only

[365] "*Kadro eğitimi, … kitleleri devrim için, devrimci eylem içinde eğitmek … ve onlardan devrimin yararına olan şeyleri öğrenmek, …* [bunları] *basit ve anlaşılır bir biçimde tekrar onlara sunarak* [onları] *harekete sokabilmek gibi yetenekler edinme sürecidir.*" "Kadrolar," *Devrimci Gençlik*, no.14 (9 November 1976), quoted in *Emperyalizme ve Oligarşiye Karşı*, p.171.

> to the extent that revolutionaries resist the temptation to establish such a center that revolution appears as a liberating possibility.[366]

The words of Pertev Aksakal, a RP cadre who carried out practices especially in the rural areas of Fatsa, denotes the existence of such a relationship between revolutionaries and the people in the town:

> June and July is the time of hazelnut meetings in Fatsa. … We had a discussion with some villagers in Fatsa. [They said] "They won't give us a good price for the hazelnut, let's not take our hazelnuts to the market." Actually, this was directly villagers' demand. Can it happen or not? A really radical decision. … Sometimes revolutionaries make such proposals, villagers refuse. Sometimes we refuse the requests of villagers. In other words, between revolutionaries and villagers, there are … relations based on a balance. Not revolutionaries here, and villagers there, there is a combined, yet balanced relation respecting and considering each other.[367]

Of course, this dialectical relationship was constitued upon the efforts to solve the everyday problems of the broad masses. This meant that policies were not determined and put into practice from above on the basis of some ideological dogmas, but were shaped by a mutual relationship developed between the common people and the revolutionaries inside the fresh struggles of everyday life.[368] That is why Cumhur Yavuz claimed that they had a more local character than other organizations:

> Thanks to our style we could manage to be local better. We had such a tendency. We wouldn't use the language of ordinary Marxist-Leninist organizations. Ours was a more sincere and familiar language.

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[366] Dirlik, p.44.

[367] "*Haziran ayı ve Temmuz fındık mitingleri zamanıdır Fatsa'da. … Fatsa'daki bir kısım köylülerle … şöyle bir tartışmamız olmuştur.* '*Bunlar bize iyi bir fındık taban fiyatı vermeyecekler. Biz fındığımızı indirmeyelim.*' *Aslında bu doğrudan köylülerin talebi idi. Ya bu olur mu olmaz mı? Hakikaten çok radikal bir karar. … Bazen devrimcilerin böyle talepleri olur, köylüler reddeder. Bazen köylülerin taleplerini biz reddederiz. Yani devrimcilerle köylüler arasında … bir denge üzerine kurulu ilişkiler vardır. Devrimciler burada, köylüler orada değil de iç içe ama birbirlerine saygı duyan, birbirlerini gözeten bir dengeli ilişki vardır.*" Pertev Aksakal, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.150-1.

[368] *THKP-C ve Devrimci Yol'dan Bugüne*, p.51.

> … The vital needs of the people was the basis of our organization. …We wouldn't use top-to-down political arguments often. It was this characteristic of ours that got us together with masses.[369]

This point might be better understood when the attitudes of other factions in the region are considered. As opposed to the flexible and local character of the Dev-Yol which allowed it to deal with all sorts of everyday problems of the broad masses efficiently, other factions were generally acting on the basis of some apriori models which not only caused them to miss the opportunities the everyday life lay before them, but also restricted their spheres of influence to a few struggle areas. As argued above, there were many other towns in the Black Sea where revolutionaries were very influential. However, contrary to those in Fatsa, the revolutionaries in these towns did not consider participating in local elections to win the municipality, a political device which, as we shall see, gave a significant boost to the revolutionary movement and the social opposition in Fatsa. Zeki Işık, a member from Fatsa of the Liberation faction confirms this: "For example, the same thing could have happened in Alaçam, Ayancık, and Bulancak too. Why didn't we take part in local elections? We used to regard this as a rightist, backward and passive way."[370] On the other hand, Vahit Genç, a member in Ordu of the Progressive Youth Association (*İlerici Gençler Derneği - İGD*), a youth organization in relation with the Communist Party of Turkey (*Türkiye Komünist Partisi - TKP*), states that they consumed all their energy to organize the workers in the factory of Sahra:

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[369] "*Biz tarzımızla yerel olmayı daha iyi becermiştik. Böyle bir yatkınlığımız vardı bizim. Bildiğimiz Marksist-Leninist örgütlerin dilini kullanmıyorduk. Daha içten, bizden bir dildi bizimkisi. … Halkın yaşamsal ihtiyaçları örgütlenme temelimizdi. … Daha tepeden siyasal argümanları gerekli gereksiz kullanmazdık. Bizi kitlelerle buluşturan bu yanımızdı*." Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

[370] "*Aynı şey Alaçam'da da, Ayancık'ta da, Bulancak'ta da olabilirdi mesela. Biz neden girmedik yerel seçimlere? Bizde bu geri, sağ, pasif bir yol olarak görülüyordu*." Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

> In those days, we used to regard the working class as the dominant force. We used to say that the revolution would be realized under the leadership of the working class. … There was a factory of Sahra in Ordu. All our practices were to organize the workers there and make them unionized. We used to spend all our days and nights for this.[371]

Likewise, Doğan Çelebi from the HK faction and Zeki Işık too, express that unlike the Dev-Yol which focused on the peasantry and the urban poor in the town, they gave priority to organization within the working class,[372] which, more often than not, came to mean factory workers. As Necmi Erdoğan puts it, these factions generally charged the Dev-Yol with populism implying that it neglected the class perspective, and bandwagoned the spontaneous movements of the masses. Nonetheless, this flexible characteristic of the Dev-Yol which made it prone to the effects of local, spontaneous, and autonomous forces was composing the primary source of its dynamism and rupture from the classical left. In other words, the inability to complete the *Partileşme Süreci* was what granted the Dev-Yol its uniqueness and the image of being a social movement.[373]

Another distinctive contribution of the Dev-Yol to the legacy of the THKP-C was the Resistance Committees (*Direniş Komiteleri*). Actually, in compliance with the nature of the *Partileşme Süreci* these committees were born out of and developed within social struggles. They were established to improve and organize the spontaneous anti-fascist resistance tendencies among people in schools, factories, neighbourhoods and villages; and link them to the revolutionary

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[371] "*Biz o zaman işçi sınıfını başat alıyorduk. İşçi sınıfı önderliğinde devrim olur diyorduk. gençlikle öğrenci gençliğin önderliğinde… Ordu'da bir Sahra fabrikası vardı. Bütün çalışmalarımız ordaki işçilerin örgütlenmesi, sendikalı hale gelmesi içindi. Bütün gecemizi gündümüzü buna ayırıyorduk.*" Vahit Genç, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[372] Doğan Çelebi, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 11 April 2007; Zeki Işık, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 01 February 2007.

[373] Necmi Erdoğan, "Demokratik Soldan Devrimci Yol'a: 1970'lerde Sol Popülizm Üzerine Notlar," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.78 (Autumn 1998), pp.24, 26, 33.

struggle.[374] That is to say they were not only an important element of the strategy of active defence against fascism, but also a key constituent of the revolution strategy of the Dev-Yol. According to the Dev-Yol, in Turkey, the revolution was to be realized through a long and indirect People's War, and the power was to be acquired not suddenly in the entire country, but gradually in separate fragments.[375] Here, the Resistance Committees had a twofold task. First, they were regarded as a mechanism to establish the connection between the struggle of vanguards and the broad masses so that the People's War could be achieved.[376] Second, they were considered to be the nuclei of the people's government (*halk iktidarının nüveleri*), which would gradually give birth to a new set of human relations, and in the course of time rise as alternative power bases to the existing state bodies.[377]

Erdoğan claims that this indicates a Gramscian transition in the Dev-Yol from war of manoeuvre (*manevra savaşı*) to war of position (*mevzi savaşı*)[378] in the sense that the revolutionary practice was not confined to the efforts to acquire state power, but it was also regarded as a process of developing alternative social relations beginning from that time. Actually, this was a consequence of the idea of *Partileşme Süreci* and the following stress made on dealing with the concrete and urgent problems of the people instead of acting according to some apriori theories. In Tanıl

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[374] "Faşizm ve Faşizme Karşı Mücadele Sorunu Üzerine (2)," *Devrimci Yol,* no.13 (15 January 1978), pp.11; *Direniş Komiteleri ve Faşizme Karşı Mücadele* (a Booklet published by the Dev-Yol in 1979) quoted in *Devrimci Yol Belgeler*, (DVD) (İstanbul: Bireşim Yayınları, n.d.).

[375] "Parti-Cephe İlişkileri, Direniş Komiteleri ve Partileşme Süreci," *Devrimci Yol*, no.16 (20 March 1978), p.9.

[376] Ibid.

[377] *Direniş Komiteleri ve Faşizme Karşı Mücadele* Booklet.

[378] Erdoğan, p.29. Along with its incomplete *Partileşme Süreci*, this view of revolution generated civil-societism (*sivil toplumculuk*) and spontaneousism (*kendiliğindencilik*) accusations for the *Dev-Yol*. For instance see *Kendiliğindenci Bir Hareket Devrimci Yol*, (İstanbul: Mücadele Yayınları, 1990). For a discussion on war of position and war of manoeuvre, see Perry Anderson, *Gramsci Hegemonya Doğu-Batı Sorunu ve Strateji*, trans. Tarık Günersel (İstanbul: Salyangoz Yayınları, 2007), pp.84-111.

Bora's words, this amounts to a transition from the revolution as a moment of drastic rupture to the revolution as a process of continuous making.[379] According to Bora, a significant portion of the radical left tradition suffers from a cynicism stemming from too abstract and macro explanations for concrete problems. For Bora, this not only makes leftists overlook the specificities of each case, but also causes them to avoid "small works," which they usually regard as healing capitalism. Against their viewing practice as a strategical and instrumental act following an apriori theory, Bora suggests an understanding of practice that is not predetermined, but open-ended, and shaped by historical subjects in the process of solving their authentic problems. By that he argues, dichotomies such as theory-practice, and target-instrument could be transcended.[380]

In accordance with the aims mentioned above, the resistance committees were planned in a way as to bring the broad masses and all anti-fascist elements together in a united revolutionary front, whether they were a Dev-Yol supporter or not, and besides the anti-fascist struggles they were powered to carry out economic, social and cultural practices to solve all of the problems of the people.[381] In short, while the *Partileşme Süreci* was about the organization of the party, the Resistance Committees were a unit of frontal organization.[382] At that point, we had better take a look at the organizational structure of the Dev-Yol.

Following the THKP-C, the leaders of the Dev-Yol adopted a dual organizational structure: The party consisting of professional revolutionaries, that is

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[379] Tanıl Bora, quoted in Banu Uzpeder, "Türkiye Solunda 'Taş Üstüne Taş Koyma' Çağı," *Nokta Dergisi*, no.8 (21-27 December 2006), p.37.

[380] Tanıl Bora, "İki Sinizm, İki Pragmatizm ve 'Eylem'i Yeniden Düşünmek," *Birikim*, no.210 (October 2006), pp.16-23.

[381] Ibid.

[382] "Parti-Cephe İlişkileri, Direniş Komiteleri ve Partileşme Süreci," p.8.

cadres, and the front composed of broad social segments. As already explained, Resistance Committees were a unit of this frontal organization. Other than these, the Dev-Yol carried out mass practices wherever it performed cadre practices. These included trade unions, universities, and occupational organizations such as the TÖB-DER, the TMMOB, and the Association of All Civil Servants' Unification and Solidarity (*Tüm Memurlar Birleşme ve Dayanışma Derneği - Tüm-Der*). The results of the elections for the administration in these mass organizations were regularly published in *Devrimci Yol*.

On the other hand, as stated in the indictment of the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial, the party side had a hierarchical order. At the top, there was a Central Committee consisting of Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, Mehmet Ali Yılmaz, Nasuh Mitap, Ali Alfatlı, Ali Başpınar, Sedat Göçmen, Melih Pekdemir and Mehmet Akın Dirik. This committee was divided into four parts: The political bureau responsible for determining, realizing and checking policies, the military wing, the organization secretariat ensuring the cooperation between different organization units, and the press and foreign relations unit. Besides the Central Committee, there was a General Committee which was empowered to discuss the problems and policies of the organization, and to take advisory decisions. Its members were composed of the Central Committee members and prominent Dev-Yol cadres. Under the Central Committee, there were Regional Committees which were further divided into City, District and Neighbourhood Committees. Each region had a person in charge. For the Black Sea region, this was Sedat Göçmen. Other than spatial committees, there were also committees established within occupational organizations.

According to the indictment, the Fatsa organization of the Dev-Yol was founded at the end of 1977 under the leadership of Yusuf Atasoy, the son of Ahmet

Atasoy's uncle, who, during the THKP-C period, was arrested because of working as a courier, but released as he was too young. Along with Yusuf Atasoy, in the Fatsa District Committee there were Kemal Atasoy, Atıf Özgel, Aydın Akyazı, Sezai Cesur, Habil İrgül, Ahmet Özdemir and Fikri Sönmez. After the foundation of the Fatsa Committee, together with Yusuf Atasoy, Evren Karagöz, Kof Mustafa and Kamil Genç, Sedat Göçmen set up the Eastern Black Sea Committee. Meanwhile, the Ordu City Committee, too, was established. It was consisting of Yusuf Atasoy as the chairman, Yaşar Durmuş, İhsan Ünal and Adnan Keskin. In theory, the Fatsa District Committee was tied to the Ordu City Committee while the Ordu City Committee operated under the Eastern Black Sea Committee and Sedat Göçmen. Above these was the Central Committee.[383]

Nevertheless, as a result of the factors already discussed, in practice this hierarchy did not work in a one-way manner. Like between the revolutionaries and people, there was a dialectial relationship between the central and local cadres of the Dev-Yol. In other words, the center was providing local cadres with a general perspective, but local cadres were adopting these to the concrete conditions of their regions, and their practices were playing a significant role in the re-shaping of the general perspective and policies of the organization. According to Hakan Tanıttıran, an intellectual close to the Dev-Yol circles, there was a close relationship between the Dev-Yol center and Fatsa, and the Fatsa experience had a considerable effect on the whole Dev-Yol organization:

> Fatsa was influenced by the Dev-Yol, and the Dev-Yol by Fatsa. … What happened in Fatsa could be identified as the learning process in practice of local Dev-Yol cadres who were the children of local people. Fatsa was one of the places which had the most direct relationship with

[383] *İddianame*, pp. 147-152, 157, 173. At this point, i'd like to put it again that here the indictment is referenced because a considerable part of the arguments and names in it are parallel to the information I have collected from various actors who participated in these processes. Yet, I have to admit that I could not get all these names confirmed, so there may be a few mistakes among them.

> the Dev-Yol Center. … However, in Fatsa, Fikri Sönmez had more impact than any Dev-Yol cadre. … Fatsa was not a design from above of the Dev-Yol.[384]

As Ahmet Özdemir states, it was the result of this dialectical relationship and mutual interaction between the Dev-Yol Center, local Dev-Yol cadres and the indigeneous people that led them decide to take part in the 14 October 1979 local elections:

> The Fatsa experience was … the practical projection of the decision of the Dev-Yol in 1979 to boycott the general elections but participate in local elections. On the other hand, in particular, Fatsa was not an application of a theorized experience. On the contrary it was theorized within local measures and through various experimental processes. When we came to the end on 11 July, there were many differences between what we knowed before and after about local governments. … We were the apprentices of that period.[385]

The local elections and the municipality experience will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

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[384] "*Fatsa Devrimci Yol'dan etkilendi, Devrimci Yol da Fatsa'dan. … Fatsa'da yaşananlar daha çok yerel Dev-Yol kadrolarının, ki bunlar yerel halkın çocuklarıydı, pratik içerisinde öğrenme süreci olarak nitelebilir. Fatsa, Dev-Yol merkezi ile en doğrudan ilişkisi olan birkaç yerden biriydi. Bununla birlikte Fatsa'da bütün Dev-Yol kadrolarından çok Fikri Sönmez'in etkisi vardı. Fatsa, Dev-Yol'un yukarıdan tasarımı değildi*." Hakan Tanıttıran, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 14 December 2006.

[385] "*Fatsa deneyimi… 1979'da Devrimci Yol tarafından öngörülen '<u>Genel seçimleri boykot, yerel seçimlere katılım</u>' düşüncesinin pratik izdüşümüydü. Özel olarak ise Fatsa teorize edilmiş bir deneyimin uygulaması değildi. Tersine yerel ölçülerde planlanan, çeşitli deneyimsel süreçlerden geçilerek teorize edilen bir örnekti. 11 Temmuz'daki sona geldiğimizde yerel yönetim hakkında bildiklerimizle başlangıçtaki bildiklerimiz arasında çok çok farklılıklar vardı. … O dönemin çıraklarıydık diyebiliriz.*" Ahmet Özdemir, quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.130-1.

CHAPTER IV

THE MUNICIPALITY EXPERIENCE

The Local Elections

As Fikri Sönmez states in his court defence, in the 1977 local elections, Nazmiye Komitoğlu, a retired teacher known for her democratic personality, was elected as the municipality chairman from the CHP with the support of all of the revolutionary and democratic circles in the town. However, shortly after these elections she became seriously ill, and had to hand over her chair to the vice chairman, Kemal Burnaz, who was also the president of the Fatsa branch of the CHP. According to Sönmez, Kemal Burnaz was quite close to various interest groups, and this brought about a deep split within the CHP. Meanwhile, although Mrs. Komitoğlu sent her resignation several times to the municipality, Burnaz did not put it into practice since this would necessitate new elections, which would definitely result in the defeat of the divided CHP. Nevertheless, the plans of Burnaz failed when the District Elections Board (*İlçe Seçim Kurulu*) declared 26 August the date of new elections after Komitoğlu died.[386] This was the beginning of the end of the long CHP rule in the town.[387]

[386] Quoted in Pertev Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim Deneyi Fatsa* (İstanbul: Simge Yayınevi, 1989), pp.35-6.

[387] In fact, Fatsa was one of the fortresses of the CHP during the 1960's and 1970's. The CHP was by far the winner party in 1963, 1968, 1973 and 1977 local elections in the town. Available [online]: http://www.yerelnet.org.tr/belediyeler/index.php?belediyeid=127383. [17 July 2007]. On the other

At this point, the revolutionaries decided to take part in the elections. As already mentioned in the prior chapter, this decision was taken by a mutual interaction between the Dev-Yol center and local Dev-Yol cadres as well as between these cadres and the local people. Partially the decision was a reflection of the Dev-Yol's policy of boycotting the 1979 senate by-elections in order to struggle against the martial law and its pressures, but participating in local elections since local governments were, to a degree, autonomous from the cenral government, opening a space for the development of local initiatives.[388] This was also parallel to the Dev-Yol's view of revolution claiming to acquire power not suddenly in the entire country but gradually in separate fragments. That's why Yaşar Durmuş claims that they considered the municipality to be a means for organizing a different life style, and showing people that a life without exploitation and unfair gains was possible.[389] Actually, this stress made by the Dev-Yol on local governments, too, was developed in the course of time within social struggles. Before the decision to participate in local elections, in the *Devrimci Yol* magazine, there had been several evaluations by

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hand, it also easily won the 1969, 1973 and 1977 general elections in the district. (Unfortunately there aren't district statistics for 1965 general elections). For 1969 elections see DİE, *12 Ekim 1969 Milletvekili Seçimi Sonuçları*, pp.1012-5; For 1973 elections see Available [Online]: http://www.konrad.org.tr/secim/ayrinti.php?il_id=486&ilce_id=5160&yil_id=7&sonuc_getir=TRUE &x=73&y=5. [17 July 2007]; For 1977 elections see Available [Online]: http://www.konrad.org.tr/secim/ayrinti.php?il_id=419&ilce_id=4522&yil_id=8&sonuc_getir=TRUE &x=45&y=9. [17 July 2007]. A reason for the CHP's strength in Fatsa might be the high literacy rate in the town. As Mardin maintains, in those years, most of the literate people advocated Kemalist principles. Mardin, p.255. On the other hand, it could be argued that, in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a close relationship and mutual interaction between the social base of the CHP and some revolutionary factions such as the Dev-Yol and the TKP. Therefore, where revolutionaries were strong, the CHP was strong too, and vice versa.

[388] Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.54. For the boycott decision see "Namluların Gölgesindeki Seçim Aldatmacasına Hayır! Tek Yol-Tek Alternatif Halkın Kendi İktidarıdır," *Devrimci Yol*, no.30 (3 September 1979), pp.1-3; "Boykot Gerçek bir Demokrasi Mücadelesidir!," *Devrimci Yol*, no.31 (October 1979), pp.2-3; "Seçimlerde Devrimci Tavır ve Boykot," *Devrimci Yol*, no.31 (October 1979), p.8. Acording to the Dev-Yol, the boycott was quite influential. While the AP did not increase its votes, the CHP lost almost a million votes. See "Seçim Sonuçlarının Değerlendirilmesi," *Devrimci Yol*, no.32 (1 November 1979), pp.3-4; "Boykot Etkili Bir Siyasi Protesto Eylemi Olarak Gerçekleşti," *Devrimci Yol*, no.32 (1 November 1979), p.5.

[389] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

local cadres based on their own experiences about the significance of local governments.[390] On the other hand, as Mehmet Gümüş, a music teacher in Fatsa High School, argues, this decision was also taken as a result of the pressures from the people of Fatsa who, thanks to previous struggles, trusted the revolutionaries as a just and strong authority that had the will and power to solve their problems.[391]

After the declaration of the date of new elections, the revolutionaries and people began discussing candidates. According to Mehmet Gümüş, for the most part, it was not the revolutionaries but the people who selected Fikri Sönmez:

> I remember that we focused on three names. One of them was a teacher friend of ours named Sezai [Cesur]. Another one was Hamdi Sarıhan, the son of Ertan Sarıhan's uncle, and a geography teacher in the high school where I worked, too. In addition to these, between ourselves we had begun to talk about the candidacy of Fikri Sönmez. This did not last long, and transcending us, our people declared Fikri Sönmez as the candidate for chairmanship. … When one chatted about the revolutionary movement in Fatsa, Fikri Agabey was recurring in the mind. People knew and saw him, he was at the front stage in all hazelnut and black market struggles. If we were to raid a stockpiler's shop, Fikri Agabey would lead it. When products were delivered to the market, Fikri Agabey used to make the speech. At hazelnut meetings Fikri Agabey used to make the speech… Therefore, our people had already proclaimed him as the chairman. … The people chose him, spontaneously without asking us.[392]

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[390] For instance see "Malatya Olayları ve Çıkarılan Dersler," *Devrimci Yol*, no.18 (22 May 1978), p.2; and "Elazığ Halkının Faşizme Karşı Direnişi Sürecek," *Devrimci Yol*, Özel Sayı no.30 (29 October 1978), pp.1-2.

[391] Mehmet Gümüş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 13 March 2007.

[392] "*Benim hatırladığım üç tane aday üzerinde duruldu. Birisi Sezai diye bir öğretmen arkadaşımızdı. Birisi Ertan Sarıhan'ın amcasının oğlu yine benim lisede çalıştığım öğretmen arkadaşım Hamdi Sarıhan adlı coğrafya öğretmeni arkadaşımızdı. Bir de Fikri Sönmez'in adaylığı konuşulmaya başlanmıştı. Kendi aramızda tartışma yaşanırken. Bu çok sürmedi, bizi aşan bir boyutta, halkımız Fikri Sönmez'i başkan adayı olarak ilan etti. … Fatsa'da devrimci hareket deyince Fikri Abi akla geliyordu. Halk onu biliyordu, onu görüyordu, tüm fındık çalışmalarında, tüm karaborsayla ilgili mücadelenin başında Fikri Abi vardı. Bir stokçunun dükkanına gidilecekse başında Fikri Abi vardı. Mallar çıkarılır piyasaya, konuşmayı Fikri Abi yapar. Fındık mitinginde konuşmayı Fikri Abi yapar… Dolayısıyla halkımız Fikri Sönmez'i zaten başkan olarak ilan etmişti. … Halkımız seçmişti onu yani bize hiç sormadan. Kendiliğinden seçmişti.*" Mehmet Gümüş, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.53.

Because of this fact, Feridun Altıntaş claimed in *Fatsa Güneş* on 29 June 1979 that Fikri Sönmez was the candidate of the people:

> On 26 August, there will be elections for the municipality chairmanship left vacant after Nazmiye Komitoğlu. The candidates of parties are not certain. However, in the public opinion, there seems to be a single candidate declared by the people. In our observations, many individuals state that Tailor Fikri Sönmez has been dealing with the problems of the people for years, and people believe that Fikri SÖNMEZ would carry out the chairmanship in a fair and impartial manner.[393]

At this point, we had better have a look at who Fikri Sönmez was.

Fikri Sönmez

Fikri Sönmez was born in 1938 in Kabakdağ, which was one of the most conservative villages in Fatsa.[394] As his son Naci Sönmez states, Kabakdağ was a Georgian village, and an absolute majority of its inhabitants were inclined towards right-wing political parties. The family of Fikri Sönmez was no exception to this. It, too, was a conservative, religious family, and his father was an AP supporter. Naci Sönmez goes on to assert that after finishing primary school, he started working as an apprentice to a tailor. Soon, he went to İstanbul, and began working with a French tailor. Thanks to this, Fikri Sönmez became a first-class tailor to whom the most decent people of Fatsa brought their clothes. When he returned to Fatsa, he began working for a relative of Ziya Yılmaz, who was from Kabakdağ like himself.

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[393] "*Nazmiye Komitoğlu'ndan boşalan Belediye Başkanlığı için 26 Ağustos'ta seçim yapılacaktır. Partilerin adayları henüz belli değildir. Ancak, kamuoyunda halkın ilan etmiş olduğu tek bir aday gözükmektedir. Yaptığımız incelemelerde pek çok kişi, Terzi Fikri Sönmez'in yıllardan beri halkın sorunlarıyla ilgilendiğini ve halkın da belediye hizmetlerinde Fikri Sönmez'in tarafsız ve adil bir başkanlık yapacağına inancı olduğunu belirtmektedir.*" Feridun Altıntaş, "Fikri Sönmez Belediye Başkanlığına Aday," *Fatsa Güneş*, 29 June 1979 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.52-3.

[394] Naci Sönmez and A.C. Güney, "Devrimci Bir Halk Önderi: Fikri Sönmez," *Dünün ve Bugünün Defterleri Türkiye Sorunları 5*, no.1 (July 1988), p.52.

As a result of this, soon, he became acquainted with Ziya Yılmaz, who played a big role in the development of his political ideas. At that time, Ziya Yılmaz was still a university student. His and his student friends' visits to Sönmez's tailor shop introduced Sönmez to the political trends among the university youth.[395] Additionally, as Ahmet Becioğlu contends, those university students who returned to Fatsa in summers and had their clothes repaired in Sönmez's tailor's shop, too, had a considerable impact on the political thoughts of Sönmez, who was a DP supporter in the late 1950s.[396] In short, owing to his very social and daring personality combined with the increased social mobility, Fikri Sönmez managed to get himself out of the conservative environment of Kabakdağ. Meanwhile, at the age of twenty-seven, he married 19 year old Nurten Sönmez by an arranged marriage.[397]

As Sönmez and Güney contend, following his acquaintance with leftist ideas, Fikri Sönmez joined the TİP around 1965. Until 1971, he served the TİP as a District Secretary and President. During this period, he also actively participated in the rising anti-imperialist struggles. In 1969, he was among those who protested the US Sixth Fleet in İstanbul and İzmir. Beginning from 1968, he took part in the organization of hazelnut producers throughout the Black Sea, and contributed, as an organizer and a speaker, to the "End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meetings arranged in the area from Samsun to Trabzon. To the 1970s, he backed MDD supporters against the TİP administration. Later, in the midst of 1970 when the MDD front was divided, he supported Mahir Çayan's group. After 12 March, he was imprisoned for aiding Çayan and his friends, and released after about twenty months. After 1974, he was one of those who did not condemn, but embraced the

[395] Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[396] Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[397] Nurten Sönmez, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.23.

past struggles. Dating from 1977, he played a key role in the struggles against fascist attacks, black marketing and the exploitation in the hazelnut.[398] As already stated, Sönmez's consistent struggles made him a trustworthy person in the eyes of the people, who, consequently, declared him as their candidate for the municipality chairmanship. Moreover, thanks to these prolonged and determined struggles, he was regarded not simply as a senior revolutionary, but as an elder brother by all revolutionaries in the town regardless of their comparative statuses in the organizational hierarchy. That is why even the high-ranked Dev-Yol cadres in the Fasta District and Ordu City committees or even those in the Central Committee of the Dev-Yol still call him Fikri Agabey.

In this high degree of trust and the great respect to him, some other complementary characteristics of Sönmez had an effect, too. First of all, as all his friends and comrades argue, he was really a very social person who took part in almost all social places and activities in the town such as coffeehouses, pubs, weddings, and circumcision ceremonies. Besides, he was one of the founders of *Fatsa Esnaf Spor* football club.[399] In the words of Nurettin Demirbaş, a civil cervant, he was where people were.[400] Thus, as Hüseyin Uygun claims, Fikri Sönmez never saw himself different from common people, and in fact he was not; he was a tailor coming from apprenticeship.[401] This not only earned him the affection of the common people, but also, as Naci Sönmez contends, provided him with the ability to observe and understand their reactions and feelings better than

[398] Sönmez and Güney, p.52-4.

[399] Fazlı Hayta, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.23-4.

[400] Nurettin Demirbaş, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.43.

[401] Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

other revolutionaries.[402] It may be argued that, with this ability, Fikri Sönmez ensured a closer relation between the revolutionaries and the local people who, as Uygun maintains, thought that "If Fikri is in the business, there is no harm there."[403] In other words, Fikri Sönmez was a key link between the revolutionary youth movement on the one hand and the hazelnut producers, agricultural workers and the urban poor on the other. He played a crucial role in the shaping of the revolutionary cadres' decisions and actions in accordance with the desires and reactions of the common people. This was what made him one of the most important actors in the history of the social struggles in Fatsa.

When talking about Fikri Sönmez, one ought to mention his remarkable oratory skills, too. As Aydın Akyazı claims, although he was not a great theoretician, he was a powerful speaker who could easily make a connection with broad social segments, and impress them.[404] Leyla Gedik, a member of Fatsa children's chorus, states that he spoke in a very simple and clear style so that even children were able to understand the point.[405] Nurten Sönmez told me in an unrecorded conversation that this had attracted the attention of Hamdi Mağden, an Ordu deputy from the AP, who, in the 1960s, had offered Fikri Sönmez a seat in the parliament in exchange for his membership to the AP.

To sum up, with all these characteristics, Fikri Sönmez was, naturally, a spokesman of the people, who had a great influence not only on the revolutionary youth movement, but also on the common people of Fatsa, and thus he was able to establish a stronger connection between them.

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[402] Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[403] "*Fikri işin içindeyse ordan bir zarar gelmez.*" Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[404] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

[405] Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, p.145.

The Election Campaign

The key theme of Fikri Sönmez's elections campaign was the government of and by the people. According to Sönmez, all municipality administrations who were in charge until then had been the representatives of the dominant classes, not the people:

> All the municipality chairmen who have been, until now, elected with the support of a few black marketers, profiteers, and stockpilers violating the laws have had to serve those interest groups which got them elected. They granted all the benefactions of the municipality to a few profiteers. They made our people robbed by a few cruel men in all areas. … They divided us, the poor people, into political parties such as the AP, CHP and MSP, or along racial differentiations so that they could steal from us.[406]

As a response to this, Sönmez did not deliver sweet promises, but claimed that they could only solve their problems with the active participation of the people; that is to say through the government of and by the people:

> We, the revolutionaries, do not deliver imaginary promises like the candidates of the ruling class. Our promise is the light of our Dev-Yol. Under this light, the people of Fatsa will bring not only a new municipality chairman but also a new world view to the municipality. This view shall ensure that our people have a word and authority in the municipality.[407]

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[406] "*Şimdiye kadar … bir avuç karaborsacı, vurguncu, stokçu ve yasa tanımayan çıkarcı çevrelerin desteği ile seçilen belediye başkanları, kendilerini seçtirmiş olan çıkarcı çevrelere hizmet etmek zorundaydı. Bir avuç vurguncuya belediyenin bütün nimetlerini yedirmişlerdir. Halkımızı bir avuç zorbaya her alanda soydurmuşlardır. … Biz yoksul emekçi halkı yıllardır AP,CHP,MSP gibi partilere ve ırk ayrımına bölmüşler, kendileri de bunu değerlendirip bizi soyup soğana çevirmişlerdir.*" "Bağımsız Belediye Başkan Adayı Fikri Sönmez'in Halka Açıklaması," *Fatsa Güneş,* 06 July 1979, quoted in Pertev Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması Bir Yerel Yönetim Deneyi*, 2nd ed. (Ankara: Penta Yayıncılık, 2007), p.313.

[407] "*Biz devrimciler egemen sınıfın adayları gibi hayali vaadler vermiyoruz. Bizim vaadimiz Devrimci Yol'umuzun ışığıdır. Bu ışığın altında Fatsa halkı yalnız bir belediye başkanı değil, aynı zamanda belediye yönetiminde yeni bir dünya görüşünü de getirmiş olacaktır. Bu düşünce belediyede halkımızın söz ve karar sahibi olmasını sağlayacaktır.*" "Bağımsız Aday Fikri Sönmez'in Halka Açıklamaları," *Fatsa Güneş*, 07 September 1979, quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.72-3.

Therefore, Sönmez claimed, at every opportunity, that the oncoming elections were to be between the people and dominant classes in Fatsa.[408] Naci Sönmez argues that with this strong emphasis made on "doing together with people," or, in more scientific terms, the idea of "participatory municipal administration," which had not even taken place in *Devrimci Yol* magazine before, Sönmez had more impact than anybody else thanks to his personal qualities mentioned above.[409] Although this is right, it is not true to hold only Sönmez responsible for this approach. Actually, the idea in question was not only in conformity with the Dev-Yol's style of doing politics, but also, as Yaşar Durmuş states, it was a practical solution to overcome the obstacles that were to stem from the structure of the municipal administration within which an independent mayor alone would not be so effective.[410] This point will be re-adressed in the People's Committees section.

Another salient theme in the campaign was the guarantees given to small tradesmen. In his elections speechs, Sönmez stressed that they were not the enemies, but guarantors of tradesmen, thus only black marketers and stockpilers robbing the people had a reason to fear them.[411] This point is quite understandable since Fatsa town center was, as mentioned in the first chapter, a commercial center where many small tradesmen lived. On top of this, as some meatball sellers said to a reporter from *Demokrat*, during the elections process, some people told the tradesmen not to vote for the revolutionaries, who would confiscate their properties: "Before the elections some people said to us 'If the revolutionary candidate wins the elections,

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[408] For instance see "Belediye Başkan Adayı Fikri Sönmez'le Mülakat," *Fatsa Güneş*, 28 September 1979, quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması*, p.315.

[409] Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[410] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[411] "Fikri Sönmez'in Seçim Konuşmalarından İzlenimler," *Fatsa Güneş*, 5 October 1979, quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması*, p.315.

he will get your wheelbarrows from you. They are against private property.' No doubt, we got frightened a little."[412]

As stated in *Devrimci Yol*, after the announcement of the elections decision, the revolutionaries divided the municipal area into different units where they established election committees consisting of four or five people in each of them. Also a Central Election Committee (*Merkez Seçim Komitesi*) was founded to which unit committees were bonded. In addition to these, Women's Committees were set up to operate together with the unit committees.[413] Besides, in a town with around 8,000 registered voters, as Sedat Göçmen argues, almost 1,000 people, a considerable section of whom did not identify themselves as revolutionary, actively participated in the campaign. During this process, almost every village and house was visited, and those who had houses both in villages and in the town center were convinced to come to the center and use their votes.[414]

Mehmet Gümüş compares these practices to a festival, and argues that it is very difficult to reach such a spirit again.[415] I think it is impossible to understand this enthusiasm without taking into consideration the hopefulness among the broad masses and revolutionaries. For the broad masses, the revolutionary cause was not only a rhetoric and practice addressing their feelings of justice. It was also a rational survival strategy for them which not only promised a life without exploitation, but

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[412] "*Seçimden önce bazı kişiler bize* 'Devrimci aday kazanırsa, arabalarınızı elinizden alacak. Onlar mülkiyete karşıdır' dedi. Tabii ki biz de biraz korktuk." "'Belediyemiz Bizden Yana,'" *Demokrat*, 8 May 1980.

[413] "Fatsa Belediye Başkanlığı Seçimini Halkın Devrimci Adayı Kazandı," *Devrimci Yol*, no.32 (1 November 1979), p.12.

[414] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.74. These great efforts, indeed, played a significant role in the elections victory, yet, as Ahmet Özdemir maintains, it was primarily their previous struggles which earned them the municipality. In other words, they had won the municipality elections much before the elections itself. Ahmet Özdemir, "Halkın Yönetimindeki Fatsa Belediyesi," *Dünün ve Bugünün Defterleri Türkiye Sorunları 5*, no.1 (July 1988), p.67.

[415] Mehmet Gümüş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 13 March 2007.

also realized this alternative to some extent. In short, against the pitiless exploitation by the dominant classes, which made life extremely difficult for them, the revolutionary struggles was a hope for the laboring classes in which they saw their survival. Ayten Yılmaz, a daughter of a villager family, describes the excitement and euphoria in their village prior to hazelnut meetings:

> I remember a hazelnut meeting in Gürgentepe, Ordu. I was about ten years old. We didn't have a cloth to write on or oilpaint to write with. My dad used to send us into the streets. We used to collect batteries, used in pocket lamps, and so forth. We used to open those batteries. Inside was a black thing like coal. My dad used to crush it and make paint. And my mom used to have sheets. One side was white. They used to take quilts from the closet, and get two or three of them. My father used to sew them and make a placard. From the seven-year-old to the seventy-year-old, except for a few people, we used to set out by tractors at four or five o'clock in the morning.[416]

On the other hand, for the revolutionaries hope had a different meaning. Looking from the present, this may seem quite naive; however in those times, the revolutionaries were sure that a socialist revolution was about to come. Thus, they were working hard to fulfill their revolutionary duties. This optimism was one of the most fundamental characteristics of the socialist movements in the 1970s. Fatsa was not different in this context. For instance, Hüseyin Uygun states:

> There is a close place fifteen kilometers far from here. Yalıköy. The revolution had come to Yalıköy. The revolution was going to happen. We were struggling hard with these emotions. With a great faith and no exhaustion, we were going to create the government of the people. The problems were to going to come to an end, and people were going to be happy.[417]

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[416] "*Bir fındık mitingi hatırlıyorum, Ordu, Gürgentepe'de. 10 yaşında falanım. Elde yazacak bez yok, yağlıboya yok. Babam sokaklara gönderirdi bizi. Fenerlerde vs. kullanılan pilleri toplardık. O pillerin içini açardık. İçinden kömür gibi siyah bir şey çıkardı. Babamlar onu ezer, boya yapardı. Annemin de yatak yüzleri vardı, bir tarafı beyaz olurdu. Yüklükten indirirlerdi yorganları, 2-3 tanesini alırlardı. Babam onları dikerdi, pankart hazırlanırdı. 7'den 70'e köyde birkaç tane insan hariç traktörlerle gece 4'te 5'te yola çıkardık*." Ayten Yılmaz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[417] "*Yakın bir belde var burdan on beş kilometre kadar uzaklıkta. Yalıköy. Devrim Yalıköy'e kadar gelmişti. Devrim olacaktı. O duygularla koşturuyorduk. Büyük bir inançla, yorulmadan halkın*

Moreover, in a rapidly changing world, the revolutionary cause provided the revolutionaries, most of whom were young people, with a solidarist community, a honorable identity, and a noble reason for which to live. For example, Naci Sönmez contends that even though only a handful of them managed to go to university after finishing high school in those years, they did not find themselves in a vacuum thanks to their revolutionary relationships.[418] On the other hand, the words of Mahmut Altıntaş, a Dev-Yol cadre from Aybastı who had been to Fatsa several times, demonstrate the role of revolutionary identity in supplying young people a dignified and satisfying goal in their lives:

> It was a marvellous sentiment. Feeling yourself like an eagle, and different. Of course, we were afraid, but we did not give up. … There is nothing sweeter than rebellion on the earth. It's a wonderful thing to get rid of your chains and leave yourself to the wind. What we experienced during our revolutionary struggles was such a state of mind. … We didn't have a family or a private life. Our everything was that struggle. Some of our friends had left their education. Some were carrying out their occupations in a sketchy way. Everyone had given up everthing else. … There wasn't such a concern as whether to meet our darlings or to visit our mom's in the evening. Which meeting can we organize in which village, where can we make another person join us, whose vegetable garden can we hoe, for whose land can we build a wall? … A genuine mobilization spirit.[419]

No doubt, the dominant classes and the *ülkücü* militants did not stand idle while the revolutionaries and the people were carrying out extensive practices for

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iktidarını yaratacaktık. Sorunlar bitecekti, insanlar mutlu olacaktı." Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[418] Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[419] "*Çok müthiş bir duyguydu o .Kendini kartal gibi hissetmek, farklı hissetmek. Tabi ki korkuyorduk. Ama bırakıp gitmek yoktu. … Yeryüzünde isyandan daha tatlı hiçbir şey yoktur. Zincirlerinden kopmak, kendini rüzgara bırakmak harika bir şeydir. Bizim yaşadığımız o halet-i ruhiyeydi işte devrimcilik yaparken. … Bizde bir aile yaşantısı yoktu, özel yaşam yoktu. Herşeyimiz o mücadeleydi. Kimi arkadaşlarımız eğitimini bırakmıştı, kimi arkadaşlarımız mesleklerini yarım yamalak icra ediyordu. Herkes diğer herşeyini bırakmıştı. … 'Akşamleyin sevgilimle mi buluşacağım, anama mı gideceğim?' diye bir kaygı yok. Hangi köyde hangi toplantıyı yapabiliriz, nerde bir tane daha insan kazanırız, hangi insanın bostanını çapalarız, hangi insanın tarlasının duvarını yaparız? … Gerçek bir seferberlik ruhu.*" Mahmut Altıntaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Kocaeli, 20 March 2007.

the oncoming elections. As Sönmez claimed in his court defence, first of all, although he had applied to the District Election Committee fifteen days before the deadline, he had been requested to pay a huge amount of money to make his candidacy definite only three hours before the deadline. Thanks to the fact that he had taken precautions for such a situation, he had been able to pay the money on time. After that some administrators of the Fatsa branch of the CHP had gone to Ankara and tried to convince the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit to suspend the local elections in Fatsa since a defeat in Fatsa was going to be a significant blow to the CHP before the 14 October senate by-elections. Ecevit had not accepted the idea, but delayed the elections to 14 October so that local CHP cadres had gained some more time for their election campaign.[420]

After this decision, as Pertev Aksakal states, Fikri Sönmez managed to survive several assasination attempts. On 5 September 1979, while returning to his home in Kurtuluş neighbourhood, which was one of the few remaining places in Fatsa where *ülkücü*s could still find shelter, some fascists started firing at him. However, fortunately Sönmez escaped from the attack with only two wounds in his leg. This time on 3 October, the *ülkücü* commandos fired at and wounded Celal Aslan, whom they confused with Sönmez. Later, on 5 October 1979, fascists raided a coffeehouse from which Sönmez had departed a short time earlier after arranging a meeting. In this assault, Tevrat Güler was killed along with three wounded. Finally, just a few days before the elections, together with some militants, Hüseyin Erdal, a Yozgat deputy from the MSP, was caught by the police with guns and bombs.[421]

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[420] Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması*, pp.44-5.

[421] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.133-4. The exact date of the last incident is not clear. In the books of Aksakal and Uyan, 12 September is given as the date. However, Uyan quotes *Fatsa Güneş* asking "Did Fatsa survive from a significant danger two days before the elections?" Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.67. That means the real date is probably 12 October. Nonetheless, in his court defence,

In the end, the elections were held on 14 October 1979, and despite all these hindrances, Fikri Sönmez obtained the majority of the votes, starting a new period in Fatsa (See Table 7).

Table 7. The Results of the 14 October 1979 Fatsa Mayoralty Elections.

Name of Candidate	Party of Candidate	Number of Votes
Fikri Sönmez	Independent	3,096
Zeki Muslu	CHP	1,133
Rıza Özmaden	AP	859

Source: Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.134.

As Aksakal states, when compared with the 1977 local elections, these results revealed that Fikri Sönmez had obtained the votes of not only revolutionaries, but also the broad masses, who previously had supported the CHP, AP and MSP, which, in 1977, had 2,430, 1,340 and 154 votes, respectively.[422]

In the indictment, these elections were compared to the coercive elections of the Union and Progress Party (*İttihat ve Terakki Partisi*) with the claim that oppositional peope had been silenced by force.[423] However, my interviewees refute this claim. For instance, İsmet Hosaflıoğlu, a civil servant in charge of one of the ballot boxes during these elections, states:

> I was in charge of a ballot box in the elections. The guy gave his vote by himself. He said 'We've tried everthing else, let's try this one.' Do you understand? He said 'If we don't like him, we would overthrow

Fikri Sönmez claimed that the incident had been four days before the elections. Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması*, p.49.

[422] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.134.

[423] *İddianame*, p.127.

him.' I tell you that I was in charge of a ballot box. Everbody gave his vote voluntarily and in accordance with the laws.[424]

The Reconfiguration of the Municipal Structure

The People's Committees

As soon as they won the elections, the revolutionaries began to search for new mechanisms that would ensure the government of and by the people since they had only gained chairmanship in the entire municipal administration which was controlled by system parties. For instance, among 26 associates of the Municipality Assembly (*Belediye Meclisi*) the CHP had sixteen, the AP had eight, and the MSP and the Democratic Party (*Demokratik Parti*) had one members.[425] At this point, Resistance Committees proposed by the Dev-Yol became a model for them.[426] As explained, these committees were not only defensive structurings against fascist attacks, but also the nuclei of the people's government where alternative human relations would gradually flourish beginning from the present, making these organizations rise as alternatives to the existing power bodies. As Ahmet Özdemir states, it was this latter aspect on which they focused in Fatsa. Thus, although they also carried out anti-fascist practices, it was primarily municipal works and

[424] "*Ben seçimlerde sandık başındaydım. Adam kendiliğinden verdi yahu.* '*Bir de bunu deneyelim*' *dedi, anlıyor musun?* '*Herşeyi denedik, bir de bunu deneyelim*' *dedi.* '*Beğenmezsek yıkarız*' *dedi. … Ben sadık başındaydım diyorum, gönüllü, usulü, kaidesi neyse oyunu kullandı herkes.*" İsmet Hosaflıoğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007. Nurettin Demirbaş, another civil servant in charge during the elections, confirms this too. Nurettin Demirbaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007. Moreover, Kemal Şendur, who previously voted for the AP, too, verifies that the elections were fair. Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[425] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.103.

[426] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

neighbourhood problems that they dealt with in the People's Committees (also known as Neighbourhood or Municipal Committees) in Fatsa.[427] In short, the People's Committees were the adaption of the Resistance Committees idea to the local conditions of Fatsa, that is to say a town where revolutionaries had, to a great extent, eliminated fascist attacks, and won the mayoralty.

Consequently, as Özdemir maintains, Fatsa, which had seven neighbourhoods, was divided into eleven units according to the quality of problems, and in each unit a People's Committtee consisting of between three and seven members was established through elections based on secret voting and open counting. These elecions were held in the assembly halls of neighbourhood schools, and about two and three hundred people participared in each. The mechanism was the same in all these meetings. First, Fikri Sönmez, the mayor, was making a speech about what had been done until then, and how they had come to that point. Then, with the guidance of the members of the Public Relations Office (*Halkla İlişiler Birimi*), another new organizational unit which will be discussed later, people were discussing and identifying the problems in their neighbourhoods. After that candidates were being chosen in relation to these problems, and finally committee members were elected by the inhabitants of each neighbourhood.[428]

As Sebahattin Akyazı, who presided over the People's Committee of Kurtuluş Neighbourhood for two periods, argues, along with revolutionaries, all people regardless of their political tendencies were able to vote and be elected in the committee elections except the fascists:

> Those people were not appointed from above but elected from below with the broad participation of the people on the basis of secret voting and open counting. Who can deal with local problems concerning

[427] Özdemir, pp.69-71. Also see Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.137.

[428] Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.133.

> the municipality best? … The elections were held in Kurtuluş Primary School. Actually I was not eager to take part in the committee, but I became a candidate with the recommendation of my friends. I was elected. The majority of the Kurtuluş Neighbourhood participated in the elections. There were people from all political ideas, but the fascists. For instance, there were Kemal Şendur and Ekrem Gündüz from the right. There was Server Akıllı as a CHP suppoter. He has as much power as I have. We made a division of labor between us about municipal problems. The problems were being reported from below. We were chosing someone among us, and reporting these to the municipality. We did not have a serious dissidence about municipal problems.[429]

Hüseyin Uygun claims that the revolutionaries had a guiding role during the process of determining candidates, but it was not rare that not these candidates, but those suggested spontaneously by the people themselves were elected.[430] Ahmet Becioğlu's story confirms this:

> Fikri Agabey looked in my eyes, and all of a sudden, the people in that place wrote my name on the board. Hey! I can't be a committee member. Why? I have work to do, I can't bother with that. There were six candidates. My Fikri Agabey says, "For municipal affairs, elect five or six representatives between yourselves. When there is a need of help from the municipality, speak to these people, do not come to the municipality all together." Anyway, the elections were held, and I lost by one vote. Fortunately, I lost. Afterwards, their names were specified by the police. After 12 September, they were all imprisoned.[431]

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[429] "*Seçilen insanlar yukardan aşağı atanmış kimseler değil, halkın geniş katılımıyla aşağıdan yukarı gizli oy açık sayımla seçilen insanlardı. Belediye ile ilişkili yerel sorunları en iyi kim götürebilir? Mekan olarak Kurtuluş İlkokulu kullanıldı. Benim aslında komitede yer almak gibi bir derdim yoktu da arkadaşların önerisiyle yazıldım. Seçildik. Kurtuluş mahallesinin büyük kısmı katıldı seçimlere. Her partiden her düşünceden insanlar katıldı seçimlere, faşistler hariç. Örneğin Kemal Şendur ve Ekrem Gündüz vardı sağdan. Server Akıllı, CHP kökenli vardı. Benim ne kadar etkim varsa onun da o kadar var. Belediyeyle ilgili sorunlarda kendi aramızda görev bölümü yaptık. Zaten tabandan sorunlar geliyor. İçimizden birer görevli seçerek belediyeye aktarıyorduk. Ciddi anlamda, belediyeyle ilgili sorunlarda görüş ayrılığı çıkmadı*." Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[430] Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[431] "*Fikri Abim bir gözüme baktı benim. Ordaki insanlar birden bire benim adımı yazdılar tahtaya.. Ya ben komite üyesi olamam. Niye? Benim işim var, onla mı uğraşacağım ben? Altı tane aday çıktı. Fikri Abim diyor ki* 'Belediyeyle ilgili işler için *beş altı tane aranızdan temsilci seçin, belediyeden yardım almak gerekirse bu temsilcilerle muhatap olun, burdaki insanlar hep beraber belediyeye gelmesin.*' *Neyse seçimler oldu, ben bir reyle kaybettim. İyi ki kaybetmişim. Daha sonra onlar polis tarafından tespit edilmiş. 12 Eylül'den sonra hepsi dolduruldu içeriye*." Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

To come to the point, the revolutionaries and the common people were working together in these committees, and the revolutionaries were not commanding or directing the people, but they were their collaborators.[432] Uygun argues that these committees were fully authorized about local problems concerning the municipality, and top-to-down interventions in them from the Fatsa Dev-Yol organization was out of question.[433] Furthermore, as Ahmet Özdemir argues, people had the right to call back their representatives in case they were not pleased with them. Such an incident occurred when it was understood that a few committee members had distributed oil and fuel needs of the people to their relatives.[434]

In this way, these committes became tools by which the people discussed their everyday problems and took measures about them with the help of the municipality. Aydın Akyazı contends that when a problem or a decision was brought to them by the committees, the municipality did not use to keep people waiting too much, but immediately acted in accordance with their suggestions.[435] As Sedat Göçmen contends, the Municipality Assembly could do nothing, but approve these decisions since its sessions were being broadcasted live to the people, hence none of the associates could dare to oppose the decisions of the people.[436]

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[432] Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007. According to Uygun the number of the revolutionaries in the Mustafa Kemalpaşa Neighbourhood was almost equal to the number of others. Ibid. On the other hand, Sebahattin Akyazı states that in their committee, the ratio of the revolutionaries to the common people were one in three. Sebahattin Akyazı, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.93. On this matter Sedat Göçmen argues that in the first elections they did not nominate too many revolutionary candidates because they rather wanted the common people to take part in the committees and embrace their own problems. Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007. However, confirming this, Ahmet Özdemir maintains that in the next elections, they run more revolutionary candidates since some committee members failed to fulfill their duties. Yet, the majority of the members still consisted of the common people. Ahmet Özdemir, inteview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.134.

[433] Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007;

[434] Özdemir, pp.71-2, 82.

[435] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

As Göçmen goes on to claim, soon, people began to bring not only municipal problems, but also all their everyday troubles such as family issues, land disputes, blood feuds and girl abductions (*kız kaçırma*) to the People's Committees.[437] Since the rural areas and the town center of Fatsa were quite integrated, this tendency showed itself in the villages of Fatsa, too, where similar committees were established by the people spontaneously.[438]

Together with the previous struggles of the revolutionaries to solve the concrete problems of the people, these developments resulted in a decline in the volume of the work of the courts in the town (See Table 8 and 9).

Table 8. The Volume of the Work of Civil and Criminal Courts of First Instance (*Asliye Hukuk ve Asliye Ceza Mahkemeleri*).

	Number of Cases	
Year	Civil Court of First Instance	Criminal Court of F.Instance
1975	1,154	447
1976	1,113	495
1977	892	463
1978	848	432
1979	809	400
1980	655	385

Source: Yayla, p.199.

[436] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[437] Ibid.

[438] Pertev Aksakal, interview by Kerem Morgül, İstanbul, 16 March 2007. For example, following Fatsa, the people of Kayaköy neighbourhood in Ilıca established their own People's Committee to solve their road problem. See "Fatsa Kayaköy Mahallesi Halkı Yolunu Kendi Yapıyor," *Demokrat*, 7 May 1980. It may be argued that the idea of People's Committees intersected with the traditions in high Alevi villages where people solved their problems through communal meetings without the intervention of the state. Yet, this point needs further investigation.

Table 9. The Volume of the Work of Civil and Criminal Courts of Peace (*Sulh Hukuk ve Sulh Ceza Mahkemeleri*).

	Number of Cases	
Year	Civil Court of Peace	Criminal Court of Peace
1975	647	763
1976	624	737
1977	567	707
1978	552	606
1979	567	379
1980	507	320

Source: Yayla, p.200.

In the Indictment, because of these developments, the Sönmez municipality and the revolutionaries were accused of forming illegal People's Courts where they judged people, bypassing the official state organs.[439] Cumhur Yavuz argues that the first accusation was just funny:

> The judge asks "Did you see the People's Courts?" "I saw," says the guy. "Where was it, underground?" "No," he says "it was in the middle of the village. Sir, these people gathered all villagers at the square. Everybody spoke. … In the end, it was decided that they would not acknowledge him and cut off their neighbourhood relations with him." Prosecutor, who thought he had found something, makes a fool of himself. People laugh in the court. … The story of the People's Courts is this.[440]

On the other hand, the second accusation was right, but in itself it was not something bad. Indeed, as Sedat Göçmen and Naci Sönmez argue, all these meant that gradually a dual power structure began to appear in Fatsa. First was the official

[439] *İddianame*, pp.128, 159.

[440] "*Hakim soruyor* '*Halk mahkemesini gördün mü?*' '*Gördüm*' *diyor.* '*Nerdeydi, yerin altında mı?*' '*Yok,*' *diyor* '*köyün ortasındaydı. Efendim bu insanlar bütün köylüyü topladılar meydanda. Herkes konuştu. Sonuçta buna kimse merhaba demesin, komşuluk ilişkimizi keselim diye karar çıktı.*' *Bir şey buldum sanan savcı gülünç duruma düşüyor. Salonda insanlar kahkaha atıyor. … Halk mahkemesi hikayesi bu.*" Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

bodies of the state such as the municipal police and courts. Second was the non-official establishments of revolutionaries and the people that generated solutions to eveyday problems without a need for (in fact despite) the official bodies.[441] Since this was circumventing the state's reason for the existence, it was really a great threat to the establishment. This point was stressed by Oktay Ekşi the day after Target Operation in Fatsa as a warning to the rulers of the country:

> Since this government [the Sönmez municipality] met the greatest expectation of the people, that is to say an effective and just authority, it was able to integrate with the people, grew stronger, and gradually surpassed the authority of the state in that region. … The embracing by the people of the district, of an illegitimate authority formed around Fatsa municipality and the mayor should give a lesson to the ruler of Turkey. Because, our people give them such a message: "We look for a just government which would solve our problems, listen to us, and demonstrate its effectiveness." It's the only way out to get this message, and meet the needs of citizens with an effective and fair state administration before new Fatsa's come into being throughout Turkey.[442]

On the other hand, the People's Committtees were not the sole participatory mechanism in the Fatsa municipality. As Mahmut Memduh Uyan states, once every two or three months, people gathered together at People's Meetings where they directly put forward their suggestions about the municipality or criticized the mayor and his staff who were present there, too. At the start of these meetings the municipality administration gave an account of their performances straightforwardly

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[441] Sedat Göçmen and Naci Sönmez, interviews by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.162-3.

[442] "*Bu yönetim halkın en büyük beklentisine yani etkin ve adil bir otorite isteğine cevap verip Halk ile bütünleştikçe güçlenmiş ve o yöredeki devlet otoritesini geri plana itmişti. … İlçe halkının, Fatsa Belediyesi ve Belediye Başkanı çevresinde oluşmuş bir Gayrı meşru otoriteyi benimser bir tavır almaları, Türkiye'yi yönetenlere ders vermelidir. Çünkü halkımız onlara 'Biz, bizim sorunlarımıza çözüm bulacak, bize kulak verecek ve etkinliğini gösterecek adil bir yönetim arıyoruz' şeklinde bir mesaj vermektedir. Bütün Türkiye'de yeni Fatsa'lar oluşmadan bu mesajı almak ve etkin, adil bir devlet yönetimiyle vatandaşın ihtiyacına cevap vermek tek çıkış yoludur*." Oktay Ekşi, "Fatsa'dan Ders Almalı," *Hürriyet*, 12 July 1980.

to the people. The first of these meetings was held on 18 December 1979 in Cinema Cem.[443]

Thanks to all these participatory devices, the Fatsa experience has usually been a source of pride among the Dev-Yol circles. For example, Sedat Göçmen claims that in Fatsa they put into practice a sample of Athenian direct democracy. According to Göçmen, while in Athens only slaves were unable to vote and participate in the government, in Fatsa only fascists were excluded from the power.[444] Similarly, stressing the democratic essence in both experiences, Mahmut Memduh Uyan argues that Fatsa is as important for the history of Turkey as the Paris Commune is for the history of social struggles.[445]

Indeed, as Can Hamamcı argues, with regard to the municipality administration, Fatsa is an example of participatory model which was implemented especially in left-wing municipalities in France and Italy during the 1970s, and advocated by many CHP candidates before the 1977 local elections.[446] Nevertheless, I think there are two basic problems regarding this strong emphasis on the democratic and participatory essence of the Fatsa experience. First of all, more often than not, these claims about Fatsa are utilized as a means of glorifying the entire past record of the Dev-Yol by implying that unlike other leftist organizations, it contained a strong criticism of bureaucratic socialism, and had a democratic character. Usually a sentence seemingly about Fatsa and the future adresses the whole Dev-Yol or its center and the past. For instance, Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu

[443] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.103-4.

[444] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[445] Mahmut Memduh Uyan, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*, (Documentary Film) (Ankara: Özgür Açılım, 2007).

[446] Can Hamamcı, "Belediye Özerkliği ve Fatsa Deneyimi Üzerine 1-2-3,"*Demokrat*, 5-6-7 September 1980.

contends that "If in Turkey a democratic, libertarian and enlightened future is to be discussed, it shall be a future grounded upon the revolutionary politics that created Fatsa."[447]

It is clear that here the causal link is reversed, and the democratic and participatory essence of the Fatsa experience is presented as a direct and typical outcome of the Dev-Yol's policies. As a result, the past of the Dev-Yol, or to put it more clear, of the Dev-Yol leaders, is exalted. No doubt, the incomplete *Partileşme Süreci* which granted local actors, who knew the local problems well, a high degree of autonomy, and the idea of Resistance Committees had a significant impact on the participatory nature of the Fatsa experience. However, it is not possible to claim that before the Fatsa experience reached a certain point, the Dev-Yol had either any clear idea of or proposal for participatory democracy or a mature criticism of bureaucratic socialism. In fact, all its discussions with other factions were based on quite orthodox Marxist arguments. An indicator of this was the reading lists published in *Devrimci Yol.* The most referenced thinkers in these lists were V.I. Lenin, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong and Mahir Çayan.[448] In short, as argued before, Fatsa was not an identical implementation of the Dev-Yol idea, but the reshaping and transcending of it in practice by local cadres and people in accordance with local conditions. In this context, as much as it was a part of it, the Fatsa experience can also be regarded as a criticism of the Dev-Yol since the historical subjects in Fatsa did not consider armed propaganda to be the primary

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[447] "*Eğer gelecekte Türkiye'de demokratik, özgürlükçü ve aydınlık bir gelecekten söz etmek söz konusu olacaksa bu … Fatsa'yı yaratan devrimci siyasetin temelleri üzerinde yükselecek bir gelecek olacaktır.*" Oğuzhan Müftüoğlu, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*.

[448] See "Marksist Teorinin ve Teorik Eğitimin Önemi Üzerine," *Devrimci Yol*, no.1 (1 May 1977), pp.13-5; "Marksist Felsefe Eğitimi Üzerine," *Devrimci Yol*, no.3 (1 June 1977), pp.13-5; "Ekonomi Politik ve Eğitimi Üzerine," *Devrimci Yol*, no.5 (1 July 1977), p.13-4; "Tarihsel Materyalizm," *Devrimci Yol*, no.8 (1 September 1977), p.12-3; and "Emperyalizm 1," *Devrimci Yol*, no.15 (21 February 1978), p.12-3.

struggle method, and focused on solving the conrete problems of the people in a more or less participatory structure.

This brings us to the second point of objection. No doubt, Fatsa had a democratic participatory core which must be embraced and defended; however, as Fatsa was the reshaping and going beyond of the Dev-Yol idea in practice, participation was not a fully achieved target, but an ongoing and incomplete tendency still needing to be developed. For instance, Ahmet Özdemir argues that they were unable to include the majority of the people in the process of participation. He claims that in the "End to Mud Campaign" which was very successful, only about thirty percent of the local people took part. In the first days of this campaign, this ratio was even lower, around 10-15 percent.[449] Likewise, Sebahattin Akyazı claims that a significant portion of the people expected the solution of their problems from the revolutionaries instead of actively taking part in the process.[450] In other words, although there was a positive change, "the authority and the ruled" dichotomy did not disappear altogether. This point will be further discussed in the fifth chapter.

The Public Relations Office and the Municipality Personnel

After the elections, besides People's Committees, a unit named Public Relations Office was set up within the municipality. Prominent members were Kemal Atasoy, Aynur Tandoğan, Seher Ertop and Ahmet Özdemir.[451] According to Özdemir, this office was thought of as a complementary and facilitating mechanism

[449] Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.140-1.

[450] Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[451] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.101-2.

backing the People's Committees in their aim to ensure the participation of the people in the local government. In other words, the Public Relations Office was the first municipal unit where committee members or other people were to bring their problems. Then, according to the characteristics of the problem, this office contacted directly with the mayor or other sub-committees within the municipality such as the technical committee, accounting committee, and electricity and water affairs committee.[452] To make a long story short, this office was the central unit within the municipality which coordinated the relations between the people and the People's Committees on the one hand, and the mayor and the relevant municipal units on the other.

What was done about the internal operation of the municipality was not confined to these structures. The new municipality administration also carried out an operation about the municipality personnel in order to be able to put into practice their understanding of local government. As Sönmez claimed in his court defence, by the time he won the elections and became the mayor, the municipality personnel had been unable to get their wages for months. Thus they all had debts to shops, coffeehouses and so on. According to Sönmez, this miserable condition of the municipality workers not only prevented them from implementing the orders of the municipality and intervening in illegal affairs in the town but also, caused widespread bribery.[453] As Sedat Göçmen states, in order to bring an end to this, the municipality did not fire any workers. Instead, their wages began to be paid, and a very good social contract was signed between the personnel and the municipality.[454] With this social contract workers not only gained economic rights such as a 150-300

[452] Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.125-6.

[453] Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol Savunması*, pp.73-4.

[454] Sedat Göçmen, interview in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.102.

percent increase in their wages and equal wages for equal work, but also political rights such as the continuation of wage payments in case any worker was imprisoned beause of his/her political thoughts.[455]

Practices during the Municipality Period

The End To Mud Campaign, 13-18 November 1979

As Sönmez stated in his court defence, in the first neighbourhood meetings which were organized to establish the People's Committees, the most urgent problem of the neighbourhoods was specified as the mud covering every street of the city which stemmed from the started but unfinished sewage system works during the previous municipality. Every street had been digged, and the cobblestones ripped up and the extracted mud thrown to each side of the roads. Since Fatsa was a rainy town, the holes were filled with dirty water which became a shelter for mosquitos and frogs. Also some sewer pipes were broken, causing waste water to mix with drinking water. Not only were all these a serious threat to the public health, but also they made the lives of the people who lived, worked or passed through these streets very difficult. For instance, the torn up roads prevented vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances from entering neighbourhoods.

As Sönmez went on to claim, after the meetings the issue was brought to the technical committee of the municipality, which estimated that more than four years would be required to fix all these problems with the existing municipality sources.[456]

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[455] "Eşit İşe Eşit Ücret Fatsa Belediyesinde İmzalanan Sözleşmeyi İşçiler Hazırladı," *Demokrat*, 31 May 1980.

[456] Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, pp.52-3.

However, as Sedat Göçmen argues, this was the first significant test for them, and they wanted to create a shocking effect among people by quickly solving the problems in question.[457] As a result of several meetings in the Municipality Assembly and the People's Committees, it was decided that they could manage to complete all works in a short time if everybody would clean the in front of their houses, that is to say, by the active participation and contribution of neigbourhood inhabitants.[458] Kemal Şendur from Kurtuluş Neighbourhood verifies the participation of the people in this campaign:

> There was unity and togetherness. Those who had trucks came with trucks, those who had tractors came with their tractors. Some people came as workers. There was solidarity. Some brought gravel, some carried away soil. That is, if work is done, this people, these citizens come without caring for left or right provided that there is a leader. And they came and did. How many years have passed since? Twenty-five years. As many roads were never opened after that. … Why wouldn't this people help when they see this?[459]

However, as Ahmet Özdemir maintains, the ratio of the participation of the local people in the campaing was not more than 30 percent. Especially in the initial days, it was much lower until women encouraged their husbands to take part in the work.[460] This was probably stemming from the fact that it was primarily women who had to deal with the consequences of muddy streets, such as washing the clothes and taking care of ill children. In order to guarantee the success, along with some revolutionary engineers and architects living in big cities, many Dev-Yol

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[457] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[458] From the court defence of Fikri Sönmez quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, pp.53-4.

[459] "*Birlik ve beraberlik vardı. Kamyonu olan kamonla geldi, traktorü olan traktörüyle geldi. Kimi işçi olarak geldi. Dayanışma vardı. Kimi çakıl getirdi, kimi toprak götürdü. Yani bir iş yapıldığı zaman sol sağ diye bir şey yok, bu millet, bu vatandaş gelir. Yeter ki önder olsun. Ve geldiler yaptılar. Kaç sene oldu? Yirmi beş sene oldu. Daha ondan sonra böyle yol açılmadı. Bu halk bunu gördüğünde niye yardımcı olmasın?*" Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[460] Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.141.

cadres from near towns and cities including Samsun, Sinop and Artvin were brougt to Fatsa.[461] In addition to this, as Sönmez claimed, vehicles of all the nearby municipalities and relevant state institutions such as the Highway Administration (*Karayolları*) and the Public Waterworks Administration (*Devlet Su İşleri*) were requested, and almost all of them whether they were from the CHP or AP sent their workers and/or vehicles to Fatsa.[462]

As Uyan states, all those people coming from outside were accommodated by native people. Moreover, some women spontaneously began to prepare meals for workers, and this spread to every street where the "End to Mud Campaign" was carried out.[463] Atıf Özgel, a member of Fatsa District Committee of the Dev-Yol and the Public Relations Office, states that:

> We used to say "In this street we are twenty people, prepare meals for twenty people," but they would never prepare meals for twenty people. To many people who didn't live in that period, this may seem to be exaggerated, but they would prepare meals for two hundred people. And some used to reproach us, asking "Why don't you eat our food?"[464]

In short, as Sebahattin Akyazı and Hüseyin Uygun contend, the "End to Mud" campaign was carried out in the genuine spirit of the *imece* tradition.[465] In other words, getting the inspiration from the long-standing customs of the people, the revolutionaries revived and reproduced the old and declining *imece* tradition in accordance with actual needs. Owing to this collective work, a major problem of

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[461] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[462] From the court defence of Fikri Sönmez quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*…, p.54.

[463] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.111.

[464] "'*Bu sokakta yirmi kişiyiz, yirmi kişilik yemek yapılsın*' *derdik, ama hiçbir zaman yirmi kişilik yemek çıkmazdı. Belki bu bir çoklarına, o dönemi yaşamayanlara abartı gibi gelecek ama iki yüz kişilik yemek çıkardı. Ve orda da bize gönül koyan olurdu*, '*Bizim yemeğimiz niye yenmiyor?*' *diye.*" Atıf Özgel, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*.

[465] Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007; Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

Fatsa was solved only in six days. During the campaign, not only were the streets cleaned, but also new streets were opened including a main street of four km, a new sewage system was built in a neighbourhood, and the existing sewage systems were repaired.[466] What was done was indeed a great work. Because of this, a month later, just at the end of the second month of new municipality, Sıtkı Pazarbaşı claimed in *Fatsa Güneş* that along with A. Cevat Güvenkaya, Atıf Topaloğlu and Nihat Kutsal, Fikri Sönmez was one of the most successful mayors in the entire history of Fatsa.[467]

The most important consequence of the campaign was that the people of Fatsa realized that they could achieve anything as long as they came together and worked collectively. That is why *Devrimci Yol* claimed that with the strong arms of the people, every job could be done, and all obstacles could be overcome.[468] Moreover, thanks to the campaign, Fatsa established further closer relationships with the surrounding municipalities, towns and villages.[469]

The People's Culture Festival, 8-14 April 1980

One the most important activities during Fikri Sönmez's mayoralty was the People's Culture Festival, which was decided in February 1980 by the Municipality

[466] "Halkın Güçlü Kollarıyla Yapılamayacak İş Aşılamayacak Engel Yoktur! Fatsa'da 'Çamura Son Kampanyası' Sonuçlandı," *Devrimci Yol*, no.33 (3 December 1979), p.16; Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.111.

[467] Sıtkı Pazarbaşı, "Belediye Başkanları ve Hizmetleri," *Fatsa Güneş*, 14 December 1979 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.142.

[468] "Halkın Güçlü Kollarıyla Yapılamayacak İş Aşılamayacak Engel Yoktur! Fatsa'da 'Çamura Son Kampanyası' Sonuçlandı," p.16.

[469] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.111.

Assembly, and realized in April.[470] As stated in *Devrimci Yol*, the principal aim of the festival was to contribute to the revolutionary social struggles by breaking the ideological and cultural hegemony of the dominant classes over the people:

> Therefore, the Revolutionary cultural battle will be a part of the struggles for setting up the revolutionary people's power and a new life style against the current dominant bourgeois culture; instead of a culture grounded upon such bourgeois understandings as individiual interest, selfishness, and keeping the laboring masses from political activity, it will be, before anything else, a struggle for developing a Revolutionary people's culture aiming to establish a new system of relations (a new socialist life style) based on forming the people's own power (participation in the government of itself and the society), developing the people's creativity, and collectivity… There may be those who say that such an engagement is unnecessary, and all these are problems related to the post-revolutionary period. … With such a comprehension, it's impossible to realize a true revolution. … Fatsa is a real challenge to the decadent and degenerate social relations of the dominant classes in favor of a brand new social order.[471]

This Gramscian target was also stressed by Fikri Sönmez in the opening speech of the festival: "Friends, do not let anyone be deceived by the word 'festival.' Our purpose is not to try that degenerate way again which is used by the dominant classes by entertaining and easing you. Cultural struggle, too, is a part of our people's struggles for survival in all areas."[472] On the other hand, as Şükran

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[470] From the court defence of Fikri Sönmez quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, p.55.

[471] "*O halde, Devrimci kültür savaşı da bugünkü egemen burjuva kültürüne karşı, halkın devrimci iktidarını ve yeni bir yaşam tarzını kurma mücadelesinin bir parçası olacaktır; bireysel çıkar, bencillik ve emekçi kitlelerin politik pasiflik içinde tutulması gibi burjuva anlayışlarını esas alan bir kültür yerine, herşeyden önce halkın kendi iktidarını kurma (kendisinin ve toplumun yönetimine katılma), halkın yaratıcılığının geliştirilmesi, kollektiflik temeli üzerindeki yeni bir ilişkiler sisteminin (yeni-sosyalist bir yaşam tarzının) oluşturulmasını esas alan Devrimci bir halk kültürünün geliştirilmesi mücadelesi olacaktır… Böyle bir uğraşın bugün için gereksiz olduğunu ve bütün bunların devrim sonrasına ait bir sorun olduğunu söyleyenler bulunabilir. … Böyle bir anlayışla gerçek bir devrimin başarılması sözkonusu bile olamaz. … Fatsa, … egemen sınıfların her yönüyle çürümüş, yozlaşmış toplumsal ilişkilerine karşı yepyeni bir toplumsal düzen adına yapılmış gerçek bir meydan okumadır.*" "Halkın Devrimci Kültürünü Yaratma Yolunda: Fatsa Halk Kültür Şenliği," *Devrimci Yol*, no.35 (April 1980), p.6.

[472] "*Dostlar, şenlik sözü kimseyi yanıltmasın. Amacımız eğlendirerek rahatlatmak, egemen sınıfların kulladığı yoz bir yolu bir kez daha denemek değildir. Kültür mücadelesi de halkımızın her alanda verdiği yaşam mücadelesinin bir parçasıdır.*" Quoted in Gülten Akın, "Fatsa Olgusu 'Kültür Mücadelesi Halkın Yaşam Mücadelesinin Bir Parçasıdır,'" *Demokrat*, 6 May 1980.

Ketenci, a journalist in *Cumhuriyet*, argues, another target of the festival was to introduce Fatsa to the outside: "Actually, Fatsa was disclosed to the outer world by the festival. It was why they held that festival. Formerly we did not know what was happening there exactly. I did not know as well."[473]

It can be argued easily that the festival was able to meet both ends. Within the scope of the festival, a series of cultural and intellectual activities about social issues and problems were done. These included painting, photograph, design and cartoon exhibitions, poetry, chorus and folkloric music concerts, folk dance and slide shows, theatres, movies and panels. In these activities famous intellectuals and artists took part, including poets Can Yücel, Gülten Akın and Adnan Yücel, minstrels Ali Asker and Feyzullah Çınar, academics, thinkers and journalists Ünsal Oskay, Murat Belge, Yazgülü Aldoğan, Gündüz Vassaf, Ahmet Abakay, Mahmut Tali Öngören, Emil Galip Sandalcı, Şükran Ketenci, Tuğrul Eryılmaz and Ali İhsan Mıhçı.[474] After the festival, many of these people wrote about or described their observations in newspapers.[475] In these observations, they stressed especially the participatory character of the local government, the peaceful and secure atmosphere in Fatsa unlike in other parts of the country, the great interest shown by the common people

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[473] "*Fatsa aslında dış dünyaya şenlikle açıldı. Zaten o şenliği yapmalarının amacı oydu. Ondan öncesinde ta orada neler olduğunu tam bilmiyorduk. Ben de bilmiyordum.*" Şükran Ketenci, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*.

[474] ODTÜ and People's Houses Headquarters also took part in the festival with their chorus, folk dance and theatre teams. For all activities and participants see *8-14 Nisan '80 Fatsa Halk Şenliği*, (Festival Program) Milli Kütüphane Arşivi (National Library Archive), code numer: BR 1994 AD 2094. (See Appendix).

[475] For instance see Şükran Ketenci, "Fatsa Şenliği: Alışılmamış Bir Deney," *Cumhuriyet*, 17 April 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.125-6; Can Yücel, "Ekmekbol,"*Demokrat,* 26 April 1980; Can Yücel, "Kendini Kurtarmış Bir Yer 1-2," *Demokrat,* 4-5 May 1980; Tuğrul Eryılmaz and Mahmut Tali Öngören, interviews in "İzlenimler," *Demokrat*, 6 May 1980; Adnan Yücel and Ahmet Abakay interviews, in "'İşte Susuzluk İşte Çağlayan Bir Irmak,'" *Demokrat,* 7 May 1980; Süha Görün and Şükran Ketenci, interviews in "İzlenimler," *Demokrat,* 8 May 1980; Yazgülü Aldoğan, Ünsal Oskay, Turhan Salman, and İbrahim Hitay, interviews in "'Fatsa Halkın Kendi Kendini Yönetmesinin Örneğidir,'" *Demokrat,* 9 May 1980; Can Hamamcı, "Halkın Belediyesi: Fatsa Örneği," *Demokrat*, 18 May 1980.

in intellectual and cultural activities, the high level of consciousness among the laboring masses, and the rise of new human relations in the town based on self-confidence, participation, justice and solidarity. Thus, for the intellectuals, the festival was an extraordinary, suprising and fascinating experience. For instance Şükran Ketenci wrote:

> Fatsa municipality organized a festival between 8 and 14 April. … For some reason, the press paid almost no attention to this festival. Nevertheless, few journalists and more artists, writers and scientists were astonished by what they saw in Fatsa. … What suprised those coming from big cities much more was the new life style developing around the Fatsa municiality, and the extraordinary behaviour of the people of Fatsa from children to 70 year olds. … Can you think that women over 40-50 years with white cheesecloths on their heads and in villager dresses, bearded hodjas, and some mothers and fathers with children listened to the intellectual debate made by Can Yücel, Murat Belge and Ali İhsan Mıhçı about culture? … That a modern dressed ODTÜ student and a clean dressed, headscarved town women over her 50s attended an anthem sung on the people's night together sitting side by side… That in the people's chorus, people from all degrees took part from the student, tradesman, and car repairer to the grandfather over 55 … That there were women with loincloths who joined the coffeehouse chats of the guests coming from big cities … That guests from the cities were accommodated in the houses of the people of Fatsa, and those families to whom a guest did not come although they were prepared to regarded it as an insult. That there occurred arguments between vendors and guests who wanted to eat or buy something because vendor did not accept money…[476]

[476] "*Fatsa Belediyesi 8-14 Nisan tarihleri arasında bir şenlik düzenledi. … Basın nedense bu şenliğe hemen hemen hiç önem vermedi. Oysa şenliğe katılan az sayıda gazeteci, daha çok sayıda sanatçı,yazar, bilim adamları Fatsa'da gördükleri karşısında şaşkına dönmüşlerdi. … Büyük kentlerden gelenleri daha da çok şaşırtan Fatsa Belediyesi çevresinde gelişen bir başka yaşam biçimi ve çocuğundan 70 yaşındakine kadar Fatsalıların alışılmışın dışındaki davranışları oldu. … Can Yücel, Murat Belge, Ali İhsan Mıhçı'nın kültür üzerine tek kelime ile 'entelektüel' düzeyde yaptıkları bir tartışmayı başlarında beyaz tülbent ve köy giysileri ile 40-50 yaşın üstünde kadınların, sakallı hocaların ve hatta bazı çocuklu anne babaların dinleyebileceklerini düşünebilir misiniz? … Halk gecesinde sazla söylenen bir marşa, modern giysili bir ODTÜ öğrencisi ile teniz giyimli başı eşarpla örtülü 50'in üstünde bir kasaba kadınının yan yana oturdukları yerden eşlik edeceklerini … Halk korosunda öğrencilerden, esnaftan, araba tamircisinden, 55 yaşın üstündek dedeye kadar her kademeden Fatsalının yer aldığını … Büyük kentlerden gelen konukların kahve sohbetlerine belinde peştemalı çıkarmadan katılan kadınlar olduğunu … Kentlerden gelen konukların Fatsalıların evlerinde ağırlandıkları, hazırlık yapmasına karşın evine konuk gelmeyen ailenin bunu kendisine hakaret saydığını. Bir şey yemeye ya da ufak bir anı eşyası almaya kalkan yabancılarla satıcılar arasında para alınmak istenmemesi yüzünden tartışma çıktığını…*" Şükran Ketenci, "Fatsa Şenliği: Alışılmamış Bir Deney," *Cumhuriyet*, 17 April 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.125-6.

Ahmet Abakay, the General Secretary of the Comtemporary Journalists' Association (*Çağdaş Gazeteciler Derneği*), too, was surprised at what he had seen:

> I and other guests were really surprised that a small district could organize and put into practice a festival with such a broad scope and content. … Another positive observation is that it was not, as usual, the youth who participated in the overcrowded panels, but men and women from the laboring people who took part in the production process.[477]

In fact, as Leyla Gedik contends, who was fascinated was not only the intellectuals, artists and journalists coming from outside, but the local people as well:

> In a small place like Fatsa, the Culture Festival was a big thing. We were preparing because some people were coming from outside. Some people were coming to watch and get to know you. Everybody was like professionals. As if all housewives were intellectuals. I, who can't stand even occupational meetings now, struggled to watch them. Headscarved women watched the activities in the cinema halls, fascinated. Everbody was fascinated by each other. And the participants were fascinated by them… I don't remember anything bad from those days. If there had been any, as a child, we would have easily seen and felt it. We were very happy. … Everything was festive…[478]

Indeed, the people the visitors saw in Fatsa were not a passive crowd. An interesting demonstration of this happened when a crowded group of people who could not find a place for the performance of the Fatsa Youth Theatre (*Fatsa Gençlik Tiyatrosu*) marched to the municipality and then occupied the theatre hall in

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[477] "*Bir küçük ilçenin bu denli geniş kapsamlı ve içerikli bir şenlik düzenleyebilmesi ve bunu yaşama geçirebilmesi beni ve diğer konukları gerçekten şaşırttı. … Bir başka olumlu gözlem ise tıklım tıklım dolan salonlarda özellikle panelleri izleyenlerin alışılmış olduğu üzere gençler değil, kadın-erkek üretim süreci içinde yer alan emekçi halktan kişiler olmasıydı.*" Ahmet Abakay, interview in "'İşte Susuzluk İşte Çağlayan Bir Irmak,'" *Demokrat,* 7 May 1980.

[478] "*Fatsa gibi küçük bir yerde Kültür Festivali büyük bir şeydi. Dışarıdan birileri gelecek diye hazırlık yapılıyordu. Birileri seni bilmeye, görmeye geliyordu. Herkes profesyonel gibiydi. Ev kadınları sanki silme entelektüel olmuştu. Şimdi mesleki toplantılara bile zor katlanan ben, onları izlemek için çırpınırdım. Sinemalarda yapılan etkinlikleri başörtülü kadınlar büyülenerek izlerdi. Herkes birbirinden büyülenirdi. Katılımcılar da onlardan büyülenirdi… O günlerden kötü hiçbir şey hatırlamıyorum. Kötü bir şey olsaydı, bir çocuk olarak onu çok rahat yakalar, hissederdik. Çok mutluyduk. … Şenlikliydi her şey…*" Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu in Sarıoğlu, pp.140-1.

order to make the play be performed again.[479] Likewise, Sedat Göçmen argues that although many of them were incapable of that matter, hundreds of people participated in the poem reciting competition showing that they were not afraid of, but eager to make public performances.[480] In other words, the local people were not just spectators, but also active participants in the festival. They asked questions, made criticisms and put forward proposals to the panels.[481]

Besides sports contests between neighbourhoods, they performed their own art activities. One of these were theatrical performances. As Ahmet Özdemir maintains, the people of Fatsa was already familiar with theatre. Since 1972, the TÖB-DER-member teachers had been organizing plays every year. Additionally, the People's House had been putting on theatrical performances since 1975-1976. There were also theatrical companies that had worked for years in the surrounding districts and cities.[482] As a result, the Fatsa Youth Theatre and the Ordu Municipality Theatre (*Ordu Belediye Tiyatrosu*) gave performances in the festival.[483] Mehmet Gümüş says other significant activities carried out by the local people were the People's Chorus prepared by himself, and the Children's Chorus directed by Ahmet Özdemir. The People's Chorus consisted of women and men between 20 and 70 years.[484] On the other hand, as Leyla Gedik states the Children's Chorus mainly consisted of the sons, daughters, small brothers and sisters of the revolutionaries. The songs they

[479] "Sanat Gösterileri," *Demokrat*, 7 May 1980.

[480] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.134.

[481] "Bir Şenliğin Ardından," *Demokrat*, 8 May 1980.

[482] Ahmet Özdemir, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.129.

[483] See *8-14 Nisan '80 Fatsa Halk Şenliği*, (Festival Program). We have already touched on the relatively rich cultural infrastructure in the region beginning from the pre-Republican period which, no doubt, had a considerable effect on this.

[484] Mehmet Gümüş, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.122-3.

sang were about the social life in the town, and they were composed with the contributions of children under the guidance of Ahmet Özdemir.[485]

As Leyla Gedik claims, the Children's Chorus was often accused of being a mechanism through which children were used for political ends; however, in reality, it was an indicator of the politicization of children themselves spontaneously in an already politicized environment:

> In those days, there was widespread enthusiasm in Fatsa. … There were many incidents around, and we, the children, were not outside this. People in our houses were not chit chatting. There were politics everywhere your eyes looked and your ears listened. We were even asking Preceptor Ahmet the difference between factions. We, the children, heard everything… Even our games were different. We used to make slings and collect stones in order to hunt "*şiş göbek*" (literally means "fat ass" implying exploiters)… In the "End to Mud Campaign" we worked together with all kinds of people we loved. They were fixing our door, and we carried water to them. We were aware of the pleasure stemming from our contribution and togetherness. We were all hazelnut producers, we knew the problems. We wondered how we could contribute to the "End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meetings which were frequently organized in Fatsa and the region, and we even made a list of duties as the Children's Chorus. We said, "We're strong enough to carry a placard," and after intensive discussions we decided to sign it *Dev-Çocuk* (An abbreviation for the Revolutionary Children). … For Fatsa, they often say "children were used." Looking from that point, it is impossible to understand our tale. …[486]

[485] Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu in Sarıoğlu, p.140.

[486] "*O günlerde Fatsa'da kitlesel bir coşku yaşanıyordu. … Etrafınızda bir sürü olay yaşanıyordu ve biz çocuklar bunun dışında değildik. Evlerimizdeki insanlar havadan-sudan konuşmuyordu. Gözünüzün gördüğü, kulağınızın duyduğu her yerde politika vardı. Ahmet Hoca'ya fraksiyonlar arasındaki farkı bile soruyorduk. Biz çocuklar her şeyi duyuyorduk… Oyunlarımız bile farklıydı, '*şiş göbek*' avlamak için sapan yapar, taşlar toplardık… 'Çamura Son Kampanyası'nda her kademeden sevdiğimiz insan mozayiği ile birlikte çalışıyorduk. Kapınızın önü yapılıyor, biz de onlara su taşıyorduk. Katkınızın verdiği hazzın, birlikteliğin bilincindesiniz. Hepimiz fındık üreticisiydik, sıkıntıları biliyorduk. Fatsa'da ve bölgede sıkça gerçekleştirilen 'Fındıkta Sömürüye Son' mitinglerine katkımız ne olabilir diye düşünmüş, Çocuk Korosu olarak görev listesi bile çıkartmıştık.* 'Güçlüyüz, pankart taşıyabiliriz" demiş, yoğun tartışmalar sonucu *pankartımıza Dev-Çocuk imzası atmayı kararlaştırmıştık. … Fatsa için sıkça 'çocuklar kullanıldı' denir ya. O noktadan bakarak bizim masalımızı anlayabilmek mümkün değil.*" Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu in Sarıoğlu, pp.143-4.

In other words, Fatsa was a fairy tale for children in which they emulated the adults, and were full of a similar enhusiasm and joy stemming from realizing themselves through a collective and socializing struggle:

> Fatsa was a fairy tale land. We used to emulate the adults. … The children had their own autonomus, naive life style. We used to read the children's and books' page in *Demokrat* newspaper. … And then came Target Operation, the magic was broken, they stole our fair tales. … It was a disgusting scene, a beautiful day was rising and tanks were entering from all sides. In the morning, I gathered my friends together, we scattered the bottles we had broken on the roads where the tanks were to pass. Supposedly, we were going to puncture the wheels of the tanks… How could we know that they do not puncture?[487]

If one side of the new human relations claimed by intellectuals and journalists was about children, the other side was undoubtedly about women. In his article in *Demokrat*, Can Yücel emphasized this:

> Another result of this collective fusion is that the contradictions between women-men and adult-children have brought towards healthy combinations. Both children and women are free from men. Neither the women are submissive to their husbands nor are the children obedient to their fathers. Because they are side by side on the way to revolution. The succes of that sweetheart Children's Chorus is because of this. That is why elder sisters call visitors from the road and shake our hands in a friendly manner, as if we are guests in their housholds.[488]

In fact, women were not only side by side with men in all of the struggles, as Can Yücel argues, but more often than not they were even in front of them. One of the reasons for women's participation in and strong support of the social struggles

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[487] "*Fatsa bir masal diyarıydı. Büyüklerimize öykünürdük. … Çocukların, kendilerine ait, özerk, naif bir yaşam biçimi vardı. Demokrat gazetesinin çocuk sayfasını, kitap sayfasını okurduk. … Ve sonra Nokta Operasyonu geldi, sihir bozuldu, masallarımızı çaldılar. … İğrenç bir görüntüydü, güzel bir sabah oluyordu ve dört bir taraftan tanklar giriyordu. Sabah arkadaşlarımı topladım, kırdığımız şişeleri, tankların geçeceği yollara serptik. Güya tankların tekerlerini patlatacağız… Patlamayacağını nereden bilelim?*" Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu in Sarıoğlu, pp.149-50.

[488] "*Bu toplu kaynaşmanın bir başka sonucu da kadın-erkek, yetişkin-çocuk arasındaki çelişkilerin sağlıklı birleşimlere doğru götürülmüş oluşu. Gayrı çocuk da, kadın da erkek karşısında erkin. Kadın kocasının karşısında el pençe divan durmuyor, ne de çocuk babasının karşısında iki büklüm. Devrim yolunda hepsi yan yanalar çünkü. O güzelim çocuk korosunun başarısı bu yüzden. Bacıların, konukları yolda çevirip, hanelerine konuk gelmişizcesine dostça elimizi sıkmaları bu yüzden.*" Can Yücel, "Kendini Kurtarmış Bir Yer 2," *Demokrat*, 5 May 1980.

was the revolutionaries' practices against domestic violence towards women and the bad habits of husbands such as alcoholism, gambling and idleness. Because of this, Mahmut Tali Öngören wrote:

> Do you know who supports the new independent local government of Fatsa most? Women. Because the revolutionaries who founded this municipality saved their men from drunkenness, gambling and coffeehouses. It's said that, formerly, those men who earned a little money would rush to drinking, playing cards and backgammon. When they got into trouble, they would run to the house and take their wives' jewelry. "Now they are all at work," says a woman who accommodates us in her house.[489]

Şükran Ketenci stresses the same point:

> I have heard this from many women. The woman said, "My husband no more beats me, they have told him in the coffeehouse not to." Again women told clearly, "They have saved my husband from his gambling habit." One of the most important reasons why they loved it. … A youth movement, perhaps her own child was in it, too, producing solutions directly for family problems and women-men exploitation, they loved it very much. They were always apparent, women were always at the front stage, and they were the majority.[490]

In addition to these, Gülin Bayraktar, a revolutionary who came to Fatsa from outside, claims that they also carried out programs in villages where they taught women how to read and write, and told them such issues as the negative effects on their lives of bearing too many children.[491] As Pertev Aksakal argues, the People's

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[489] "*Fatsa'nın yeni bağımsız yerel yönetimine kim en çok destek oluyor, biliyor musunuz? Kadınlar. Çünkü bu belediyeyi kuran devrimciler onların erkeklerini sarhoşluktan, kumardan ve kahvelerden kurtarmışlar. Biraz para kazanan erkekler hemen soluğu içkide, kağıt oyununda ve tavlada alırmış eskiden. Başı sıkışınca eve koşup karısının boynundaki beşibiryerdeyi aynı amaçla koparırmış.* '*Şimdi hepsi işinde gücünde*' *diyor evinde bizi konuk eden bir kadın.*" M. Tali Öngören, "Fatsa Gerçeği," *Türkiye Yazıları* (June 1980), quoted in Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.320-7.

[490] "*Kaç kadından dinledim bunu.* '*Kocam, kahvede anlatmışlar, artık gelip beni dövmüyor*' *diyordu kadın. Gene kadınlar anlatıyorlar çok net olarak:* '*Kocamı kumar alışkanlığından kurtardılar.*' *Sevmelerinin en önemli nedenlerinden biri. … Doğrudan doğruya aile sorunlarına ve de kadın-erkek sömürüsüne çözüm üreten bir gençlik hareketi, kendi çocuğu da belki içinde, onu çok seviyorlardı. Hep ortadaydılar, hep öndeydiler kadınlar her yerde ve çoğunluktular.*" Şükran Ketenci, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.*

[491] Gülin Bayraktar, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.*

Committees were a useful mechanism for women to struggle against unequal gender relations and violence towards themselves. Accordingly, the participation of women in the decision-making processes together with men made it difficult for the men to preserve some of their privileges within the social life. Especially, the bringing of violence issues to the committees was quite dissuasive for the men.[492]

On the other hand, according to Nurten Demirbaş, who joined te revolutionaries after she had come to Fatsa as a bride, the behaviour of the revolutionaries towards women was generally egalitarian:

> There wasn't such conservatism among the revolutionaries. They were quite open and enlightened. When I met them, I loved them all. … There wasn't such an attitude like "Women should stay at home." We were making our practices together. … When we came together, if I was preparing the meal, they used to prepare the table. If I was washing the dishes, they used to tidy the house. I learned women-men equality and women's rights after I met the Dev-Yol.[493]

However, Sedat Göçmen maintains that they were not so strong in terms of both women's issues and their overall behaviour towards women:

> We were quite weak at the issue of women. … We went to one of our friends' house, sat at the table, ate food. There was water at the edge of the table. "Ayşeee come, give me water," he called [her wife] from far inside. … In the course of time, as political movement developed, we began to emphasize a little women-men equality. … To the 1980s, the participation of women increased. … But we never had a significant number of women militants. We had some women friends at the cadre level, but it was not enough. It's one of the points we couldn't get over. There were some friends who had come to Fatsa from outside. For instance Gülin [Bayraktar] had come instead of working as a music teacher outside. We had brought Aynur Karasan to Fatsa, she was at Samsun Education Institute. We had got Seher as Fikri Agabey's

[492] Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.50-1.

[493] "*Devrimcilerde öyle bir tutuculuk yoktu. Gayet açıklardı, aydınlardı. Onlarla tanıştığımda hepsini çok sevmiştim. … Kadınlar evinde otursun tavrı yoktu. Çalışmalarımızı kadın-erkekli yapıyorduk. … Biraraya geldiğimizde ben yemek hazırlıyorsam onlar da masayı hazırlardı. Ben bulaşığı yıkıyorsam onlar da ortalığı toplardı. Ben Devrimci Yol ile tanıştıktan sonra öğrendim kadın-erkek eşitliğini, kadın haklarını.*" Nurten Demirbaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

> secretary. There were also a few girls from the high school. Throughout the whole region, we didn't have a widespread women's program.[494]

Actually, women's programs were not the sole reason that led the considerable portion of women to strongly support and participate in the social struggles. It must be noted that it was women who were primarily affected by the exploitation in the hazelnut and black marketing, with which the revolutionaries were quite effective at dealing. As already discussed in the second chapter, in hazelnut production, there was an unequal division of labor between men and women. While women, along with children, were mainly responsible for the difficult production processes, it was chiefly men who controlled the marketing side. Furthermore, while men owned the lands, women were, to a great extent, in the status of unpaid family members. Thus, women were exploited twice as much as men: both as producers and as women. Consequently, it was no surprise that they embraced struggles against the exploitation in the hazelnut as much as men did, if not more than them. Similarly, for the most part, women experienced the negative consequences of black marketing at a closer range than men since it was usually they who did the shopping or had to take care of children's nutrition. For that reason, they were mostly at the front stage in black marketing raids and meetings against price increases (See the pictures in the Appendixes section).

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[494] "*Kadınlar konusunda oldukça zayıftık. … Gidiyoruz bizim arkadaşların evine. Masada oturuyoruz, yemek yiyoruz. Masanın kenarında su duruyor. 'Ayşeee gel. Su koy.' Taa içerden çağırıyor. … Zaman içerisinde politik hareket geliştikçe kadın-erkek eşitliği üzerinde durmaya başladık biraz. 80'lere doğru kadınların katılımı daha arttı. … Ama çok sayıda kadın militana sahip olmadık hiçbir zaman. Kadro düzeyinde kadın arkadaşlarımız vardı ama yeterli değildi. Aşamadığımız noktalardan birisidir. Fatsa'ya dışardan arkadaşlarımız gelmişti. Gülin gelmişti mesela, dışarda müzik öğretmenliği yapacağına. Aynur Karasan Samsun Eğitim Enstitüsü'ndeydi, onu getirmiştik Fatsa'ya. Seher'i Fikri abinin sekreteri olarak almıştık. Liseden bir iki kızımız vardı. Bütün bölge çapında da yaygın bir kadın çalışmamız olmadı.*" Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007. For similar comments see Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.135-7.

Last, without doubt, it may be argued that in many cases women were not less militant, courageous and altruistic than men, as seen during and after Target Operation. An example is given by Ayten Yılmaz:

> There was Habil's mother. She was tortured so badly. Because she was a woman who cooked from night till morning and carried the food on her back to the caves. At night she was followed. When she realized that she was being followed, she made the children escape, and was caught herself. Habil's mother was really a very revolutionary woman. She had organized and educated herself. … She was tortured. "They beat me, my girl," she says, "they applied electricity, did whatever is out of humanity, but I did not tell them any secrets." If only she was alive now and we went to her together.[495]

Another story of this kind is narrated by Bahtiyar Yeşiltaş, a Dev-Yol member in Fatsa:

> Somewhere around Çullu road, a barricade was set up. We got the hot bread in our hands to distribute it to those people waiting at the edge of the barricade. I got out of the car with the bread bag in my hands, a baby was crying. I came closer and looked, a woman was trying to suckle her child. It was two o'clock at night. I said "Sister, what are you doing here with the child?" She said "I am guarding." I said "Sister, is this your business with a two-months old child, who told you to guard?" "Nobody told me to, I came myself," she said … "brother, when the fascists raid here as they did in Gürgentepe, Gölköy and Çamaş, will they keep me apart saying 'You are married, you have a child, your husband is not here' ?" "No" I said. "Thus," she said "I guard here with my child to feel more secure. I told the people here that 'I can't struggle against fascists with a stick or gun. Instead of being sleepless, go to my house and have a rest. If they come for the raid, I would run, tell you that they have come.' While I and my child are sheltered at home, they, too, would protect me."[496]

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[495] "*Habil'in annesi vardı. O kadar çok işkence görmüştü ki. Çünkü gece sabaha kadar yemek pişirip sırtında mağaralara taşıyan bir kadındı. Gece takip ediliyor. Takip edildiğini farkedince çocukları kaçırtıyor kendi yakalanıyor. … Habil'in annesi hakikaten çok devrimci bir kadın. Kendi kendini örgütlemiş, kendini yetiştirmiş.* '*Dövdüler kızım*,' *diyor,* '*elektrik yaptılar, insanlık dışı ne varsa yaptılar, ama ser verdim sır vermedim*.' *Keşke hayatta olsaydı da birlikte gitseydik şimdi.*" Ayten Yılmaz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[496] "*Çullu yoluna çıkan yerin orda bir yerde barikat kurulmuş. Sıcak ekmeği aldık elimize, barikatın köşesinde bekleyenlere ekmek dağıtacağız. Arabadan bir indim, ekmek poşeti elimde, bir bebek ağlıyor. Yaklaştım bir baktım, kadının bir tanesi çocuğunu emzirmeye çalışıyor. Gecenin saat 2'si.* '*Bacım sen ne yapıyorsun burda ya,*' *dedim* '*çocukla?*' '*Nöbet tutuyorum' dedi.* '*Bacım sana mı kaldı bu iş yaa*,' *dedim* '*iki aylık çocukla, kim dedi sana nöbet tut diye?*' '*Kimse demedi*, *ben kendim geldim*' *dedi …* '*kardeşim buraya faşistler baskın yaptığı zaman, Gürgentepe'ye,Gölköy'e, Çamaş'a yaptıkları gibi* '*Sen yeni evlisin, senin çocuğun var, senin kocan burda değil*' *diye beni ayıracaklar mı?*' '*Yooo*' *dedim.* '*İşte*,' *dedi* '*ben çocuğumla beraber kendimi daha güvende hissedeyim diye*

Struggles against the Black Market, Exploitation in the Hazelnut and Fascism

After winning the local elections, the revolutionaries acquired a better opportunity for carrying on their previous struggles against black marketing, exploitation in hazelnut, and fascism. This was especially evident in the struggles against black marketing. As Sönmez stated in his court defence, thanks to the People's Committees, the municipality was able to check and control all of Fatsa, house by house and shop by shop. In other words, owing to these committees, the municipality had ears and eyes everywhere.[497] This also meant that from then on, black market raids acquired a legal status as they were performed by committees which were tied to the local government. Thus, the municipal police or security forces were no longer able to intervene in raids in favor of shopkeepers. As a result, the efficiency of struggles against the black market increased noticeably. For instance, in one case, even a member of the Municipality Council (*Encümen*) from the CHP, Cevat Biricik, was caught with a considerable stock of oil in his silo:

> We raided an oil silo belonging to Cevat Biricik, a Municipality Council member from the CHP. [He said] "You can't raid here. I shall report you to Fikri Bey." He had somehow stayed in prison during the THKP-C period, and relying on his friendship, he thought Fikri Sönmez could save him from the Dev-Genç. We said "Go to Fikri Sönmez, he wouldn't react differently." We loaded the oil onto a truck, and sold it to citizens at a suitable price.[498]

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burda nöbet tutuyorum. Burdakilere dedim ki '*Ben elime ne sopa ne tabanca alıp faşistlerle mücadele edemem, siz gidin burda uykusuz kalacağınıza benim evimde yatın, dinlenin, eğer onlar baskına gelirse ben koşarak gelirim, geldiler derim.*' *Ben çocuğumla evimde korunurken,onlar da beni korur zaten*' *dedi.*" Bahtiyar Yeşiltaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 09 April 2007.

[497] Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, pp.73-4.

[498] "*Bir yağ ambarını bastık. Cevat Biricik. CHP'den Belediye Encümen üyesi.* '*Siz burayı basamazsınız. Ben sizi Fikri Bey'e söylerim.*' *Yani onun dostluğuna güvenerek, o da geçmişte nasılsa THKP-C döneminde hapis yatmış, o beni Dev-Genç'ten kurtarır düşüncesiyle bize tepki gösterdiğinde,* '*F.Sönmez de bizden farklı bir tepki göstermez, sen git ona*' *dedik. Kamyona yükledik yağları, getirdik vatandaşa normal fiyatıyla sattık.*" Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

In his court defence, Sönmez narrated the event as follows:

> When he [Cevat Biricik] was caught by the municipality officials with his store with 110 containers of oil, he said to the municipal police that "I'm a prominent person of the CHP, in fact I did not bring these for black marketing, I was going to distribute them to shops in villages. I would speak to Mr.Mayor, don't seize these products." … Cevat Biricik phoned me and wanted me to ignore that issue. But, … I wanted the product seized immediately and brought to the municipality. On this matter, Cevat Biricik was fined in a Council meeting. In the following Council election in June period, he was removed from Council membership by the People's Party.[499]

In another case, as Sebahattin Akyazı states, a great stock of oil was caught in the depot of Fiskobirlik:

> There was a lot of oil in the depots of Fiskobirlik. We went to the master and said: "You are going to open these. People will benefit from them whether they are Fiskobirlik members or not." The depot was full, the guy was resisting, and citizens had run out of oil. After some time, he couldn't resist anymore. What's the market price? We put citizens in a queue. Official friends collected the money at the cash box, and a few friends of us checked. We sold oil at Fiskobirlik for a week.[500]

Beginning with the municipality period, these raids turned out to be much more important for the survival of the laboring classes than they had before. As a study reported in *Demokrat* shows, in those days while the real incomes of the workers, agricultural producers and civil servants were declining, the prices of consumption materials were constantly increasing at drastic levels. Accordingly,

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[499] "*Kendisi, belediye ilgilileri tarafından mağazasında 110 koli yağ yakalattığında, belediye zabıta memurlarına şöyle diyor:* '*Ben Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'nin ileri gelen bir insanıyım, ben bunları esasında karaborsa için getirmemiştim. Köylerdeki bakkallara dağıtacaktım. Ben reis beyle görüşürüm, siz bu malları müsadere etmeyin.*' … *Cevat Biricik, telefon ederek benden bu işin idare edilmesini istemişti. Ancak … malın derhal müsadere edilip belediyeye getirilmesini istedim. Bu konuda encümen toplantısında Cevat Biricik'e para cezası kesildi. Daha sonraki Haziran dönemindeki encümen seçiminde de Cevat Biricik, Halk Partisi tarafından encümen üyeliğinden düşürüldü.*" Quoted in Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, pp.72-3.

[500] "*Fiskobirlik'in depolarında dünya yağ dolu. Müdüre gittik, dedik* '*Bu depoları açacaksın., Fiskobirlik'e üye ya da üye olmayan insanlar bu yağdan yararlanacak.*' *Depo dolu, direniyor adam, vatandaş da yağsız. Bir süre sonra daha fazla direnemedi. Piyasada fiyat ne? Vatandaşı sıraya dizdik. Memur arkadaşlar kasada parayı topluyor. Bir iki tane arkadaşımız da denetliyor. Bir hafta yağ sattık Fiskobirlik'te.*" Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, 07 April 2007.

considering 1963 values to be a hundred, the wholesale price indices rose from 869.9 in December 1978 to 1,513.7 in November 1979. In other words, in eleven months the prices rose by 79 percent. Meanwhile, the net wage indices of civil servants decreased from 100 to 77.3. In addition, the net wage indices of insurance holder workers fell from a hundred in December 1978 to 88.8 in August 1979. Furthermore, the internal terms of trade indices for the agricultural sector declined from 84.5 in December 1978 to 67.9 in November 1979, which meant that the prices of industrial materials were rising more than agricultural products so that the net incomes of agricultural producers were declining, too.[501] One can easily observe from the newspapers of the period that this tendency increasingly continued during 1980, making the lives of laboring masses unsustainable. Against rapidly rising prices which deteriorated their living standarts, the people of Fatsa organized several demonstrations. For instance, in February 1980, 2,000 people marched in the town against price increases, and on 29 March approximately 10,000 people, of whom housewives composed the majority, protested rising costliness.[502]

Nevertheless, these raids were not an obstacle to the revolutionaries and the municipality to improve, in the course of time, their relationships with a considerable section of small tradesmen. For instance, Ahmet Özdemir claims that, after the elections, one of the first things the municipality did was to impose a fine on drivers and tradesmen who parked their cars carelessly in streets causing many people to complain. However, the drivers and tradesmen objected this application, arguing that the decision had not been discussed and settled by the people themselves as had been promised before the elections. As a result, a meeting was

[501] "1979'da Türkiye Ekonomisi 2: Enflasyon Tırmanırken Emekçi Gelirleri Sürekli Düşüyor," *Demokrat*, 24 January 1980.

[502] "Fatsa'da Zamlar Protesto Edildi," *Demokrat,* 6 February 1980; "Fatsa'da Pahalılık ve Baskıları Protesto Mitingi Yapıldı," *Demokrat,* 2 April 1980.

arranged on 18 December 1979, and the municipality accepted its fault. In the meeting, it was decided a new garage would be built, and parking areas were determined. Moreover, this meeting initiated a series of other meetings thanks to which the municipality established close relations with petty tradesmen.[503] Similarly, as Aydın Akyazı argues, when the revolutionaries wanted them to close their shops on Monday for the whole day in order to protest the Kızıldere events on their anniversary, the tradesmen opposed the idea as it was the market day of Fatsa, on which they relied for survival. In the end, they agreed to close the shops for an hour.[504]

During the municipality period, struggles against the exploitation in the hazelnut continued, too. However, in this period meetings were not in the district center, but rather in other residential areas of the town. One of them was in Çatak (Çatalpınar), one in Ilıca and one in Yalıköy.[505] These meetings showed that by 1980, hazelnut producers had reached a significant level of class consciousness and a strong determination for further struggles through their own experiences and previous resistances. For instance in the Çatak meeting a producer said to the reporter of *Demokrat* that, "There is nothing left but our own strong arms to protect us. Let's unite, organize and get our rigths from usurers, merchants and

[503] Özdemir, pp.73-5.

[504] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

[505] "Gölköy ve Çatak'ta 'Fındıkta Sömürüye Son' Mitingleri Yapıldı,"*Demokrat,* 8 July 1980; "Yalıköy'de 1500 üretici: Fındıktaki Sömürüye Hayır," *Demokrat*, 10 July 1980; "Fatsa'nın Gürgentepe ve Ilıca Bucaklarında 'Fındıkta Sömürüye Son' Mitingleri Yapıldı," *Demokrat*, 12 July 1980; Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.148-9. Actually Gürgentepe was not tied to Fatsa but to Gölköy. In the newspapers, I could not find any information about the Aslancami meeting, but it is mentioned by Uyan. According to Uyan beginning from 1978 until Target Operarion on 11 July 1980, there had been eight "End to the Exploitation in the Hazelnut" meetings in Fatsa. Ibid.

exploiters."[506] Similarly in the Yalıköy meeting another producer named Ferhat Şirin said:

> They said "You're poor" and silenced us. They said "It's a sin to covet the property of the rich" and deceived us. … We no longer intend to guard this homeland hungry and poor, we are not going to collect alms in these lands. We are going to carry on our struggle till the end together and united, shoulder to shoulder, side by side, as mothers and fathers, and sisters and brothers.[507]

Meanwhile, during the municipality period, in the town, anti-fascist struggles were carried out via protests or celebrations on the anniversaries of some significant days. For instance in December 1979, on the first anniversary, the Kahramanmaraş incidents, during which hundreds of Alevis were murdered by fascists, were protested in Fatsa. During the protests, 5,000 people organized a meeting, tradesmen closed their shops, students did not take part in lectures, workers and civil servants did not go to work, and the Ordu-Samsun highway was blocked for two hours.[508] Later, on the anniversary of the Kızıldere events, various demonstrations were organized in the town including students' boycotting school for a day.[509] On top of these, the celebrations of the May 1 Workers' Day, in which 6,000 people participated, turned into an anti-fascist demonstration.[510]

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[506] "*Bizi koruyacak kendi güçlü kollarımızdan başka bir şey kalmamıştır. Gelin birleşelim, örgütlenelim, faizcilerden, tüccarlardan, sömürücülerden hakkımızı alalım.*" "Gölköy ve Çatak'ta 'Fındıkta Sömürüye Son' Mitingleri Yapıldı," *Demokrat,* 8 July 1980.

[507] "'*Siz fakirsiniz*' *dediler, susturdular bizi.* '*Günahtır zenginin malına göz dikmek*' *dediler, aldattılar bizi. … Artık bu vatanı aç ve yoksul beklemeye niyetimiz yok, bu topraklarda sadaka toplamayacağız. Bizler bir ve beraber olarak, omuz omuza, yan yana, ana baba, bacı kardeş mücadelemizi sonuna kadar sürdüreceğiz.*" "Yalıköy'de 1500 üretici: Fındıktaki Sömürüye Hayır," *Demokrat*, 10 July 1980.

[508] "5000 Kişinin Katıldığı Miting ve Yürüyüşle Maraş Katliamı ve Faşizm Lanetlendi," *Fatsa Güneş,* 28 December 1979 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.153-5; "Maraş'ı Unutmadık, Unutmayacağız, Unutturmayacağız," *Devrimci Yol*, no.34 (January 1980), p.5.

[509] *Fatsa Güneş*, 4 April 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.156.

[510] "Fatsa'da 1 Mayıs," *Demokrat,* 13 May 1980.

Municipal Practices: Rebuilding the Urban Space

The practices of the municipality were not restricted to the above struggles. It also took actions regarding municipal services and the urban space. Fikri Sönmez explained the municipal practices performed until then in his speech at the opening of the Municipality Assembly in June. Accordingly, other than the "End to Mud Campaign" the municipality had had realized many urban works. One of them was the opening, building, and enlargement of numerous roads and main streets in the town. For this, the municipality had to demolish some buildings belonging to local notables which were illegal according to the building scheme (*imar planı*) of the town. These included Muharrem Çebi's restaurant, Erdem Paycı's bakery, and Erişler's store.[511] On the example of the demolition of Çebi's restaurant, Nurettin Demirbaş argues that during Sönmez's mayoralty, common interests were cared for instead of private interests:

> The roads Fikri Sönmez opened were roads which couldn't be opened although the expropriation compensation had been paid fifty years ago. There, at the corner, Çebiler had a restaurant on the road to Mağazalarbaşı where the current building of the MHP is. [Fikri Sönmez] said to the guy "You have a month's time, remove it. You have already received the expropriation compensation." The guy was an old corner boy, he got stubborn. "Fifteen days," [Fikri Sönmez] said, "if you say one more word, I will call the bulldozer immediately." Look, before Fikri Sönmez, you would enter this city you see now from the beginning of Sülükgölü and get out from Su square. There weren't any connections. All these roads belong to Fikri Sönmez. … Look, there, a building goes into the road. The former mayor… They bought the land from a poor citizen, then made changes in the building scheme, and gave it improperly to one of their business partners. The guy built a ten-flat building there. … It was a children's playground. Now there is a ten-flats building there. Children's playground something everone can benefit from, it is an area of common usage. Could you have done this during the Fikri Sönmez period? Absolutely impossible.[512]

[511] "Belediye Başkanının Meclis Açılış Konuşması," *Fatsa Güneş*, 6 June 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.158-60.

It is clear here that Nurettin Demirbaş points out the difference between the use and exchange value of urban space, which Şükrü Aslan stresses as a distinguishing character of diverse urban politics. Aslan maintains that the city is an arena of conflicts, contradictions and struggles between different social segments and interest groups, and that urban planning is a significant device determining these struggles. Following Henry Lefebvre, David Harvey, John Turner, Manuel Castells and Anthony Giddens, Aslan argues that urban space and social processes are integrated, therefore the reproduction of urban space is related to the reproduction of capitalist social relations. Against the capitalist approach to urban space based on its exchange value, Aslan proposes focusing on its use value grounded upon public interests. Moreover, he regards urban social struggles and local governments as a possible means for solving urban social contradictions in favor of the urban poor and broad social segments. In this context, he considers the Fatsa experience to be an attempt to transform capitalist social relations through alternative urban politics carried out by a local government led by socialists.[513] However, as noted in the first chapter, this view does not explain the Fatsa experience sufficiently since what was in question in Fatsa was a wider social movement grounded upon both urban and rural social groups, which acquired the local government after prolonged struggles.

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[512] "*Fikri Sönmez'in açtığı yollar elli senedir istimlakı ödenip de açılamayan yollardır. …. Şurda köşede, şimdiki MHP binasının olduğu Mağazalarbaşı'na giden yol var, orda Çebilerin lokantası var. Adama diyor ki 'Sana bir ay müsaade, bunu kaldır. İstimlağını almışsın.' Adam eski külhanbeyi, dikleniyor. 'On beş gün,' diyor, 'bir kelime daha söylersen hemen dozeri çağırırım.' Bakın, şimdi burada şu gördüğün şehir, Fikri Sönmez'e kadar, Sülükgölü'nün başından giriyordun, Su Meydanı'ndan çıkıyordun. Bağlantılar yoktu. Bu yolların hepsi Fikri Sönmez'e aittir. … Bakın, şurda bir bina yola geliyor. Eski belediye başkanı.. Bunlar fakir vatandaşın elinden arsayı alıyorlar, ondan sonra imarda tadilat yapıyorlar, gidiyorlar kendi iş ortaklarından birine peşkeş çekiyorlar. Adam da oraya on katlı bina dikiyor. … Orası çocuk parkıydı. Şimdi orda on katlı bina var. Çocuk parkı toplumun tamamının yararlanacağı bir yerdir, ortak kullanım alanıdır. Bunu bir Fikri Sönmez zamanında yapabilir miydin? Hiç mümkün değil*." Nurettin Demirbaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[513] Aslan, pp.11-2, 25-7, 30, 36-44, 50-61, 73-5. For a master thesis focusing on Fatsa from this perspective see Hade Türkmen, *Radicalisation of Politics at the Local Level: The Case of Fatsa During the Late 1970s* (M.A. Thesis, Middle East Technical University, The Department of Urban Policy Planning and Local Governments, 2007).

Other municipal works performed during the period in question included building and repairing sewer systems, bringing water and electricity networks to Hastanebaşı, Akıl Tepesi, Çullu and Sakarya neighbourhoods, draining the swamp in Kurtuluş neighbourhood, ameliorating the stream in Sakarya neighbourhood, cancelling the flour distributorship belonging to private persons and providing people with cheap bread, bringing an end to the power of the mafia over garages and terminals and lowering the costs of transportation, bringing new buses for transportation, constructing new shops and a new market place, increasing the number of municipality vehicles, and increasing the income of the municipality as a result of all these practices.[514]

In his speech at the opening of the Municipality Assembly in June, Sönmez also talked about the plans of the municipality; however he did not have time to realize these plans since a military operation was conducted in the town on 11 July 1980 in order to end this "threatening" process. The response of the ruling classes to the developments in Fatsa, and Target Operation will be analyzed in the next chapter.

[514] "Belediye Başkanının Meclis Açılış Konuşması," *Fatsa Güneş*, 6 June 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.158-60; "Belediye Çalışmaları," *Fatsa Güneş,* 30 May 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.144-5; Gülten Akın, "Fatsa Olgusu Fatsa Belediyesinin Çalışmaları," *Demokrat,* 9 May 1980; Can Yücel, "Ekmekbol," *Demokrat,* 26 April 1980; Ahmet Özdemir, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.145-7; Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.142-4.

CHAPTER V

THE RESPONSE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

No doubt, neither the national government nor the local notabes just stood as onlookers to the above-mentioned developments in Fatsa. As Uyan states, shortly after Fikri Sönmez's and the revolutionaries' success in the local elections, the newly founded Süleyman Demirel government replaced Cafer Eroğlu with Hikmet Gülsen as the new governor of Ordu. As soon as he sat in his seat, governor Gülsen successively performed two minor operations in Fatsa, first on 24 January 1980, and second on 8 March 1980. In both operations the municipality was raided by a large team of security forces, it was searched utterly by force, and the workers were insulted and even slapped.[515] Moreover, as Sönmez told *Demokrat* newspaper, during this period, an unofficial embargo was applied on Fatsa because of which the people of Fatsa could not get enough of some basic consumption materials such as fuel oil, oil, coal, and cigarettes. According to Sönmez, this was a way of punishing the people of Fatsa for not submitting to the robbery and exploitation of the dominant classes, and chosing their own revolutionary candidate as the mayor.[516]

[515] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.171-4.

[516] "Belediye Başkanı Fikri Sönmez: 'Fatsa Belediyesi ve Halk Siyasi Baskı Altında,'" *Demokrat,* 1 March 1980.

Governor Reşat Akkaya and the Terrorizing of Ordu

If the pressures on Fatsa were confined to these, it would not have been too difficult to cope with; however, these were just the beginning. On 20 April, the Demirel government unseated Hikmet Gülsen, and appointed Reşat Akkaya instead.[517] Not only is this interesting because a government removed from office a governor whom it had appointed a few months earlier, but also because of the shining(!) record of the newcomer Reşat Akkaya. Before becoming the governor of Ordu, Akkaya, a Crimean immigrant, had been removed from office first in Mersin and then in Eskişehir as Police Chief (*Emniyet Müdürü*). Later, when the Demirel government came to power, he was appointed as the Police Chief of Ankara, but had been unable to hold this seat for a long time, too, since even the Ankara Martial Commandership (*Sıkıyönetim Komutanlığı*) could not stand his extremely biased behaviour. During his service in Ankara, Akkaya had fired those police officers and dedectives who had caught MHP supporter suspects of the Balgat and Mamak massacres.[518] Indeed, Akkaya was a firm MHP supporter. Later, he was accussed, in the indictment of the Ankara MHP Trial, of requesting new cadres, devices, and guns from Alpaslan Türkeş, the chief of the MHP, after becoming the governor of Ordu.[519]

In his first commentary as governor, Akkaya claimed that he would do his best to end the anarchy and terror in Ordu, and show the strength of the state as soon as

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[517] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.176.

[518] For the past record of Reşat Akkaya see "Vali Akkaya'nın Atanmasından Sonra Ordu'da 41 Cinayet İşlendi," *Cumhuriyet,* 21 July 1980; "Ordu Valisi Akkaya'nın Sicili," *Demokrat,* 15 July 1980; Hüseyin Özkan, "Çamaş-Fatsa Kavşağı 11," *Demokrat,* 26 July 1980.

[519] Quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.177-8.

he had formed his own administration cadre.[520] Indeed, soon Governor Akkaya began to form his team in Ordu by assigning known MHP supporters to the most significant seats. For instance, Celal Şahin, one of the founders of the Hearths of Ideal in Ordu, was appointed as Director of National Education (*Milli Eğitim Müdürü*), and Zeynel Abidin Aksoy who was accused of taking part in the killing of a citizen in Amasya, was appointed as Police Chief.[521]

However, instead of declining, the number of clashes and killings in Ordu increased dramatically after Governor Akkaya's arrival. As argued in *Cumhuriyet* on 21 July 1980, during Akkaya's governorship 41 murders were committed in Ordu in three months while this number had been 16 in five months while the previous governor Gülsen was in charge.[522] According to Pertav Aksakal, during Akkaya's governorship, murders per year rose more than 25 times (See Table 10).[523]

[520] "'Devletin Gücü Ordu'da Gösterilecektir,'" *Fatsa Güneş,* 2 May 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.176.

[521] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.145.

[522] "Vali Akkaya'nın Atanmasından Sonra Ordu'da 41 Cinayet İşlendi," *Cumhuriyet,* 21 July 1980.

[523] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.150-1. Mahmut Memduh Uyan shows that most of the murders during Akkaya's governorship occured in June and August 1980 (A total of 73 killings). Mahmut Memduh Uyan, "Direniş Komiteleri ve Fatsa," *Dünün ve Bugünün Defterleri Türkiye Sorunları Dizisi 7,* no.3 (June 1989), p.120.

Table 10. Killings in the Districts of Ordu Before and After Reşat Akkaya.

	Number of Killings Between 1977 and 20 April 1980	Number of Killings During Akkaya's Governorship (5 Months)
Gölköy	-	8
Gürgentepe	-	2
Aybastı	5	42
Ünye	9	10
Fatsa	20	68
Total	34	130

Source: Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.150.

As far as one can follow from the newspapers of the period, there was a common agreement among many Ordu deputies, politicians and mayors that it was Reşat Akkaya who was chiefly responsible from the rapidly increasing clashes and disturbances in the city.[524] As a response to these developments, at the beginning of June, the mayors of Ordu, Perşembe, Fatsa, Akkuş, Gürgentepe, Yolköy, Bolaman, Ilıca, Sarıyakup, Yeşilce and Işıktepe gathered together in a meeting in Gürgentepe, and decided to act jointly against fascism.[525] As Sönmez stated in his court defence,

[524] For instance the CHP group consisting of senator Orhan Vural, and deputies Memduh Ekşi, Ertuğrul Günay and Temel Ateş, which made investigations in Fatsa after Target Operation, stressed that it was Akkaya who brought about classhes between brothers in Ordu. "'Ordu'ya Kardeş Kavgasını Vali Getirdi,'" *Cumhuriyet,* 15 July 1980. Parallelly, Temel Ateş argued that before the coming of Akkaya, the enemy of laborers, Ordu was one of the most peaceful places in Turkey. Ateş also accused Akkaya of torture, and giving guns to the fascists. Temel Ateş, "Ordu İli Gerçeği ve Fatsa Operasyonu 1,2,3," *Demokrat*, 24, 25, 26 July 1980. Similarly, speaking on behalf of the CHP group, Ertuğrul Günay claimed that Akkaya was not a partner of the *eşkıya*, but he was an *eşkıya* himself (Here *eşkıya* is used pejoratively meaning lawless). "Fatsa'ya Dışarıdan Getirilen Faşistler MHP Binasına Yerleştiriliyor," *Demokrat,* 24 july 1980. In addition to these Kazım Türkmen, the mayor of Ordu claimed that it was impossible to prevent the incidents unless Akkaya left Ordu. "'Reşat Akkaya Burada Kaldıkça Olaylar Önlenemez,'" *Demokrat*, 27 August 1980. On the other hand, Orhan Yılmaz, the mayor of Giresun and the president of the Union of Black Sea Municipalities (*Karadeniz Belediyeler Birliği*), went further to argue that Akkaya not only had to be removed from the governorship, but also he had to be taken out of the society. Orhan Yılmaz, interview by Erbil Tuşalp, in Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 1," *Cumhuriyet,* 15 August 1980. Likewise, the chairmen of the local branches of the CHP and MSP in Gölköy maintained that the best operation to do in Ordu was to unseat Akkaya. "Ordu'da Yapılacak En İyi Operasyon Vali'nin Görevden Alınmasıdır," *Demokrat*, 10 September 1980.

in Ordu 27 of 36 village, town, district and city municipalities were from the CHP, and these were the first targets of Governor Akkaya. Actually, Akkaya was planning both to terrorize all progressive and democrat municipalities in Ordu, and to encircle Fatsa, the center of social opposition in the city, from rural areas and the surrounding municipalities.[526] One of Akkaya's initial victims was the Gürgentepe municipality. At the end of June, at midnight, security forces led by the governor himself raided and damaged the municipality building, and they took the mayor Ekrem Aydın into custody.[527]

Shortly after this raid, serious incidents occured in Çamaş, a *bucak* 15 km far from Fatsa center. As Hüseyin Özkan states, beginning from Akkaya's arrival in Ordu, some foreign *ülkücü* militants were settled in Çamaş, especially in Hasancık village, and they began to attack known revolutionaries, and harrass the people. In one such event on 18 June, Cumali Eliaçık, a Dev-Yol cadre from Fatsa who was in charge of Gürgentepe, was killed. Meanwhile, Osman Uygun, the mayor of Aşağı Çamaş, was beaten and taken into custody, and Gürez Şimşek, the mayor of Yukarı Çamaş was barred from entering Çamaş. On 2 July, approximately 5,000 people began marching from Aşağı Çamaş towards Yukarı Çamaş to protest these developments. The *ülkücü* militants opened fire on the crowd, and Şehittin Tırıç, a well-respected and beloved person who was also the Dev-Yol member in charge of

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[525] "Ordu'da Yerel Yönetim Başkanları ve Halk Faşizme Karşı Birlik Toplantısı Yaptı," *Demokrat,* 6 June 1980.

[526] Quoted in Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim,* p.79. Also see Temel Ateş, "Ordu İli Gerçeği ve Fatsa Operasyonu 3," *Demokrat*, 26 July 1980; Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007; Aydın Akyazı, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.* Mehmet Yıldız, a social democrat in Fatsa, argues that when they went to Ünye, Samsun or another city outside their town, the people of Fatsa were being attacked and beaten regardless of whom they were. Mehmet Yıldız, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 09 April 2007.

[527] "Gözaltına Alınıp Salıverilen Gürgentepe Belediye Başkanı: 'Vali Bölücülük Yapıyor,'" *Cumhuriyet,* 23 June 1980.

Çamaş, was killed.[528] Shortly after that, clashes began between the security forces and the people protesting Tırıç's death, as a result of which two revolutionaries and military petty officer (*astsubay*) Nurettin Kaymaz were killed.[529]

These developments indicated a change in the strategy of discouraging and supressing the social opposition. Under martial law conditions, the main axis of anti-fascist struggles, increasingly, turned out to be not against civil fascists, but against the official security forces of the state; and massive clashes began to appear more in places like Artvin, Fatsa, İzmir, Antakya, Tarsus, Mersin and Adana where civil fascists had been expurgated to a considerable extent.[530]

"Leave Çorum, Look at Fatsa:" Target Operation

While these events were happening in Ordu, backed by some police officers organized in the Union of Police (*Polis Birliği - Pol-Bir*), fascists provoked people with the claim that communists attacked mosques, and they initiated a massacre attempt in Çorum which was responded to with strong resistance by the people. Yet, the clashes resulted in tens of deaths and more than a hundred wounded. Initially, the government presented the incidents as an inter-secterian conflict between Alevis and Sunnis, and Prime Minister Demirel claimed that it was the CHP which had caused the bloody events in Çorum. In addition, Internal Affairs Minister Mustafa Gülcügil argued that the rightists in Çorum were supporting the state against

[528] Hüseyin Özkan, "Çamaş-Fatsa Kavşağı 13,14,15," *Demokrat,* 28,29,30 July 1980.

[529] "Fatsa'da Çıkan Olaylarda Biri Astsubay Dört Kişi Öldürüldü," *Demokrat,* 3 July 1980; "Fatsa'da Çıkan Çatışmada Bir Astsubayla Üç Terörist Öldü," *Cumhuriyet,* 3 July 1980; "Fatsa'da Solcu, Çorum'da Sağcı Teröristlerin Çıkardığı Olaylarda 1'i Astsubay 8 Kişi Öldü," *Milliyet*, 3 July 1980. At the same time, two *PTT* officials and two drivers were killed by fascists in Aybastı. "Aybastı'da Silahlı 40 Faşist 2 PTT Memuruyla 2 Şöförü Öldürdü," *Cumhuriyet,* 30 June 1980.

[530] *THKP-C ve Devrimci Yol'dan*, pp. 65-6.

leftists.[531] At the same time, Demirel also tried to distract attention away from Çorum by responding to the journalists asking questions about the Çorum events "Leave Çorum, look at Fatsa."[532]

Despite the recent disturbances, when people looked at Fatsa they saw rather a relatively safe and peaceful place. By making a comparison with today's Fatsa, Nurten Demirbaş claims that Fatsa was a much safer place in all aspects in those days:

> There was no vagrancy. There wasn't such a fear that "Our girls won't be able to go out, our women can't walk in streets." For instance, I remember going out alone in Fatsa at one or two o'clock at night without any fear. But, ask me: "Sister, can you go out alone at twelve o'clock at night in Fatsa?," I can't. Our village is fifteen minutes from the center, sometimes I used to go and come back alone. Now, never. On top of this, there wasn't electricity, mobile phones, and road in those times. People had to go through gardens. Now, we have electricity, telephone, and road, but I can't go, we don't have security.[533]

In addition to this, especially the town center was almost completely free from massive clashes between rival political groups and/or different ethno-religious

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[531] For the Çorum events and the comments of Demirel and Gülcügil see "Faşistler Çorum'u Yine Kana Buladı," *Cumhuriyet,* 3 July 1980; "Çorum, Ordu'da Olaylar Önlenemiyor," *Cumhuriyet,* 4 July 1980; "Çorum Kanlı Olaylara Sahne Oldu," *Cumhuriyet,* 5 July 1980; "Çorum'da Göç Sürerken Ölü Sayısı Her An Artıyor," *Cumhuriyet,* 6 July 1980; "Çorum'da Ölü Sayısı ve Kayıp İhbarları Artıyor," *Cumhuriyet,* 7 July 1980; "Çorum'da Bir Çok İşyeri Açılamadı," *Cumhuriyet,* 8 July 1980; "Demirel Çorum Olayları Konusunda da Yine Sadece CHP'yi Suçladı," *Cumhuriyet,* 11 July 1980; "İçişleri Bakanı Gülcügil: 'Çorum'da Devleti Yıkmak İsteyen Solun Karşısına Devlete Destek Fikrinden Hareket Eden Sağ Çıktı,'" *Cumhuriyet,* 14 July 1980; "Faşistler Çorum'u Yakıp Yıkmaya Başladı Halk Direniyor," *Demokrat*, 5 July 1980; "Çorum Ayakta Faşistler Alevi-Sünni Bütün Halka Düşman," *Demokrat,* 6 July 1980; "Faşistlerin Katliam Girişimi Durduruldu Çorum'da Mezhep Çatışması Yok," *Demokrat,* 7 July 1980.

[532] "*Siz Çorum'u bırakın, Fatsa'ya bakın.*" "Demirel Ateşle Oynuyor," *Demokrat,* 10 July 1980.

[533] "*Serserilik yoktu. 'Kızlarımız sokağa çıkamayacak, kadınlarımız sokakta gezemez' korkusu yoktu. Mesela ben şu Fatsa'da gece 1'de 2'de hiçbir korku taşımadan tek başıma sokağa çıktığımı bilirim. Ama de ki 'Abla bugün 12'de gece sokağa tek çıkabilir misin?,' çıkamam. On beş dakikadır bizim köyümüz merkeze, tek başıma gidip geldiğim olmuştur. Şimdi asla. Ki o gün elektrik yoktu, cep telefonu yoktu, yol yoktu. Bağ, bahçe aralarıydı. Bugün elektrik var, telefon var, yol var ama gidemem, güvenliğimiz yok.*" Nurten Demirbaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007. Similar evaluations were made also by some intellectuals, journalists and politicians who had visited Fatsa before the operation. For instance see Can Yücel, "Kendini Kurtarmış Bir Yer 2," *Demokrat,* 5 May 1980; Temel Ateş, "Ordu İli Gerçeği ve Fatsa Operasyonu 3," *Demokrat*, 26 July 1980; Yazgülü Aldoğan, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.*

communities as well as from political killings, assasinations and chaos that had been a part of life in many areas of the country including big cities. For this reason, even the *New York Times* argued just after Target Operation that, "Until recently Fatsa had not been touched by the violence between left and right that has killed 9 to 12 people daily across the country."[534]

Verifying this assertion, as a reply to Demirel and some provocative news, the chairmen of the Fatsa branches of the CHP, AP and MSP declared, on 10 July, that there wasn't any serious trouble in Fatsa requiring an operation. For instance, the chairman of the AP, Lütfü Topaloğlu said: "We live in peace together with our brothers from Fatsa. When we go to Ünye and Ordu, we have problems. We are beaten and treated badly. The Çamaş incidents made us very sad, and affected our town. In our district, there is not blood, fire, or gunpowder." In line with these words, Feridun Karamolla, the chairmen of the CHP in Fatsa, said: "There isn't a communist occupation in Fatsa, there are people and the people's government. … We are peaceful. Ask the people, they are happy too." Similarly, the chairman of the MSP, Cevat Kibar said: "There isn't fire and gunpowder in Fatsa, why do they want to create trouble in such a peaceful place? In this, there is the interest calculations of some people."[535]

Since then, all these arguments have been presented by many Dev-Yol cadres as proof of the realization of "living together in peace" ideal in Fatsa unlike many

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[534] "Turkish Battalion Seizes a Town After Reports It is Leftist Center," *New York Times*, 12 July 1980.

[535] "*Huzur içinde Fatsalı kardeşlerimizle yaşıyoruz. Ünye ve Ordu'ya gittiğimizde sıkıntılarımız oluyor. Dövülüyoruz, horlanıyoruz. Çamaş olayları bizleri çok üzdü, ilçemizi de etkiledi. Bizim ilçemizde kan yok, ateş yok, barut yok.*" "*Fatsa'da komünist işgal yoktur. Halk vardır. Halkın yönetimi vardır. … Biz huzurluyuz. Halka sorun. Halk da memnun.*" "*Fatsa'da ateş ile barut yok. Böylesine huzurlı bir yerde olay çıkarmayı istemek niye? Bunda bazı kişilerin çıkar hesapları var.*" "CHP, AP, MSP Fatsa İlçe Başkanları: 'Her Yerde Kan Var, Biz Burada Huzur İçindeyiz,'" *Milliyet,* 11 July 1980. Also see "Demirel Fatsa'ya Davet Edildi. AP, CHP ve MSP İlçe Başkanları 'Huzur İçindeyiz' Dediler," *Demokrat,* 11 July 1980; "Fatsa'da Olay Yok ama Halk Tedirgin," *Cumhuriyet*, 11 July 1980.

other parts of the country.[536] According to the examples, this really seems to have been true to some extent. However, the stance towards other leftist factions gives a clue about the limits of this tendency. Many Dev-Yol cadres I have talked to told me that they did not prevent other factions from existing or pursuing programs in Fatsa unless they engaged in harmful activities, but these organizations were quite weak since the people of Fatsa did not show much interest in them.[537] On the other hand, various leftists from other factions with whom i have talked claimed that although the Dev-Yol let them stay in Fatsa personally, it did not let them organize or carry out collective political practices. Especially, it was claimed that the organization in the town of the İGD was prevented by force. In other words, as the real rivals of the Dev-Yol, other leftist factions were deprived of those political rights which the CHP, AP and MSP members enjoyed to a significant degree. In fact, as Hakan Tanıttıran argues, in those times each faction had its own sphere of organization, and others were not allowed to intervene in this area.[538] This was valid in Fatsa, too. For instance, Sezai Sarıoğlu who was from the Liberation faction claims that when he went to the People's Culture Festival in Fatsa, some armed men forced him to get into a car, and then took him back to the Fatsa-Ünye border.[539] As Leyla Gedik narrates, an interesting revelation of the monolithic attitude of the Dev-Yol in this matter happened when Can Yücel raised his right hand instead of the left one during an oath ceremony in the People's Culture Festival:

> I remember my elder sisters speaking about Can Yücel. I had seen that contrary to all others he had raised his right hand while swearing in,

[536] For instance see Uyan, "Direniş Komiteleri…," p.118.

[537] For instance Mehmet Gümüş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 12 March 2007; Pertev Aksakal, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking İstanbul, 16 March 2007; Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[538] Hakan Tanıttıran, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 14 December 2006.

[539] Sezai Saroğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 12 December 2006.

> and had wondered why he did so. Everybody was shocked as he had raised his right hand. Because, there was one thing in Fatsa. It was what was beautiful and right. Really people were thinking like that. There was one thing good; the left hand was to be raised. And it was the Dev-Yol.[540]

When Demirel asked everybody to look at Fatsa instead of Çorum, along with the right-wing press, some big newspapers had already began publishing provocative and sensational news about Fatsa. On 9 July, *Hürriyet* claimed in the headline that after the kidnapping of two military petty officers by the Dev-Yol members, Target Operation had been put into practice in Fatsa, and the town had been surrounded by security forces.[541] Moreover, in the newspaper, Fatsa was portrayed as a liberated zone where there were no police or gendarmerie, but barricades and controls at the entrances and exits. Also it was argued that Fikri Sönmez challenged the governor and the government claiming that it was impossible to enter Fatsa by killing 50-60 people.[542] Similarly, on 10 July, *Milliyet* presented Fatsa as a town where 11 People's Committees consisting of Dev-Yol militants had acquired, by force, the responsibilities of the state including the

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[540] "*Ablalarımın Can Yücel'i konuştuklarını hatırlıyorum. Ant içilirken herkesten farklı olarak sağ elini havaya kaldırdığını görmüş, 'Neden böyle?' diye merak etmiştim. İnsanlar, 'neden sağ elini kaldırdı' diye şoke olmuşlardı. Çünkü Fatsa'da bir tane bir şey vardı. Güzel olan, doğru olan oydu. Hakikaten böyle düşünülüyordu. İyi olan bir şey vardı, sol el havaya kalkardı. Ve o da Devrimci Yol'du.*" Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, p.141.

[541] "Fatsa'da 'Nokta Operasyonu,'" *Hürriyet*, 9 July 1980. It seems that *Hürriyet* received, from a source within the state, an information about the oncoming military operation in Fatsa even with its name, but somehow failed at the timing. It's also possible that *Hürriyet* distributed these news on purpose in order to draw attention to the district. When journalists rushed to Fatsa the next day, they saw that nothing had happened in Fatsa. While Sönmez disproved the words *Hürriyet* ascribed to him, the District Gendarmerie Commander (*İlçe Jandarma Komutanı*) disavowed the claims that two military petty officers were kidnapped. Because of these news, journalist Ülkü Arman had to apologize from Fikri Sönmez and the people of Fatsa on behalf of *Hürriyet*. *Demokrat*, 10 July 1980.

[542] "İşte Fatsa Barikatlar, Giriş-Çıkış Kontrolleri, Polissiz, Jandarmasız Bir İlçe," *Hürriyet*, 9 July 1980.

jurisdiction. According to the newspaper, the people of Fatsa were under great pressure, and they were even forbidden to leave the town when they wanted to.[543]

Finally, around 3:30 am on 11 July, Target Operation began, and on the first day more than 300 residents were taken into custody, including the mayor Sönmez and the chairmen of the Fatsa branches of the CHP, AP and MSP, who had declared, the day before, that Fatsa was a peaceful town.[544] Since, as a result of the provocative news, severe clashes were expected, the operation was realized by a huge force which included a mechanized infantry battalion, three gendarmerie commando squads, the City Legion Commandership reinforcement troops, police teams from varios cities, and three assault boats from the sea.[545] However, no resistance or clashes occured during the operation. As Ahmet Özdemir states, just before the operation, the revolutionaries retreated towards the rural parts of the town. However, risking his life Sönmez decided to stay in the district center in order not to overshadow the legitimacy of what he had done until then.[546]

Up to now, this decision not to resist the operation has much been debated among revolutionary circles. I don't want to get into this debate deeply since it does not have much significance for the intentions of this thesis, yet it would be appropriate to briefly mention the arguments of different sides. Some lower-ranked revolutionaries argue that the Dev-Yol leaders never had any will or preparation to fight although the organization had this ability, and they always stressed armed

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[543] "Sokaklarda Bir Tek Polis ve Güvenlik Görevlisi Yok ama Fatsa'da 11 Halk Komitesi Var," *Milliyet*, 10 July 1980.

[544] "Fatsa'da 300 Kişi Gözaltında," *Demokrat*, 12 July 1980; "Fatsa Operasyonu: 300 Kişi Gözaltında," *Cumhuriyet,* 12 July 1980; "Fatsa'da Büyük Arama," *Milliyet*, 12 July 1980; "Fatsa'da 'Nokta Operasyonu' Tamamlandı," *Hürriyet*, 12 July 1980; "Fatsa'ya Devlet Girdi," *Tercüman*, 12 July 1980; "Turkish Battalion Seizes a Town After Reports It is Leftist Center," *New York Times*, 12 July 1980.

[545] "Fatsa Operasyonu: 300 Kişi Gözaltında," *Cumhuriyet,* 12 July 1980.

[546] Ahmet Özdemir, interview by Mahmut Memduh Uyan, in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.206-9.

struggles as the ultimate method to achieve the revolution.[547] Higher-ranked cadres, on the other hand, contend that they did not have the capacity to carry out a long struggle against such a big force, and that the decision to resist would not only have been a suicide for the common people of Fatsa, but also it would have been utilized by the dominant classes as a means for undermining the legitimacy of and discrediting the Fatsa experience.[548] It is also understood that they did not expect such a strong and prolonged operation and thought that they would be able to re-gain the control after a while.[549] On the other hand, it's not true to maintain that no resistance was shown in Fatsa, because, though spontaneously and in a separate and disorganized manner, many small groups of revolutionaries carried on fighting with security forces even until the end of 1983.[550]

After the operation, both Süleyman Demirel and the governor declared that at last they had brought the state to Fatsa.[551] Looking at the practices during and after the operation, it's understood that the state they were talking about was the predecessor of the police state that was to come with the 12 September coup. Indeed, during and after the operation, state officials did not bother to obey any of the laws defined by the state itself. The most striking instance of this fact was the utilization by the state of some masked people in the operation. These people guided uniformed state officials in house-to-house searchs, and showed them those people

[547] For instance Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007; Mahmut Altıntaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Kocaeli, 20 March 2007.

[548] For instance, Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[549] See Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, p.155.

[550] Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007; Mahmut Altıntaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Kocaeli, 20 March 2007. In these clashes tens of revolutionaries were killed. For the list of all killed revolutionaries see Aksakal, *Fatsa Devrimci Yol*, pp.321-3.

[551] "Fatsa'ya Devlet Girdi," *Tercüman*, 12 July 1980.

suspected of having part in oppositional activities.[552] At first the governor said that it was an operation secret;[553] however, later it was realized that these were *ülkücü* militants previously sent away from Fatsa, some of whom were being sought by the police because of several crimes including murder.[554] When he was asked a question about these people, Demirel replied with the cynical style peculiar to him as if it was not his responsibility: "The guy has hidden his face, what would I say as the prime minister? He has behaved shamefully, then he took off the mask, apparently he was shameful"[555] On the other hand, the reply of Governor Akkaya to the same question was much more shameful than Demirel's. When the CHP commission claimed that the masked people in the operation had been *ülkücü*s, Akkaya said, "In order to receive information, we also utilize some women. We have them make love. Now, can you call them w..res?"[556] Akkaya's question was answered, before others, by Hasan Şakir Sancaktar, the mufti of Ankara, who argued that according to the religion it was allowable to pretend to be a prostitute, but not to make love.[557]

Unfortunately, these statements were not funny for the people of Fatsa. These masked militants were free to commit any crime in the town from, plundering

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[552] "Fatsa'da Büyük Arama," *Milliyet*, 12 July 1980.

[553] "Fatsa'da Olan Yine Fatsalı'ya Oldu," *Hürriyet*, 14 July 1980.

[554] "Fatsa Halkı: Demirel Huzurumuzu Bozdu," *Demokrat,* 13 July 1980; "Ordu Valisi Yargılanmalıdır," *Demokrat,* 15 July 1980; "Maskeli Demokrasi," *Demokrat,* 16 July 1980; "Ordu Valisi Yasaları Çiğnemeye Devam Ediyor," *Demokrat,* 20 July 1980; "'Fatsa'daki Maskeliler Ülkücü Militanlardı,'" *Cumhuriyet*, 13 July 1980; "Fatsalıları Gelişigüzel Toplayıp Gerekçesiz Gözaltına Aldılar," *Cumhuriyet,* 14 July 1980; "Fatsa'daki Operasyonda Muhbirlik Yapan Maskeli Ülkücülerden 4'ü Tutuklandı," *Cumhuriyet*, 16 July 1980; "Fatsa'da Maskeli 4 Muhbir Daha Önce Haklarında Gıyabi Tutuklama Kararı Bulunduğu ve Çeşitli Olaylara Karıştıkları Gerekçesiyle Tutuklandı," *Milliyet,* 17 July 1980.

[555] "*Adam yüzünü kapatmış, ben hükümetin başbakanı olarak ne diyeyim? Ayıp etmiş, sonra açmış, meğer ayıplıymış.*" "Demirel Maskeliler İçin 'Ne Diyeyim, Ayıp Etmişler' Dedi," *Cumhuriyet*, 18 July 1980.

[556] "*Biz, bilgi almak için bazı kadınlardan da yararlanıyoruz. Onlara aşk yaptırıyoruz. Şimdi de bunlara o…pu diyebilir misiniz*?" [The original text was not censored]. "CHP'li Vural: 'Ordu Valisi Bilgi Almak İçin Kadınlara Aşk Yaptırdığını Söyledi,'" *Cumhuriyet*, 17 July 1980.

[557] "Ankara Müftüsü: 'Devlete Yardım İçin Aşk Yapmak Caiz Değildir,'" *Cumhuriyet*, 17 July 1980.

houses and businesses to exacting money from people and even raping women.[558] Indeed, they were under the protection of the state officials. For instance, when some policemen who were sent to Fatsa from Erzincan attempted to arrest three of them, they were seriously threatened by Kemal Şahin, the Police Chief of Fatsa. As a result of such pressures, twelve of these policemen left the town before their terms of office ended on the pretext that their lives were in danger. Eight officers among them made a formal denunciation about the police chiefs of Fatsa and Ordu. However, not the police chiefs but they were suspended from their occupation.[559] Thanks to the protection of the state officials, the *ülkücü* militants were also able to set up the bureau of *Hergün* newspaper, and the Path of Ideal Association (*Ülkü Yolu Derneği - ÜYD*) in Fatsa, which had not existed before the operation.[560]

The illegal practices of the state in the operation were not restricted to the utilization of the masked *ülkücü* militants. During the operation more or less all houses were searched, and almost every male between 15 and 35 years of age was taken into custody without any reason or proof.[561] Also as Aydın Akyazı and Nurten

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[558] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007; Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007; İsmet Hosaflıoğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007; "Fatsa'da Haraç ve Soygun Devri Başladı," *Demokrat,* 23 August 1980; "Fatsa'da Gözaltındayken Tecavüze Uğrayan Genç Bir Kız Cinnet Geçirdi," *Demokrat*, 28 August 1980; "MHP'liler Fatsa'da Halkı Tehdit Eden Bildiri Dağıtıyor," *Demokrat,* 4 September 1980; Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 2," *Cumhuriyet,* 16 August 1980. The plundering of houses and businesses by the idealist militants supports Gürel's argument that fascism is not something peculiar to late-developer countries or to those societies which are divided along ethno-religious differences, but it is primarily a reaction by the disadvantageous to the unevennes generated by modern capitalism in the economic and cultural realm. Gürel, pp.1-12. Harun Çalışkan, an idealist of the period, states that the idealist movement in Fatsa was mainly composed of poor young people. Harun Çalışkan, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, Fatsa, 11 April 2007.

[559] For these events see "Ordu Emniyet Müdürü ile Fatsa Emniyet Amiri Hakkında 8 Polis Memuru Suç Duyurusu Yaptı," *Cumhuriyet*, 21 August 1980; "Ordu ve Fatsa Emniyet Amirleri Hakkında Suç Duyurusunda Bulunan 8 Polis Açığa Alındı," *Cumhuriyet*, 27 August 1980.

[560] "Hergün Gazetesi Basın Bürosu Açıldı," *Fatsa Güneş*, 1 August 1980 quoted in Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, p.246; Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 1," *Cumhuriyet*, 15 August 1980; "Fatsa'da Boş Bir Binaya ÜYD Tabelası Asıldı," *Demokrat*, 30 July 1980. The ÜYD was the name of the Hearths of Ideal after March 1980.

Demirbaş claim, most of those who were known or suspected to have supported the revolutionaries or participated in the People's Committees and such activities as hazelnut meetings were arrested regardless of their sex and ages. Accordingly, in a town with less than 10,000 adults, around 3,000 residents were taken into custody.[562] Moreover, Fatsa was turned into a big torture house. At the beginning of September, after an on-site inspection, a commision of the Contemporary Jurists' Association (*Çağdaş Hukukçular Derneği*) led by Nevzat Helvacı claimed that until then 1,500 people had been tortured in Fatsa. Among these people were municipality workers and the mayor Sönmez who was severely injured.[563] Furthermore, in the course of time, especially after 12 September, numerous police statitions were set up in the rural parts of Fatsa and Ordu, and villagers were tortured as well.[564]

To put it in other words, as Yaşar Durmuş maintains, the operation in Fatsa was not put into practice only to catch and arrest revolutionary cadres, but more importantly to punish and discourage the people.[565] That is to say, what the government and ruling classes were afraid of was not just the prominent and leading socialists, but, as Murat Belge argued in *Demokrat*, the massification of socialism itself:

> Fatsa turned out to be a factor, almost a catalst which clarified the principal class positions that emerged in the class struggle in Turkey. It

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[561] Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 1," *Cumhuriyet,* 15 August 1980.

[562] Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007; Nurten Demirbaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

[563] "Fatsa'da Gözaltına Alınan 13 Kişi Kayıp," *Demokrat,* 6 September 1980; "Fatsa Belediye Başkanı Sönmez'e İşkence Yapıldı," *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980; Hüseyin Özkan, "Kanlanan Fındık Kabukları," *Demokrat,* 14 July 1980; "Fatsa Belediye İşçileri İşkence'den Geçiriliyor," *Demokrat*, 31 July 1980.

[564] Mahmut Altıntaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Kocaeli, 20 March 2007; Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

[565] Yaşar Durmuş, interview by Kere Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 06 April 2007.

> was obvious that the AP government was goint to attack here. Despite the fact that AP supporters living in Fatsa said, "Leave us alone," no doubt, the AP, which represents the deep fear of the dominant classes in Turkey from everything about the people, and their awakening, could not have tolerated the existence of the Fatsa example. … All this parade was done against an instance of massification. The question which made some wear masks and some drop their masks was this: "What would happen to us, if socialism massifies?" For sure, the answer to this question will not be given only in Fatsa.[566]

Indeed, Fatsa was a very good example of the massification of socialism; however, there were many such places in Turkey for which the same could easily be argued. Thus, there needs to be some other complementary reasons for making one of the first operations in Fatsa. In this context, Mahmut Memduh Uyan contends that Fatsa was chosen in order to remove a possible alternative to the oncoming military coup as the only hope in the eyes of the broad masses.[567] Truly, to the end of the 1970s, a considerable number of people had begun to consider a military coup to be the sole method to put an end to the anarchy and the political and economic instability in the country. Fatsa presented a promising alternative to a coup, as a town where, to a significant degree, security was ensured, and economic exploitation was restricted. This point was stressed by İlhan Selçuk in *Cumhuriyet* in a perfectly sarcastic language:

> I suppose that the residents of İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Adana, all cities, those who complain about pressures, those who are fed up with the prices, those who are exhausted because of hell-like life, those who are always cheated in markets too would be interested in the Fatsa

[566] "*Fatsa, Türkiye'de sınıf mücadelesinde beliren başlıca sınıf tavırlarını daha da net bir biçimde açığa çıkaran … bir etmen, neredeyse bir katalizör oldu. AP Hükümeti'nin buraya saldıracağı belliydi. Fatsa'da oturan AP'lilerin* '*Bizi rahat bırakın*' *demelerine rağmen, Türkiye'de egemen sınıfların halkla, halkın uyanışıyla ilgili her şeye karşı derin korkusunu temsil eden AP, Fatsa örneğinin yaşamasına tahammül edemezdi elbette. … Bütün bu defile bir kitleselleşme örneğine karşı yapıldı. Kimilerine maske taktıran, kimilerine de maske düşürten olay buydu:* '*Sosyalizm kitleselleşirse, ne oluruz?*' *sorusu. Bu sorunun cevabı, şüphesiz ki yalnız Fatsa'da verilmeyecek.*" Murat Belge, "Fatsa," *Demokrat,* 6 August 1980.

[567] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.14-6.

> experiment. What do I know? Since Mr. Süleyman showed such a big reaction to Fatsa, perhaps the life in Fatsa was orderly and cheap.[568]

> As far as some newspapers have written Fatsa has joined the Soviet Union; according to some newspapers it has become a Paris Commune; according to some newspapers the Turkish army has saved Fatsa. … But I wonder something else: … For the sake of God, how much did the meat, milk, egg, vegetables and fruit cost in Fatsa? Or in Fatsa were the prices in the Soviet Union applied? Is not there a curious person to inquire this side of the issue?[569]

In short, the operation was made because the dominant classes did not want Fatsa to be an alternative model to the rest of Turkey. Moreover, this model was showing signs of spreading to other places. For instance, based on his on-site observations, Erbil Tuşalp argued that though with slight differences, the people of the Black Sea region were increasingly drifting away from the state, instead integrating with local governments. Tuşalp went on to argue that Gürgentepe, Gölköy and Çamaş municipalities did not have much difference from Fatsa in terms of the integration of the local government and the people. In addition, he stated that in Yalıköy, Çatalpınar, Ilıca, Sarıyakup and Perşembe, the municipalities were taking decisions with the participation of people, and in Akkuş, Alankent, Mesudiye, Yeşilce, Esenyurt and Yoğunoluk, people were becoming aware of the fact that the state was moving away from them. Similarly, in an interview he made with Orhan Yılmaz, the mayor of Giresun, the interviewee said that what they were

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[568] "*İstanbullular, Ankaralılar, İzmirliler, Adanalılar, bütün kentliler, baskılardan yakınanlar, fiyatlardan yaka silkenler, Cehennem hayatından iflahı kesilenler, çarşıda pazarda durmadan kazık yiyenler de öyle sanıyoruz ki Fatsa deneyine ilgiyle eğileceklerdir. Ne Bileyim? Süleyman Bey Fatsa'ya bunca tepki gösterdiğine göre belki de Fatsa'da yaşam düzenli ve ucuzdu.*" İlhan Selçuk, "Dişini Çektirenlerle Gözü Ağrıyanlar," *Cumhuriyet,* 14 July 1980.

[569] "*Bazı gazetelerin yazdığına bakılırsa Fatsa Sovyetler Birliği'ne katılmış; bazı gazetelere göre Paris Komünü olmuş; bazı gazetelere göre Türk Ordusu Fatsa'yı kurtarmış. … Ama benim merakım başka: … Allahaşkına, Fatsa'da et, süt, yumurta, sebze, meyva kaçaydı? Yoksa Fatsa'da da Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki fiyatlar mı uygulanıyordu? Bir meraklı yok mu işin bu yönünü kurcalayacak?*" İlhan Selçuk, "Adem'in Kaburgası," *Cumhuriyet*, 15 July 1980.

doing was not different from the Fatsa model.[570] With regard to this point, the allegation of Zeki Muslu, who was the CHP member rival of Sönmez in the 14 October 1979 local elections, is remarkable: "I'm as sure about my name as that if the local elections had been done in the year 1981, the independent candidates of the Dev-Yol would have won Çamaş, Çatalpınar, Bolaman, Yalıköy, Aybastı, Kumru and even Korgan. In other words, it [the Dev-Yol] would have secured the entire region."[571]

Besides this big picture, also local notables whose interests were hit by the activities of revolutionaries and the municipality played roles in the making of the operation. It was not a secret that some of these people were not pleased with the developments, and were looking forward to bringing back to Fatsa what they called as the state authority. In order to achieve this, some of them even lobbied the central government. For instance, Süleyman Çürüksu, a prominent AP member in Fatsa, told Hade Türkmen in an interview that he was one of the three people who had visited Ankara and asked Demirel for help to ensure the state control in their town.[572] Among the interests which were upset, those of Demas were emphasized the most in newspapers. As already mentioned, Demas was a joint stock company which operated in the fishing industry and marketing. However, from the beginning, corruption allegations had not left the company alone, and it had been an arena of prolonged struggles between small shareholders and big businessmen.[573] Uğur Mumcu claimed that these struggles, too, played a part in the operation:

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[570] Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 3," *Cumhuriyet*, 17 August 1980.

[571] "*81 yılında belediye seçimleri yapılmış olsaydı, bağımsız aday olarak Dev-Yol'un göstereceği adaylar Çamaş'ı, Çatalpınar'ı, Bolaman'ı, Yalıköy'ü, Aybastı'sını, Kumru'sunu hatta ve hatta Korgan'ı bile alacağından adım gibi eminim. Yani o bölgeyi tamamen silip süpürürdü.*" Zeki Muslu, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*.

[572] Süleyman Çürüksu, interview by Hade Türkmen, in Türkmen, p.134.

> Foreign Affairs Minister Hayrettin Erkmen had worked as the legal counsel of this company, and for a while he had been the chairman of the board of directors. Prime Minister Demirel's brother Hacı Ali Demirel has a debt of several million liras to this company. Fatsa municipality is one of the big shareholders of DEMAS. … As a result of the Fatsa Operation, this big and important shareholder of the company was eliminated, and the *ülkücü* militants brought to Fatsa surrounded DEMAS. … Soon, the company will make, under the trusteeship of a MHP-supporter lawyer, a general committee meeting in a district in İstanbul dominated by Idealist militants, and the administration of the company will be again ceded to those directors who will give DEMAS to the command of big businessmen, Hacı Ali Demirel being the first. … There are such things too behind the operation in Fatsa.[574]

Target Operation generated a widespread reaction in the public opinion. Many people, politicians, intellectuals, journalists, and the representatives of some important NGO's condemned and criticized the government, state officials, and security forces because of their roles and manners in the operation.[575] However,

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[573] For instance see "Demas'ın Yağmalanışı," *Demokrat,* 19 May 1980; "Hacı Ali Demirel Borcunu Ödemiyor," *Demokrat,* 20 May 1980; "Halka, Vurguna ve Politikaya Açık Şirket: Demas 1, 2, 3," *Hürriyet,* 31 May, 1, 2 June 1980.

[574] "*Dışileri Bakanı Hayrettin Erkmen bu şirketin hukuk danışmanlığını ve birara da yönetim kurulu başkanlığını yapmıştır. Başbakan Demirel'in kardeşi Hacı Ali Demirel'in bu şirkete milyonlarca lira tutan borcu vardır. Fatsa Belediyesi, DEMAS'ın büyük pay sahiplerinden biridir. … Fatsa Operasyonu sonucunda, şirketin bu büyük ve önemli ortağı saf dışı bırakılmış, Fatsa'ya getirilen ülkücü militanlar da DEMAS şirketini kuşatmışlardır. DEMAS şirketi bugünlerde, MHP yanlısı bir avukatın yedieminliğinde İstanbul'da ülkücü militanların egemenliğindeki bir semtte genel kurul toplantısı yapacak ve şirketin yönetimi yeniden, DEMAS'ı, Hacı Ali Demirel başta olmak üzere, sırtı kalın işadamlarının emrine veren yöneticilere teslim edilecektir. … Fatsa'daki operasyonun arkasında böyle işler de var.*" Uğur Mumcu, "Danışman Erkmen," *Cumhuriyet,* 2 September 1980.

[575] For some of the noteworthy reactions see Hüseyin Özkan, "Getirilen Huzur mu Kaçırılan Huzur mu?,"*Demokrat,* 13 July 1980; Can Yücel, "Bir Devlet Aranıyor," *Demokrat,* 13 July 1980; "Erbakan: 'Ordu'ya Tanklarla Gidiyorlar, Böyle Huzur Olmaz,'" *Demokrat,* 13 July 1980; Emil Galip Sandalcı, "Fatsa Fatihi," *Demokrat,* 15 July 1980; Arslan Başer Kafaoğlu, "Fatsa 'Operasyonu!'" *Demokrat,* 15 July 1980; "Fatsa Operasyonu Tepkiyle Karşılandı," *Demokrat*, 16 July 1980; "Çorum ve Fatsa Olaylarının Tepkileri Sürüyor," *Demokrat,* 17 July 1980; Can Yücel, "Ünye Fatsa Arası," *Demokrat,* 17 July 1980; "TMMOB Yönetim Kurulu ve Oda Başkanları: 'Çorum'u Unutturmak Amacıyla Fatsa'da Operasyon Düzenlendi,'" *Demokrat,* 18 July 1980; Can Yücel, "Maskeler Aşağı," *Demokrat,* 19 July 1980; "Çorum Katliam Girişimi ve Fatsa Operasyonunu Protesto Gösterileri Devam Ediyor," *Demokrat,* 19 July 1980; "İstanbul Barosu Başkanı Orhan Apaydın: 'Operasyon Fatsa Halkını Cezalandırmaya Yönelik Bir Harekettir,'" *Demokrat,* 20 July 1980; Yılmaz Doğan, "Fatsa'nın Çınarları," *Demokrat,* 20 July 1980; Muzaffer Erdost, "Maskeler," *Demokrat*, 23 July 1980; Orhan Apaydın, "Sorular ve Sorumluluklar," *Cumhuriyet,* 13 July 1980; "Ecevit: Fatsa'da Maskeler İndi, Faşizmin Çirkin Yüzü Çıktı," *Cumhuriyet,* 15 July 1980; "Çağdaş Hukukçukar Derneği: 'Fatsa'da Anayasa Çiğnenmiştir,'" *Cumhuriyet,* 16 July 1980; İlhan Selçuk, "Fatsa'da Halkın Zamanla Yarışı…," *Cumhuriyet,* 10 August 1980; Mümtaz Soysal, "Fatsa Ayıbı," *Milliyet,* 15 July 1980; Mümtaz Soysal, "Çorap," *Milliyet,* 16 July 1980.

there were also those who were pleased with the developments. For example, the day after the operation, in an article in *Tercüman*, Ergün Göze not only belittled Fikri Sönmez by calling him "The Tailor in Fatsa," but also he suggested that they should not care for the laws "more then needed" in such cases threatening the existence of the state.[576] The next day, in a quite agitative language, Nazlı Ilıcak argued that for those who preferred the flag with crescent and star to the flag with hammer and sickle, there was an incident in Fatsa to be intervened into.[577] Similarly, in a series of articles, Kemal Önder portrayed Fatsa, which he considered to have been "the Little Moscow," as an important terror base in Turkey since the 1960s. He claimed that thanks to the operation, the People of Fatsa were rescued at last.[578] Moreover, on 23 July, based on a letter he claimed to have received on 21 June from a CHP-supporter village headman in Fatsa, Ahmet Kabaklı even claimed that the wives and daughters of those who dared to give testimony against revolutionaries had been kidnapped and raped for days.[579] Actually, by this article Kabaklı was bringing up a well known theme in the conservative right tradition of Turkey during the Cold War days, that is the immorality of the left. What, undoubtedly, accompanied this was another classical theme: the hostility of the left towards religion. For instance, on 14 July, based on the reports of Kemal Önder, it was argued in *Tercüman* that owing to the operation, for the first time after ten months, Muslims were able to go to mosques and worship freely in Fatsa.[580] Kemal Şendur, who was, as already stated, an AP-supporter resident of Fatsa, rejects this claim:

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[576] Ergün Göze, "Fatsa'daki Terzi," *Tercüman*, 12 July 1980.

[577] Nazlı Ilıcak, "Fatsa'da Olay Var mı?," *Tercüman*, 13 July 1980.

[578] Kemal Önder, "Türkiye'deki Terör Üssü Fatsa 1,2,3," *Tercüman,* 22,23,24 July 1980.

[579] Ahmet Kabaklı, "Fatsa 21/6/1980," *Tercüman,* 23 July 1980.

> What do I tell you, here we were also able to perform *namaz* five times a day. Once, Fikri Sönmez said: "This mosque does not befit Sülükgolü, I would give every support, let's make a new one." … I never came across with such a thing like "Why do you fast, why do you perform *namaz*?" The one who wants to perform *namaz* performs, the one who does not want to, does not perfom. I didn't come across with such a thing. Even in the prison, I didn't come across.[581]

In fact, mosques were among the primary places where the revolutionaries carried out organization practices. Since settlements in the rural areas of the town were quite diffused and far from each other, the revolutionaries were able to find villagers collectively only in mosques during Friday *namaz*s. So, first they would perform the Friday *namaz* together with people, then in the courtyard of the mosque, they would make propaganda.[582] For those revolutionaries who consider religion, as Marx argues, to be "the opium of the masses," this might be surprising. However, in Fatsa it was not. Since the revolutionary movement in Fatsa was predominantly a local movement, the revolutionaries were, to a great extent, local people who were a part of the wider society. Therefore, to a significant degree, they shared the common values of this society. And in case they did not, they did not directly clash with these values, but showed respect for and tried to transform them gradually from

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[580] "Fatsa'nın İkinci Kurtuluşu Kutlanıyor," *Tercüman,* 14 July 1980. In the same report, it was also argued that as a consequence of the operation, children, too, were able to play games after a long time, and while the people of Fatsa were celebrating their second liberation, women cooked pastries for soldiers. For sure, these were just the fantasies of the reporter of *Tercüman*. In reality, as stated even in *Hürriyet* which backed the operation from the beginning, as soon as the operation began, a curfew was declared in the town that lasted for days. Although people were allowed to go out for shopping for two or three hours everyday, since all shops were closed, the town suffered from famine. According to *Hürriyet*, during the free hours, nobody was celebrating anything, but trying to find food in a great quietness that had descended upon the town. "Fatsa'da Olan Yine Fatsalı'ya Oldu," *Hürriyet*, 14 July 1980. Also see "Aramalar Fatsa'ya Bağlı Köylerde'de Sürdürülüyor," *Milliyet*, 14 July 1980.

[581] "*Ben sana ne diyorum, biz burda beş vakit namazımızı da kılıyorduk. Hatta* '*Sülükgolü'ne bu cami yakışmaz, ben her türlü yardımı yapayım, yenisini yaptıralım*' *demişti Fikri Sönmez. …* '*Sen niye oruç tutuyorsun, niye namaz kılıyorsun?*' *diye bir şeye ben çatmadım. Namaz kılan kılar, kılmayan kılmaz. Ben öyle bir şeye çatmadım. Cezaevinde bile çatmadım*." Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[582] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007; Cumhur Yavuz, intervew by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

within. For instance, a semi-naked poster of Müjde Ar on a cinema building was removed since some people were uneasy about it.[583] Cumhur Yavuz maintains that this respect shown for their values were appreciated by the people: "We went to a village. We went to perform *namaz* with the owner of the house. While we were performing *abdest*, the guy joked: 'Hey communists, I am really afraid of you, you do this even better than us.' It catched his fancy, and he joked."[584] Similarly, Ahmet Özdemir claims that their decision not to drink alcohol had an important impact on conservative people, and made it easier for the revolutionaries to establish closer relations with them.[585] In other words, thanks to this respectful behaviour and such efforts based on social justice as the black market raids in Ramadan, in Fatsa the left managed to break the hegemony of the dominant classes over religious and conservative segments of the society, and to a considerable degree, prevented the utilization of religion as a gun aimed at itself, or as a device to keep the uneasiness of the laboring classes away from anti-systemic movements. It is even claimed that in Fatsa there were *imam*s who strove to spread revolutionary ideas.[586] However, it is also true that sometimes more pragmatic concerns were decisive in this attitude. For example, Hüseyin Uygun claims that they had to be careful in their private lives, too, since those people whose interests had been damaged by the revolutionaries'

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[583] Mahmut Tali Öngören, "Fatsa Gerçeği," *Türkiye Yazıları* (June 1980), quoted in Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.322.

[584] "*Bir köye gittik. Ev sahibiyle namaza gittik. Abdest alıyoruz. Adam* '*Ulan komünistler sizden korkulur, bu işi bizen bile iyi yapıyorsunuz*' *diye takılıyor bize. Hoşuna gidiyor, şakayla takılıyor.*" Cumhur Yavuz, intervew by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

[585] Ahmet Özdemir, interview in Aksakal, *Fatsa Gerçeği*, pp.148-9.

[586] Mahmut Tali Öngören, "Fatsa Gerçeği," *Türkiye Yazıları* (June 1980), quoted in Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, p.322; Vedat Sevim, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 14 December 2006. This point may be a contribution to the current debates on the relationship between left and religion, or on the so-called Muslim Left idea advocated by Nuray Mert and Mehmet Bekaroğlu. For an example of these debates see Alper Taş (ed.), "Din, Toplum, Sol, 1-7," *Birgün*, 26 February-6 March 2007.

activities were standing by to take advantage of their potential faults.[587] This is pretty understandable; nonetheless, occasionaly this pragmatism resulted in some actions which cannot be justified on the basis of showing respect for the people's believes, and which are hard to defend when looking from the present. For example, in one of the People's Committees elections, a woman known to engage in prostitution was elected a member of the committee by the votes of the people. However, the revolutionaries intervened in the situation, and made her withdraw from this post.[588] This was not only an excessive concession given to patriarchal social relations, but also it was against the principle of participatory democracy. After all, the woman in question was elected by the people themselves.

The Trial Process

Haluk Türkmen, the lawyer of the defendants, states that the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial began in 1983 with 696 defendants whose number later went beyond 800, and the trial process, which lasted eight years, came to the final stage at the end of 1988.[589] As Uyan explains, when the trial was completed in 1989 in Erzincan, the total number of the defendants had risen up to 851. Fifteen of these, including Fikri Sönmez, died before the decision. For 169 defendants, the case was abated because of timeout. On the other hand, while 444 defendants were acquitted, 8 defendants were punished by death penalty, and 14 defendants with life imprisonment. Besides, 30 defendants were penalized by twenty years of imprisonment, 36 defendants with

[587] Hüseyin Uygun, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

[588] Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

[589] Haluk Türkmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ordu, 12 April 2007. According to the *New York Times*, the trial began on 12 January 1983 with 740 defendants. "740 Suspected Marxists Go on Trial in Turkey," *New York Times*, 13 January 1983.

between ten and eighteen years of imprisonment, and the rest with between one and ten years of imprisonment.[590] However, as Haluk Türkmen argues, in 1990 President Turgut Özal initiated a change in the penal code which decided that death penalties would be converted into ten years of imprisonment, and other penalties would be reduced by considerable ratios. As a result, nobody in the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial was executed, and by 1992 no one was left in prison.[591]

On the other hand, it is not possible to claim that the trial process was carried out in accordance with the universal norms of law. Haluk Türkmen argues that an absolute majority of the proofs used in the trial depended on the depositions and testimonies taken by torture or on the fictive charges of the rightists.[592] Mustafa Yayla, who was a police chief in charge of the interrogation of the defendants, admits the existence of torture:

> As a torture method, in those days there was dial-up telephone. Man, this is not right! The guy trembles from head to foot. … The interrogation of Şehittin Tırıç's brother… It was obvious that those who got him before me had tortured him badly. I came, they had obliterated him, man! We let him go, but because of the blows he had, he did not live long and died.[593]

In addition, Haluk Türkmen claims that the trial committee appointed by the military regime and led by a military officer who did not need to be a jurist, was inevitably biased and prejudiced against the defendants. However, Türkmen also

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[590] Uyan, *Toplumsal Dalganın*, pp.289-90.

[591] Haluk Türkmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ordu, 12 April 2007.

[592] Haluk Türkmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ordu, 12 April 2007.

[593] "*İşkence yöntemi olarak o zamanlar çevirmeli telefon… … Ya bu iş değil ya! Tir tir titriyor herif. … Şehittin Tırıç'ın sorgusu… Benden evvel alanlar ona acaip işkence yapmışlar, belliydi. Geldim, mahvetmişler adamı ya! Gönderdik, o aldığı darbelerin sonucu adam fazla yaşamadı, öldü.*" Mustafa Yayla, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.* For a narration of torture during the operation and in prison see Pertev Aksakal, interview by Ertuğrul Mavioğlu, in Ertuğrul Mavioğlu, *Bir 12 Eylül Hesaplaşması-1 Asılmayıp Beslenenler* (İstanbul: İthaki Yayınları, 2006), pp.253-9. Also see Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.247-55.

maintains that in the course of time, the trial committee became much more impartial towards defendants as it saw the deficiencies of the proofs presented to the court, and as the judges became convinced that the defendants were sincere about their good desires for the future of the country. According to Türkmen, except some examples such as Halit Cengiz, who was the military prosecutor, most of the jurists in the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial were loyal to law as much as they could be in those times.[594]

Indeed it is hard to claim that Halit Cengiz was a jurist. As Pertev Aksakal states, on the basis of the reasoned decision of the trial, Halit Cengiz was a firm MHP supporter who, arguing that they were acting on behalf of the state, decided to dismiss legal proceedings not only for 300 policemen accused of torturing the defendants, but also for those officials who, during an exploration, got angry when they saw the corpse of one of their friends and killed the defendant Sadi Ekiz. Moreover, Halit Cengiz was, later, penalized by twenty nine years of imprisonment because of forcing many defendants to bribe him.[595] Similarly, Mustafa Yayla states that the indictment of the trial was prepared in a biased manner by the prosecutor Halit Cengiz and lawyer Şefik Yazgı, both of whom were MHP supporters.[596]

Another significant fact to be mentioned about the trial process was the high number of confessors. As Aksakal states, in June 1985, during the first Özal goverment, a law numbered 3216, which was publicly known as the "Compunction Law" (*Pişmanlık Yasası*), was legislated. By this law, the state, in fact, bribed the defendants to make confessions and delation to get rid of heavy penalizations, and

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[594] Haluk Türkmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ordu, 12 April 2007. Aksakal contends that because of pressures from above, thirty two changes were made in the trial committee during the trial process. Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.215-6.

[595] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.221-7.

[596] Mustafa Yayla, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1.*

get out of prison earlier. As Aksakal expresses, many defendants applied to take advantage of this law, and accused lots of innocent people by their fictive testimonies. Even, different groups of confessors appeared which competed with each other.[597] Aksakal claims that during the trial, they sometimes benefited from the contradictory confessions, actually aspersions, of these confessors; however, also lots of people were killed, or caught and tortured because of them. According to Aksakal, a reason for the high number of confessors was the decision of Yusuf Atasoy, who was the leader of the Fatsa organization of the Dev-Yol, and the number one defendant in the trial, to make confession to derive benefit from the law.[598] Nonetheless, the reason should also be sought in the organizational deficiencies of the revolutionary movement in Fatsa, which will be dealt with in the next section.

The Drawbacks of the Revolutionary Movement

Two years after the 12 September military coup, a referendum was organized for the approval of the new constitution which, to a great extent, curtailed the political as well as individual freedoms and rights granted by the constitution of 1961. In the referendum, the new constitution was approved by an absolute majority. The people of Fatsa, too, voted in favor of the new constitution: 95 percent for, 5 percent against.[599] After that, a new era began in Fatsa parallel to the countrywide and global developments. As already argued in the first chapter, the main characteristics of this new era was the increased social impoverishment

[597] Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim*, pp.259-92.

[598] Pertev Aksakal, interview by Ertuğrul Mavioğlu, in Mavioğlu, pp.259-61.

[599] DİE, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası Halkoylaması Sonuçları 7.11.1982* (Ankara, 1983), pp.76-7.

accompanied by a sharp decline of the anti-systemic social movements. Moreover, people were depoliticized and alienated from governmental processes through which the decisions affecting their lives were taken. In other words, in this period, individual opportunities and interests together with a clientalist approach to politics replaced the previous ideals of joint struggle and collective emancipation. The latest example of this transformation was the overwhelming election victory of the AKP in the 22 July 2007 general elections in Fatsa and the entire hazelnut region despite the great troubles the hazelnut producers had experienced during the first AKP government.[600]

All these changes occurred in the town after the military operation have been presented by some people as the proof to the fact that in Fatsa the revolutionary movement never had a genuine popular support, and its strenght was grounded upon merely coercion and terrorism. According to the proponents of this idea, for this reason, after the military operation, the people of Fatsa left the revolutionaries alone, and the political scene was completely reversed.[601] Nevertheless, as shown throughout the thesis, this allegation is not true. Even in the indictment of the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial, it was stated that in Fatsa, the Dev-Yol was able to make broad segments of the people from 7 year old children to 70 year old grandmas and grandpas march their left hands up in the air.[602] According to police chief Mustafa

[600] In Fatsa as a whole, the AKP got 22,584 votes. While the main opposition party, the CHP got 8,576 votes, the third biggest party in the parliament, the MHP got 6,918 votes. The ÖDP, in which the former Dev-Yol cadres are effective, got 415 votes. Available [online]: http://www.haberunye.com/news/414.html. 27 July 2007. Of course, in this election victory of the AKP, the incompetence of other parties which grounded their opposition chiefly upon the nationalist and laicist propaganda instead of the everyday problems of the lower classes played a significant role.

[601] For instance see Yayla, pp.213-4, 340-4.

[602] *İddianame*, p.129.

Yayla even the cats would take part in the meetings of the Dev-Yol in Fatsa.[603] In an interview made by Erbil Tuşalp, Hikmet Altıntaş, who was an AP supporter and the owner of local newspaper *Fatsa Güneş*, stressed this fact too: "They would organize a meeting, [there would be] fifteen or twenty thousand people. Only I and my wife were not among them. At first, we used to think whether they brought all of them by force. In many issues, they managed to address the problems of the people."[604] In fact, as an AP supporter in the town said to the *New York Times* reporter just after Target Operation, the popular support of the municipality had risen up to about 90 percent prior to the operation.[605]

So, how has it been really possible that everything in Fatsa was reversed so rapidly and dramatically? One of the reasons was, undoubtedly, the severity of the operation and the pressures afterwards. After all Fatsa was just a middle-sized town, but it was attacked by powerful state forces that were determined to uproot the social opposition. As already seen, during and after the operation, more than 3,000 people were taken into custody and tortuted, and almost 1,000 people were brought to court. This amounted to almost a person from each family. Moreover, the houses and businesses were plundered by *ülkücü* militants, and some people were even killed. Because of the extreme pressures, as Leyla Gedik argues, a significant portion of those people who had supported the revolutionaries had to emigrate from

[603] Mustafa Yayla, interview in *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1*. Mustafa Yayla's these words do not exist in the final version of the documentary film.

[604] "*Bir miting düzenlerlerdi, onbeş, yirmi bin kişi.Bir hanımla ben yoktum aralarında. Hepsini mi zorla getirdiler diye düşünürdük önceleri. Halkın sorunlarına inmeyi başardılar bir çok konularda.*" Hikmet Altıntaş, interview by Erbil Tuşalp, in Erbil Tuşalp and Saim Tokaçoğlu, "Operasyon Sonrası Fatsa 5," *Cumhuriyet*, 19 August 1980.

[605] "Turkish Town's Vision of Revolution is Shattered," *New York Times*, 17 July 1980.

Fatsa.[606] Ahmet Becioğlu's narration of Fikri Sönmez's funeral in 1985 indicates that the town was still under great pressure five years after the operation:

> It was time to pour soil. In a funeral, at least three tons of soil is poured, but nobody could dare to touch the pick and the shovel. Policemen were waiting over your head, but they did not tell people not to pour. Pouring soil in the funeral of Fikri Sönmez was like participating in the incidents. There was such a psychological pressure on the people. Ahmet Agabey, Ali Faik Agabey and I managed to close that grave difficultly. It was overcrowded, but nobody else poured soil. Indeed, the policemen watched till the end. … I had a red carriage Renault. … Its licence plate was marked as suspicious. … After 15-20 days, I sold the car. Because they [policemen] were looking at me wherever I went. That licence plate had been given to all policemen. Until thay day there was not such a thing.[607]

Aydın Akyazı claims that these pressures even continue today:

> Two years ago a revolutionary friend of us died in Fatsa. When we went there, we were oppressed. … We were going to Yalakköy. The gendarmerie blocked the road, and asked for our identity cards. We asked 'Why?' A judge of the Court of First Instance had taken a decision which said, 'A member of an illegal organization, Yusuf Çayır, has died. To the funeral, the members of the illegal organization from various parts of the country are going to come.' No doubt, it was an ordered decision. … This is the view of the state.[608]

The fear among people stemming from these severe and prolonged pressures can be still observed in Fatsa. During my visit to the town, I came across some examples of this fear. For instance, some people with whom I asked to make an

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[606] Leyla Gedik, interview by Sezai Sarıoğlu, in Sarıoğlu, pp.150-1.

[607] "*Sıra geldi toprak dökmeye. Bir cenazede üç ton toprak dökülecek en aşağı. Kimse küreğe kazmaya elini süremiyor. Polis bekliyor başında. Polis 'Atmayın!' demiyor ha. Fikri Sönmez'in cenazesinde toprak atmak olaylara katılmak gibi oluyor. İnsanlar üzerinde öyle psikolojik bir baskı var. Ahmet Abim, Ali Faik abim, ben o mezarı güç bela kapattık üçümüz. Çok kalabalık, toprak atan yok. Polisler harbi son ana kadar gözleriyle tespit ediyor. … Binek bir Renault'm vardı kırmızı. … Mimlenmiş plaka. … 15-20 gün sonra sattım arabayı. Nereye gidersem bana bakıyorlar çünkü.O plaka bütün polislere verilmiş. O güne dek öyle bir şey yoktu…*" Ahmet Becioğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[608] "*İki yıl önce bir arkadaşımız öldü Fatsa'da devrimci. Oraya gittiğimizde baskı gördük. … Yalakköy'e gidiyoruz. Jandarma yolu kesmiş, kimlik sordu. 'Niye?' dedik. 'Yasadışı örgüt üyesi Yusuf Çayır ölmüştür. Cenazeye yurdun değişik yerlerinden yasadışı örgüt üyeleri gelecektir' diye bir Asli Hukuk Mahkemesi hakimi karar vermiş. Tabi ısmarlama. … Devletin bakış açısı bu.*" Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

interview were quite displeased with this request, and asked me why I wanted to bring up the old troubles and pains again. In addition, some people even left the interview place in a hurry while I was performing interviews with other people.

However, these pressures and the fear stemming from them are not enough to explain everything. As argued above, the reasons for the defeat should also be sought in the organizational deficiencies of the social opposition as well as in the quality of the relations the revolutionaries established with the laboring classes. Actually, during the late 1970s, the social opposition in Fatsa enjoyed a very rapid massification. Partially, this stemmed from the appropriate political atmosphere in the country. As Güzen Zileli argues, in those times all of the leftist organizations were able to obtain mass support easily: "This was such a fertile atmosphere that none of those leftist organizations, which were in a process of recovery after the kiling of their leaders and destruction in 12 March, led by the apostlers who had been near now-dead leaders, did not pull the fishing net that they had thrown into the sea of people empty."[609] Although, it was something desired, this huge and quick massification also brougt about significant shortcomings for the revolutionary movement. Sebahattin Akyazı argues that the level and pace of massification was way beyond the control and capabilities of the revolutionaries who were young, unexperienced, and deprived of enough knowledge:

> To put it roughly, we were really amateur in that period. We tried to go on with rough knowledge. This rough knowledge inevitably made us hit the wall and fall down. … All of them were people around 18 and 20 years of age. In that process, we rather focused on practice, we could not improve the theoretical side. … It is a fact that the developments went beyond the cadres. The cadres became unable to control them. There was a very fast development in Fatsa. … Therefore, the revolutionaries turned out to be inadequate. The Dev-Yol was not a

[609] "*Bu öyle bereketli bir ortamdı ki, 12 Mart'ta yıkıma uğramış, önderleri öldürülmüş ve şimdi hayatta olmayan önderlerinin yakınında bulumuş havarilerce toparlanma sürecine girmiş hiçbir sol örgüt, toplum denizine attığı ağını boş çekmiyordu*." Gün Zileli, *Havariler* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p.98.

> professional organization. As a result, it could not extensively intervene in these developments. … Let me give an example from myself. I was the person in charge of the huge Sülükgölü region, but I had little knowledge. I learned many things in prison. I tried to obtain theoretical knowledge in prison.[610]

A key dimension of this inadequacy of the revolutionary cadres in Fatsa was their inability to see the countrywide developments well enough and determine their strategy in accordance with the bigger picture. To a significant degree, this was because of the local character of these cadres, thanks to which they had been quite successful at obtaining the support of the laboring masses and the poor until then. However, too much localness became a disadvantage later. Naci Sönmez, too, emphasizes this fact:

> Our world was the realm of ourselves, the district we lived in. Before 12 September, we acted with the psychology that "The revolution has come to Yalıköy, the job is done." Because of this, the devastation of 12 September was great. The inability to see outside, the inability to open the windows… In everybody's mind, there was the belief that "Soon, we are going to acquire the government of the country." … The people were uneducated. They could not see the future. They dived into the matter. They supposed that this movement was unbeatable, but when it was beaten so easily, and the resistance was not so strong, those people became desperate, and they were dispersed.[611]

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[610] "*Kabaca söylersek biz gerçekten o dönemde amatördük. Kaba bilgilerle yürümeye çalıştık. Bu kaba bilgiler ister istemez bizim duvara toslamamızı, yere düşmemizi getirdi. … Hepsi onsekiz, yirmi yaşında insanlar. O süreçte daha pratikte kaldık. Teorik yanını geliştiremedik. … Şu bir gerçek ki o dönemde gelişen durum kadroları aştı. Kadrolar kontrol edemeyecek duruma geldi. Hızlı bir gelişme var Fatsa'da. … O nedenle devrimciler yetersiz kaldı. Devrimci Yol profesyonel bir örgüt değildi. Olmadığı için bu gelişmelere kapsayıcı bir müdahale yapamadı. … Ben kendimden örnek vereyim. Koca Sülükgölü'nün sorumlusuydum ama kırıntı bilgim vardı. Ben cezaevinde öğrendim çok şeyi. Teorik bilgi birikimini cezaevinde edinmeye çalıştım.*" Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[611] "*Bizim dünyamız kendi dünyamızdı, yaşadığımız ilçeydi. 12 Eylül'e gelmeden önce biz '**Devrim Yalıköy'e kadar geldi, bu iş bitti**' psikolojisiyle hareket ediyorduk. O nedenle 12 Eylül'ün getirdiği hüsran, yıkım büyük oldu. Dışarıyı görememe, pencereleri açamama… Fatsa'daki herkesin kafasında '**Akşama sabaha biz ülke yönetimindeyiz**' psikolojisi vardı. … İnsanlar eğitimsizdi. Geleceğini göremedi. Balıklama dalma derler ya patır kütür daldı işin içine. Onlar zannediyordu ki yenilmez bu hareket, ama çok kolay da yenilince, direniş çok güçlü olamayınca, o tür insanlar umutsuzluğa düştüler, savruldular.*" Naci Sönmez, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 04 April 2007.

As seen, the words of Naci Sönmez indicate another fact, too. In Fatsa, an important factor contributing to the huge and quick massification of social opposition was the power (real or supposed) of the revolutionaries. Prior to the operation, the power of the revolutionary movement in the eyes of the people had risen up to the point that, as Pertev Aksakal states, some families asked those young men who wanted to marry their girls whether they were revolutionary or not.[612] When this power collapsed quickly after the operation, people could not resist so much. In other words, the social opposition which had risen rapidly and spontaneously under suitable conditions, declined dramatically when the circumstances were reversed. Mahmut Altıntaş stressed the same point when I asked him the reasons for the quick retreat of the social opposition in Fatsa:

> The people of Fatsa was saying, "We can't be beaten anymore. Even if the US army raids here, nothing would happen to us." When, all of a sudden, that organization exaggerated by empty propaganda, which was regarded as unbeatable, retreated towards mountains, and they were left in a vacuum, they failed and could not recover. A great self-confidence. When Şehittin Tırıç was shot, the people of Çamaş burned whatever belonged to the state. Before anyone came from Fatsa, everthing, including the gendarmerie station, was destroyed. All were non-cadre people. There was such a psychological ascendacy. When it was removed, people were left in a vacuum.[613]

Usually this point is regarded by some leftist circles as a proof to the so-called universal law that small commodity owners or peasants, as a direct consequence of their class characteristics, always tend to be inclined towards the power just in order to maximize their individual economic interests, and therefore they cannot be the

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[612] Pertev Aksakal, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, İstanbul, 16 March 2007.

[613] "*Fatsa halkı 'Biz artık yenilmeyiz, ABD ordusu bile buraya çıkartma yapsa, bize bir şey olmaz' diyordu. Birdenbire o yenilmez dediği ve boş propaganda ile şişirilmiş örgütlülük dağlara çekilip kendisi boşta kaldığında çuvalladı, toparlayamadı deyim yerindeyse. Müthiş bir özgüven. Şehittin Tırıç vurulunca Çamaş halkı devlete ait ne varsa yaktı. Tamamen kadro olmayan insanlardı. Daha Fatsa'dan kimse gelmeden jandarma karakolu da dahil hepsi yıkıldı. Böyle bir psikolojk üstünlük var. O birden kalkınca boşlukta kaldı insanlar.*" Mahmut Altıntaş, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Kocaeli, 20 March 2007.

trustworthy subjects of a genuine anti-capitalist change. The implication of these arguments is that only a propertyless social class can be truly revolutionary. I believe that this is a too much determinist and economist approach as it sees a one-way and mechanical relationship between the social being and social consciousness. As argued in the first chapter following Thompson, class is not a thing, but a social and cultural formation grounded upon the experiences of historical subjects over a certain historical period. For that reason, if in Fatsa the social opposition, which was mainly based on small hazelnut producers, and its support for the revolutionary movement declined rapidly after the operation, the reasons should be sought not in some supposedly universal laws about their class characteristics, but rather in the shortness of the historical period in question, and some organizational deficiencies of the revolutionary movement. Besides, who can condemn the revolutionaries in Fatsa because they did not let small households dissolve and join the landless proletariat?[614]

In fact, this brings us to a crucial organizational defect of the revolutionary movement in Fatsa. In the town, the revolutionary movement did not have such a kind of organization that could have prevented the quick retreat of the social opposition under unfavourable conditions. Indeed, when the revolutionary cadres retreated towards the rural parts of the town, there was nothing left behind but spontaneous and unorganized social relations. This primarily stemmed from the reflection on Fatsa of the dual organizational structure of the Dev-Yol. As stated in the third chapter, following the THKP-C, the Dev-Yol was designed to involve a loose frontal organization made up of broad social segments around a firm party

[614] For sure, there could have beeen some collective property attempts such as cooperative-like production organizations. Sedat Göçmen claims that they had such plans to put into practice in a few villages beginning from 1981, but they could not realize them because of the operation. Sedat Göçmen, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, İstanbul, 21 March 2007.

organization composed of well-trained, disciplined, and professional revolutionaries (cadres) who were expected to educate and guide the masses. More or less, this organizational scheme was reproduced in Fatsa. As a result, although the revolutionary organization was led by the local people, and managed to obtain an extensive popular support, it was not able to turn itself into the self-organization of small hazelnut producers and the urban poor who composed the class base of the social opposition. The fact that one of its most popular leaders was a poor tailor, and that a considerable portion of its cadres were village-origined people does not disprove this claim. Of course, this does not mean that the revolutionaries and the people belonged to separate worlds. Actually, for the Fatsa case, it is not possible to make such a clearcut sociological distinction even though it might be claimed that middle-classes, that is intellectuals, teachers and students, had a broader representation in the revolutionary organization than their actual ratios within the entire society. Indeed, as already argued, the revolutionaries were the children of the local people from all social segments in the town. However, because of the dual organizational structure, politically and organizationally, a line was drawn between the broad masses of agricultural producers, landless peasants, small tradesmen and the urban poor on the one hand, and the revolutionary cadres most of whom were young males on the other. No doubt, this points out the actual limits of the claimed abolition in Fatsa of the dichotomy between the authority and the ruled. This division might be seen from the statistics about the defendants of the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial:

Table 11. Statistics About the Defendants in the Fatsa Dev-Yol Trial.

	Number	Percentage
Born in 1963 or After	131	16.5
1962-1960	132	16.5
1959-1955	166	21
1954-1950	170	21
1949-1945	98	12
1944-1940	34	4
1939 and Before	53	7
Death	2	
No Information	13	2
Separated File	1	
Total	800	100
Female Defendants	32	4

Source: Aksakal, *Bir Yerel Yönetim,* p.347. Note: These numbers are not perfect, and not every defendant was a Dev-Yol cadre, yet the table still gives an idea about the cadre structure of the revolutionary movement in Fatsa.

As seen, most of those who were accused of being a Dev-Yol cadre in Fatsa were young males. Those who were younger than 20 years of age at the time of Target Operation composed 33 percent of all defendants. The ratio of those who were younger than 30 years of age at the same date amounted to 75 percent. On the other hand, the ratio of women, who were, as already argued, more often than not at the front stage of the social struggles in the town, was only 4 percent. This means that despite the broad popular support it had obtained, and the very strong ties it had established with the wider social opposition, the revolutionary movement (not the social movement as a whole) in Fatsa was still predominantly a youth movement with regard to its organizational structure. That is to say, the small hazelnut producers, agricultural workers, and the urban poor lacked institutional mechanisms

to have a word in the strategical orientation and decisions of the organization. Such mechanisms might have contributed to the perpetuation of the dialectical relationship between the people and the revolutionaries, which was one of the key reasons for the success of the social opposition until then. It may be argued that the People's Committees were such a mechanism, but, as seen, they were rather about the everyday and municipal problems of the neighbourhoods. No doubt, they were a very important step for the self-government of the people, but not enough. In this sense, an option might have been production-based organizations such as a producers' union as a real alternative to Fiskobirlik. Organized from below and led by the small hazelnut producers and agricultural workers, this organization might have functioned as an influential interest group within the revolutionary organization. In addition, it might have also earned producers a stronger tradition of organization. Of course this would not have been enough to prevent the defeat against such an enormous attack, but at least it might have reduced its devastating effects for the future of the social opposition in the 1980s and afterwards. However, reflecting the priorities of the young people composing its cadres, the revolutionary movement focused rather on spatial organizations which were in accordance with the anti-fascist struggle and the revolution strategy of the Dev-Yol. Therefore, production-based organizations were not created. To put it briefly, in terms of its organizational structure and capabilities, in Fatsa the revolutionary movement had way fallen behind the rapidly developing social opposition.

There were some other reasons, too, for the decline of the people's support for the revolutionaries. One of them was the fact that the more revolutionary movement got bigger and stronger the more it involved corruption, confirming the aphorism of Lord Acton, which argued that "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts

absolutely."[615] Unfortunateley, the revolutionary movement was unable to control its rapidly increasing cadres, and some of these people benefited from the movement's power for their own interests. For instance Kemal Şendur states:

> Three or four children with guns in their waists… Citizens were scared. When they wanted three or five liras, they would give, how could they manage to not give? There was no control, and what destroyed this town was the lack of control. ... Since it grew all of a sudden, the control could not be ensured. Affairs ran off the rails. Some attempted to rob, some to shoot, some to steal. Some had blood feuds, some were resentful as they had been unable to abduct their girls, some had land disputes. They all translated these into here. Things got puzzled when these were translated into left-right issue. Private issues got mixed with this issue, everthing was puzzled.[616]

Another related problem was the use of violence by the revolutionaries for political ends. Undoubtedly, in a time when the *ülkücü* militants backed by the state forces attacked them rigorously, the revolutionaries had the right to defend themselves and the people. However, it seems that their acts of violence sometimes went way beyond self-defence. This was especially true for the post-operation period. As far as what I was told by various people during my visit to the town, even children younger than 18 were killed by the revolutionaries with the claim that they were fascists. Together with the corruption of some cadres, these acts of violence caused revolutionaries, at least in the eyes of some people, to lose their hard-earned reputation as the representatives of justice. Aydın Akyazı claims that such regrettable incidents stemmed from the fact that many revolutionary cadres failed to withstand the provocative acts of the operation forces:

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[615] Quoted in Andrew Heywood, *Politics* (New York: Palgrave, 1997), p.6.

[616] "*Üç, dört çocuk tabanca belinde, vatandaş çekiniyordu. Üç, beş lira isterse veriyordu, vermez diye bir şey yok. Denetim yoktu, zaten bu memleketi yıkan denetimsizlik oldu. … Birden büyüdüğü için denetleme olmadı. Rayından çıktı iş. Kimi soyguna kalktı, kimi vurmaya kalktı, kimi çarpmaya kalktı. Kiminin kan davası vardı, kimisi kızı kaçıramamış ondan hırsı varmış, kiminin yer davası varmış. Onu buraya döktüler hep. Sağ sol meselesi bu işe döktüğü zaman bu iş hep karıştı. Özel işler bu işe girdi, hep karıştı işler.*" Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

> There, too many people were hurt. The guy was slained in front of the security forces after he went out of his house for shopping. The security forces went into houses with masked fascists, and tortured the people. For that reason, we did not have the chance to stop some people. They responded to them. It might be argued that they acted with a feeling of revenge.[617]

Nonetheless, it is not adequate to explain the acts of violence only with provocation. Partially, the problem stemmed from organizational defects, that is the inability of the leadership to control its cadres, a considerable section of whom were not actually qualified for such a responsibility. Since the connections between different groups of revolutionaries were lost after the operation, this trouble got further worse. However, the leaders of the revolutionary movement were not completely innocent in this matter. It seems that, to a degree, they condoned the acts of violence of the local cadres since they relied on their power for the efficiency of the revolutionary movement. For sure, the attacks of the *ülkücü* militants and the state forces also caused that those cadres who fought better were preferred, hence their acts of violence were not questioned so much. In addition, the stress made by the Dev-Yol on armed struggles as the ultimate method to realize the revolution was another factor contributing to the inclination of the cadres to use violence against whom they regarded as the enemies of the revolution and the people. The symbol of the Dev-Yol, which was a fist with a star, was just a demonstration of the significance given to political violence by the movement. Moreover, the widespread violence and weapon culture in the Black Sea region, of which the high prevalence of blood feuds was an example, was added to this picture, further deepening the problem. Finally, there was another reason which was perhaps more important than

[617] "*Orada çok sayıda insanın canı yandı. Evinden Pazar alışverişine çıkan adam güvenlik güçlerinin önünde katlediliyor. Güvenlik güçleri maskeli faşistlerle evlere giriyor, işkence yapıyor. Dolayısıyla bir kısım insanları frenleyebilme şansın yok. O da cevap veriyor. İntikam duygusuyla hareket ettiğinden söz edilebilir*." Aydın Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 20 February 2007.

all of the above factors: the breaking down of the dialectical relationship between the people and the revolutionaries. After the operation, to a great extent, the revolutionaries lost their everyday contacts and relations with the people, which had composed a key mechanism of checks and balances for their actions previously. Therefore, they could not measure the reactions of the people to their acts of violence. Sebahattin Akyazı confirms this fact:

> After a certain point, we put the socialist democracy aside. After Target Operation we focused on the hierarchical order. Mistakes began from this point. … What did we say? There is love and *imece* among the traditions of the people. What did you do? You shot people, opened fire on their houses. This is not among our traditions. This is negatively reacted.[618]

According to Akyazı, such actions, unfortunately, overshadowed the entire Fatsa experience in the eyes of the people:

> This people embrace revolutionaries in some fundamental points. What they do not embrace is only those beating, killing events. Of course we have a great mistake in that. … Let me put it clearly, such events in the past are still discussed. You cannot destroy the whole Fatsa, a huge project with such actions! Those who go to Friday *namaz* warm here. They say that "Ok, you have done good things, but why did you beat that man, why did you kill that man?" … This is a shame of the revolutionaries in front of me. But, especially the actions of Fikri Agabey is at the front stage. It makes everything beautiful. And it is what gives a boost to our morale.[619]

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[618] "*Belli bir noktadan sonra sosyalist demokrasiyi bir kenara ittik biz. Nokta Operasyonu'ndan sonra hiyerarşik yapıyı temel aldık. O noktada hatalar başladı. … Ne dedik? Sevgi, imece insanların geleneklerinde var. Sen napıyorsun? Adam vuruyorsun, evini kurşunluyorsun. Bu bizim geleneğimizde yok. Tepkiyle karşılanır bu*." Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[619] "*Devrimcileri bazı temel noktalarda benimsiyor bu halk. Sadece benimsemediği nokta öldürme, dövme olayları. Onda da büyük hatamız var tabi. … Geçmişteki bu tip eylemler, açık söyleyeyim, bugün hala konuşuluyor. Koca Fatsa'yı, koca bir projeyi sen böyle işlerle yok edemezsin! Cuma'ya gidenler burda ısınır. 'Tamam iyi şeyler yaptınız ama şu adamı niye dövdünüz, şu adamı niye öldürdünüz?*' *diyorlar. … Bu benim önümde bir anlamda devrimciler ayıbı. Ama özellikle Fikri Abi'nin yaptıkları ön planda. O güzelleştiriyor her şeyi. Bize morali de o veriyor.*" Sebahattin Akyazı, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 207.

Indeed, as Sebahattin Akyazı argues in the above-quoted speech, despite the unacceptable actions after the operation, and the prolonged efforts of the ruling classes to decry the Fatsa experience, still the positive traces of the past in the memories of the people have not been completely erased. When I asked common people their thoughts about Fikri Sönmez, almost all of them recalled him with great respect, and comparing his works with those of the succeeding mayors, they argued that he was one of best mayors of Fatsa. For instance Kemal Şendur argues:

> Still the roads he opened have not been paved. He was unable to buy the licence of his house since he did not care for money. If Fikri Sönmez had wanted money, he could have filled all the money of Fatsa into sacks, and got it. Such a man as Fikri Sönmez comes to world so rarely, really rarely. The current municipality is a municipality of private interests. Now everybody cares for their interests. In those times, the people were served. If today's opportunities had been in those days, Fatsa would have been a province. Where were the opportunities, where were the cars? The people swimmed in the mud.[620]

Similarly, İsmet Hosaflıoğlu expresses his longing for the old days:

> If we returned to those days, I would sacrifice an animal, what do you say man! Is this life man? They were on the side of the people in those days, what do you say man! Such a time would never come again, it came and passed. I feel pity for generations like yours. It always gets worse my brother, it does not get better. Those times, ufff… They were all gracious kids, what do you say man![621]

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[620] "*Hala onun açtığı yollar döşenmedi. Kendi evinin ruhsatını alamadı. Parayla işi yoktu ki. Fikri Sönmez para isteseydi Fatsa'nın parasını çuvallara doldurur alırdı. Fikri Sönmez gibi adam çok nadir gelir, çok nadir. Şimdiki belediye menfaat belediyesi. Şimdi herkes kendi çıkarına gidiyor. O zaman halka hizmet yapılıyordu. O zaman bugünkü imkanlar olsaydı Fatsa vilayet olurdu. İmkan nerde vardı, araba nerde vardı? Çamurda yüzüyordu millet.*" Kemal Şendur, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

[621] "*Ben o günlere dönsek, kurban keserim, sen ne diyorsun yahu! Bu yaşam mıdır yahu? O zaman halkın yanındaydılar, sen diyorsun yahu! Daha öyle devir gelmez, o bir geldi geçti. Ben sizin gibi kuşaklara acıyorum. Hep kötüye gidiyor kardeşim, ileri gitmiyor. O devirler üffff… Hepsi can ciğer çocuklardı, sen ne diyorsun yahu?*" İsmet Hosaflıoğlu, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Fatsa, 07 April 2007.

Even Harun Çalışkan, an *ülkücü*, states that there were good things, too, in those times: "Very painful things happened in Fatsa, but when I look from the present, I say, 'There were good things, too.' Here a flood occurred, the water was completely fizzy. Apparently, there was detergent in the silo of the guy. Why did you say 'I don't have it'?"[622]

The traces left behind from the past in the memories of the people are not restricted to these. Thanks to the previous struggles, the hazelnut producers in the region still have a more or less rich struggle tradition. The resemblance of their current struggle methods with those means they employed in the past is remarkable. For instance, on 24 July 2006, 2,000 hazelnut producers gathered together in Fatsa in a meeting organized by the ÖDP.[623] In an e-mail message to the ÖDP e-mail group, Özgün İncedere argued that an absolute majority of the people in the meeting were the producers from Fatsa, and women were (as in the past) at the front stage. A week later, on 30 July 2006, more than 100,000 people assembled at the *Cumhuriyet* Square in Ordu and protested the government because of the hazelnut floor price which had even fallen behind the costs of hazelnut production. Just like what had happened in 1970, after the meeting the producers blocked the Trabzon-Samsun highway for about nine hours. Neither Ordu Police Chief Rıdvan Güler, nor City Gendarmerie Commander Nevzat Yıldız and Region Gendarmerie Commander Hüseyin Güney were able to convince the producers to open the highway. The prostesters could only be dispersed by force.[624]

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[622] "*Çok acı şeyler yaşandı Fatsa'da ama bugün baktığımda 'İyi işler de olmuş' diyorum. Burda bir sel oldu, sular hep köpüklü. Adamın deposunda deterjan varmış meğer. E hani yoktu deterjan*?" Harun Çalışkan, interview by Kerem Morgül, note taking, Fatsa, 11 April 2007.

[623] "Fatsa Halkı: 'Fındık Halkındır, Elinizi Çekin'" [24 July 2006]. Available [Online]: http://sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi_no=6903 [30 July 2007].

These bring us to a vital point: Those people who took part in crowded meetings, marched with placards and participated in the People's Committees have not dissappeared. They are still there. Their memories and experiences are not completely dead yet. But, those historical actors who strove more than hard, and made great sacrifices for the making of a strong social opposition are not there or they do not feel strong and determined enough to carry out such persistant struggles again. That is what primarily needs to be changed, not the people. With regard to this point, the words of Cumhur Yavuz is important:

> Since we have not faced with ourselves, with them, with our relations, this people punish us. I got out of prison in August 1991. Fourteen days later, I went directly to Fatsa. … I visited villages. … Nobody turned their face away from me. They said, "Until now, nobody has knocked at our door." Those relations put my feet on the ground again. I was not able to find where I went to, I was puzzled. The problem is that the remainders of the revolutionary elements did not attempt to perpetuate that process. The problem is not about the people. … It is not possible to argue that masses acted because of fear or self interest. I went to a village, and came across a funeral *namaz*. The *imam* saw me and we greeted each other with our eyes. He said, "Welcome." There, our relations with the people from the *imam* to villagers had been good. The guy did not say, "Why has this communist come?" … When I returned, to those who said, "Do not go there. Nobody would welcome you, and look in your face," I said "You have attributed your fear and submission to the people. Unless you get rid of your inaction, you cannot get rid of the inaction of the people."[625]

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[624] For this meeting and the incidents after it see "100 Bin Çiftçiden Fındık Muhtırası," *Radikal*, 31 July 2006; "Karadeniz Yolu Trafiğe Kapandı," *Sabah*, 31 July 2006; "Fındıkçıdan Hükümete: Kimden Yanasınız?," *Milliyet*, 31 July 2006.

[625] "*Biz kendimizle, onlarla, ilişkilerimizle hesaplaşmadığımız, yüzleşmediğimiz için bu halk cezalandırıyor bizi. Ben 91 Ağustos'ta çıktım. 14 gün sonra doğru Fatsa'ya gittim. … Köyleri gezdim. … Kimse yüzüme bakmamazlık etmedi. 'Bugüne kadar kimse bizim kapımızı çalmadı.' dediler. O ilişkiler benim ayaklarımı yeniden yere bastırdı. Gittiğim yeri bulamıyordum, şaşkındım. Mesele devrimci unsurların kalanlarının o süreci sürdürme iddiasını göstermemiş olmalarıdır. Sorun halkta değildir. … Genel kitle için korku veya çıkarla hareket ediyordu denilemez. Köye gittim bir cenaze namazına denk geldim. İmam beni gördü, gözüyle selamlaştık. 'Hoş geldin' dedi. Orda imamından köylüsüne herkesle ilişkilerimiz iyiydi. 'Komünist neden geldi?' demiyor adam. … Bana 'Oraya gitme, kimse seni hoş karşılamaz, yüzüne bakmaz' diyenlere dönünce dedim ki 'Siz kendi ürkekliğinizi ve yılgınlığınızı halka mal etmişsiniz. Siz kendi üzerinizdeki ölü toprağını atamadıkça halkın üzerindeki ölü toprağını atamazsınız.*'" Cumhur Yavuz, interview by Kerem Morgül, tape recording, Ankara, 13 February 2007.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

For almost three decades, we have been experiencing a process of neo-liberal globalization which might be defined briefly as a global attack by Capital against Labor. Paradoxically, this period is characterized by mass impoverishment, high unemployment rates, low living standarts and increasing inequality within and between countries on the one hand, and the decline of class-based social movements on the other. Undoubtedly, Turkey has not been immune to these developments. Indeed, the current weakness of the social opposition in the country forms a sharp contrast with the 1960-1980 period during which broad masses embraced radical projects against the social order. One of the reasons for this weakness is, no doubt, the ideological hegemony of neo-liberalism which exhibits itself with such notions as the inevitability of capitalist globalization and the impossibility of collective emancipation.

A significant factor fostering these notions is the exploitation of the past as a tool of the dominant classes. In the official historiography, the widespread social struggles in the 1960s and 1970s are either completely disregarded or distorted as to be merely left-right conflicts, youth radicalism and terrorism. Consequently, not only class struggles carried out in the social arena are reduced simply to acts of violence, but also possible alternatives to the current social order are marginalized, and existing power relations based on inequality and exploitation are strengthened.

On the other hand, in the social sciences literature about the period, the social struggles are, more often than not, explained only with reference to some macro-structures such as the economic crisis, thus the constituent roles and the experiences of historical actors who took part in these processes are ignored. In fact, explicitly or implicitly these studies depict social disturbances as a price paid for social and economic modernization or as a symptom of defective modernization peculiar to Third World societies. As a result, class struggles are concealed and the exploitation of the laboring classes is justified on the ground of a unilinear progress narrative.

However, the colonization of history by the ruling classes, and the surrender of a substantial portion of social scientists do not point out an absolute victory. This process also involves counter-hegemonic struggles. In this sense, this thesis is an attempt to make a modest contribution, via the Fatsa experience, to the efforts to revive the collective memory about the social struggles in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s. For sure, this is also an attempt to recall the potential alternatives to the existing unfair social order.

Actually, the Fatsa case alone is enough to disprove the above-mentioned reductionist views about these social struggles. As argued in the second chapter, parallel to the commercialization of agriculture in Turkey beginning from the 1950s onwards, a coastal town open to outside, Fatsa, developed as an agriculture-based commercial center which marketed the hazelnut produced in its rural hinterland, and reproduced itself with the income from this trade. What is presented by the official historiography as left-right polarization within the youth, and by many social scientists as the inevitable social reflections of some macro-structural transformations were, in reality, the class struggles and alliances, carried out within the framework of this social structure, between the state, local government, usurers,

big merchants, small tradesmen, hazelnut producers, landless peasants and the urban poor. In this context, the chief achievement of the revolutionary movement in Fatsa was to embrace, to a large extent, the reactions of an absolute majority of the laboring classes against the existing social order, and to make itself an indispensable component of the social opposition by integrating with the everyday struggles of the ordinary people.

Actually, the period between 1960 and 1980 in Turkey as a whole amounted to a historical swelling of the social opposition wave which brought about a partial departure from the traditional left that had risen predominantly on the shoulders of intellectuals and students until then. In this epoch, the reactions and resistances of workers, landless peasants, small agricultural producers, *gecekondu* dwellers, and petty civil servants and tradesmen became the major dynamic of the social struggles throughout the country. Intellectuals and students were still pretty influential; however, their sphere of influence depended, first and foremost, on their relationship with wider social segments. Indeed what worried the ruling classes principally were not some leading socialists, but the massification of socialism itself. In this sense, against those views that reduce the political arena to inter-elite struggles, and regard common people as passive receivers of the outcomes of these struggles, this thesis claims that in the 1960s and 1970s the struggles and resistances of laboring classes were the main component that shaped the political arena all over the country.

Among these social struggles Fatsa had a place of special importance. Besides the ceaseless efforts and limitless sacrifices of the historical actors in the town, the key reason for this was the local character of the social opposition in Fatsa. Despite the fact that it was influenced by the global and countrywide political atmosphere and had organic ties with exterior oppositional movements (as in the case of the

village practices of university students), during the 1960s and early 1970s the social movement in the town was mainly constituted upon the determined efforts of the local cadres, such as Ziya Yılmaz, Ertan Sarıhan, Ahmet Atasoy and Fikri Sönmez, who knew the local problems very well and performed in-depth practices especially about the hazelnut question.

Owing to the flexible organizational structure of the Dev-Yol, this local character was preserved during the second half of the 1970s when the social opposition grew a great deal all over the country. In fact, the Dev-Yol was initially founded as an organization which gave priority to armed struggles to achieve the revolution that was regarded as a two-stage process: first to acquire state power, and then to initiate a top-down social transformation by using this power. Considering state power to be the principal agent of social change, the Dev-Yol was following what John Holloway defines as "the state paradigm," which has been dominant in the socialist thought either in its reformist or revolutionary form throughout the tweentieth century.[626] However, drawing lessons from the THKP-C experience, of which they were the heirs, the Dev-Yol leaders put forward a process of party-building, named as the *Partileşme Süreci*, instead of organizing a complete party immediately. According to them, building the revolutionary party was a matter of training enough numbers of qualified cadres, and qualified cadres could only be trained in practice. In other words, the institutionalization and the ideological evolution of the Dev-Yol was incomplete, and political practices that were to be performed within mass struggles were regarded as the remedy. Consequently, a considerable autonomy and iniative were granted to local actors, and a dialectical relationship was set up between the Dev-Yol center and local cadres on the one

[626] John Holloway, *İktidar Olmadan Dünyayı Değiştirmek*, 2nd ed., translated by Pelin Siral (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), pp.25-7.

hand, and local cadres and local people on the other. That is to say, policies were not determined and put into practice from above on the basis of some ideological dogmas, but were shaped by a mutual interaction developed between the revolutionaries and common people inside the fresh struggles of everyday life on the ground of "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions."

This flexible structure opening door to localness allowed the revolutionaries in Fatsa, who were local people too, to focus, with all their power, on the concrete problems of the people in the town. The political practices in this era had three main axes. These were the anti-fascist resistances, the black market raids, and the struggles against the exploitation in the hazelnut, of which the struggles against usury was a significant component. Thanks to these struggles, the revolutionary movement in the town turned into a fair and effective power in the eyes of the people, and acquired the local government through democratic elections. In this period, the dialectical relationship between the revolutionaries and the people took a great leap forward with the foundation of the People's Committees, which were a means for ensuring the participation of the people in the decision-making processes that affected their lives. Besides the neighbourhood problems concerning the municipality, the people of Fatsa discussed and settled all their everyday problems including blood feuds, land disputes, girl abductions, family problems and unequal gender relations in these committees. What provided the revolutionary movement in Fatsa with an extensive social support in a highly differentiated population in terms of social, economic and, to some degree, political identities was primarily this determination and capability to solve the actual troubles of the people.

All these indicated a departure in Fatsa from "the state paradigm" the Dev-Yol advocated initially. In fact, Fatsa was not an identical implementation of the Dev-

Yol idea, but the reshaping and transcending of it in practice by local cadres and people in accordance with local conditions. In this context, as much as it was a part of it, the Fatsa experience can also be regarded as a criticism of the Dev-Yol. Using the Gramscian terminology, this can be described as a transition from "the war of manoeuvre" to "the war of position" in the sense that the revolutionary practice was not confined to the efforts to acquire state power, but also regarded as a process of developing alternative social relations beginning from the present. Indeed, in the course of time, a new set of human relations based on self-confidence, participation, solidarity, equality and justice began to flourish in Fatsa. In this sense, what happened in Fatsa also amounted to a transition from revolution as a sudden moment of drastic rupture to revolution as a process of continuous making. Having an idea of revolutionary practice that was not predetermined, but open-ended, and shaped by historical subjects in the process of solving their authentic problems, the Fatsa experience can be regarded as a criticism, in practice, of determinist Marxism which, as a result of too abstract and macro explanations for concrete problems, overlooks the specifities of each case and neglects "small works" that are considered to be dressing the wounds of capitalism. I think, as long as the big picture, that is global capitalism, is not ignored, with the stress it made on localness, participation and solving the concrete problems of the people, this criticism might re-open a space for the currently declining social opposition again.

However, we should be careful not to exaggerate these tendencies in Fatsa, which were in reality incomplete and immature. Despite its remarkable success at integrating with the people and their problems, in the final analysis the revolutionary movement in Fatsa could not manage to turn itself into the self-organization of the small hazelnut producers and the urban poor, who composed the class base of the

social opposition in the town. That is to say, the dichotomy between the authority and the ruled did not disappear altogether. Because of the dual organizational structure taken from the Dev-Yol, politically and organizationally, a line was drawn between the broad masses of agricultural producers, landless peasants, small tradesmen and the urban poor on the one hand, and the revolutionary cadres most of whom were young male children of these people on the other. As a result, the common people of Fatsa lacked institutional mechanisms to have a word on the strategical orientation and decisions of the organization. To put it briefly, in terms of its organizational structure and capabilities, the revolutionary movement in Fatsa way fell behind the rapidly developing social opposition. For this reason, it is not true to present the Fatsa experience as a near-perfect example of direct democracy or living together in peace, as it is done in the official historiography of the Dev-Yol. Actually, this is a left-wing instance of "the invention of tradition," and as argued in the first chapter, the danger awaiting the receivers of tradition is becoming a tool of the power. For sure, turning the Fatsa experince itself into a dogma would seriously harm the emancipatory potential it has for the laboring classes today. If this thesis has any merit, I wish it would be a humble contribution to the realization of this potential.

APPENDIXES



Fig. 2. Fikri Sönmez making a speech in a hazelnut meeting in the 1960s. Source: *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1* (Documentary Film), (Ankara: Özgür Açılım, 2007).



Fig. 3. Special edition of *Devrimci Yol* about the hazelnut question.



Fig. 4. Women protesting costliness and the pressures in Fatsa. Source: *Demokrat*, 2 April 1980.



Fig. 5. Women during a black market raid. Source: *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1* (Documentary Film), (Ankara: Özgür Açılım, 2007).



Fig. 6. Mayor Fikri Sönmez in his office. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 7. A People's Committee meeting. Source: *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1* (Documentary Film), (Ankara: Özgür Açılım, 2007).



Fig. 8. Fatsa before the "End to Mud Campaign." Source: *Fatsa Gerçeği Unutturulanlar-1* (Documentary Film), (Ankara: Özgür Açılım, 2007).

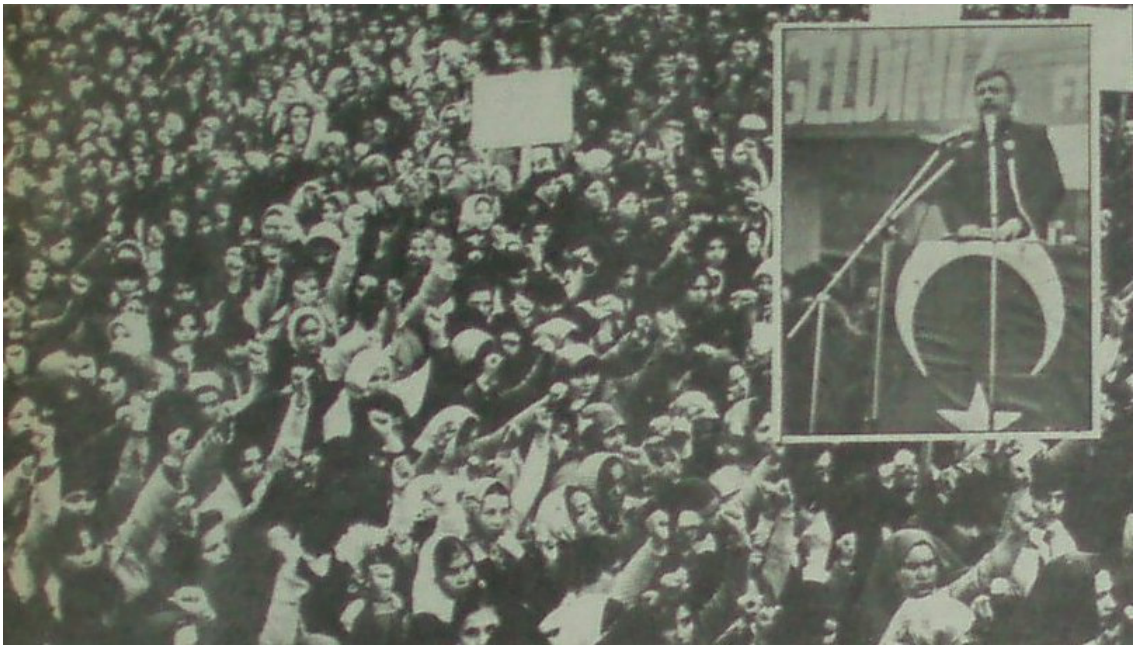


Fig. 9. Women swearing in at the opening of the People's Culture Festival with their left hands in the air. Source: *Demokrat*, 6 May 1980.

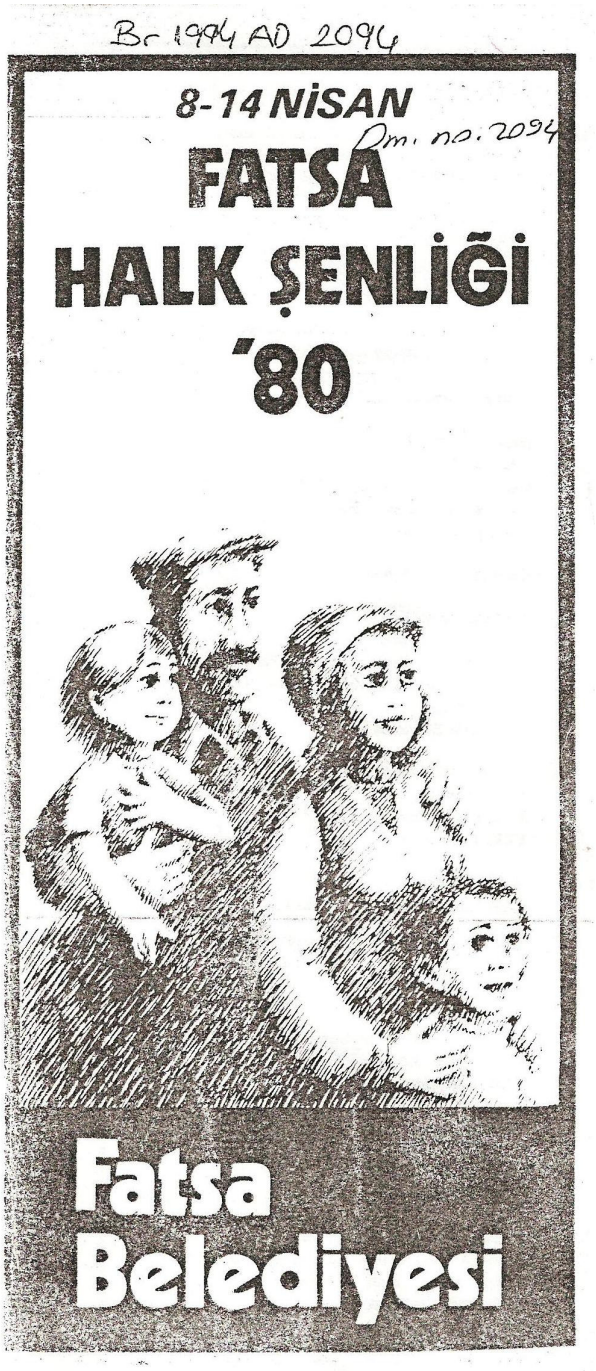
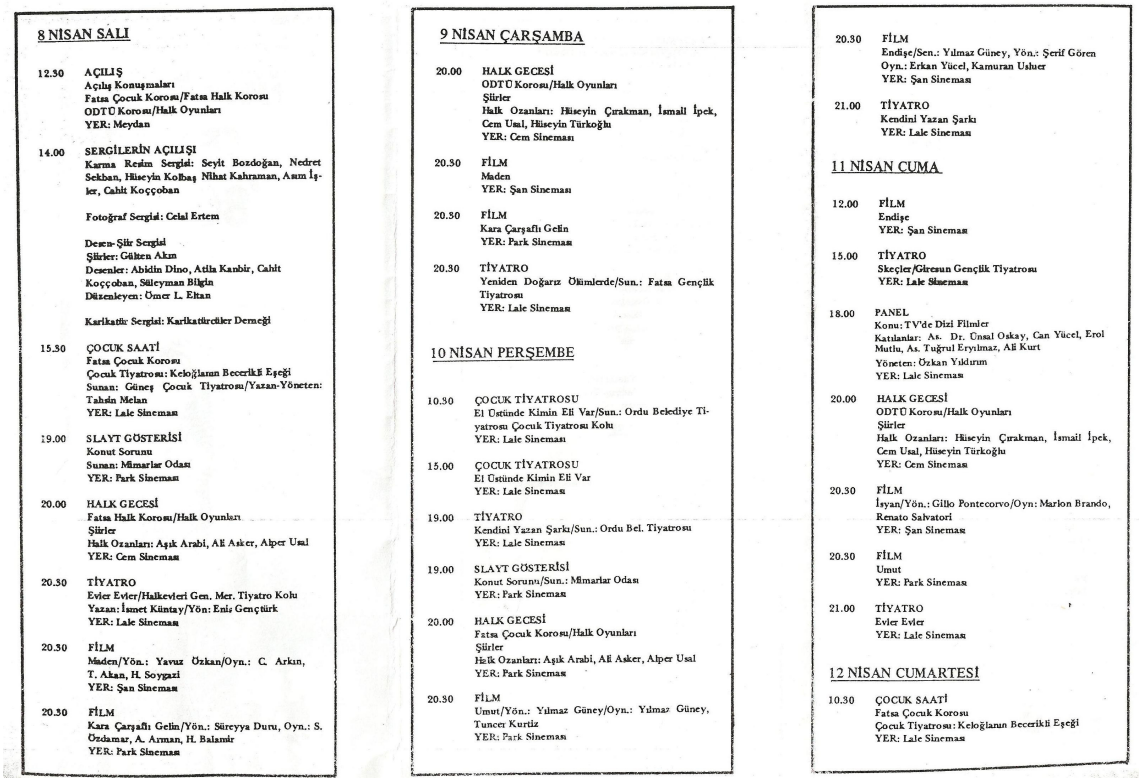


Fig. 10. Cover of the Festival Program. Source: Milli Kütüphane, BR 1994 AD 2094.



8 NİSAN SALI

12.30 AÇILIŞ
Açılış Konuşmaları
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu/Fatsa Halk Korosu
ODTÜ Korosu/Halk Oyunları
YER: Meydan

14.00 SERGİLERİN AÇILIŞI
Karma Resim Sergisi: Seyit Bozdoğan, Nedret Sekban, Hüseyin Kolbaş Nihat Kahraman, Asım İşler, Cahit Koççoban

Fotoğraf Sergisi: Celal Ertem

Desen-Şiir Sergisi
Şiirler: Gülten Akın
Desenler: Abidin Dino, Atila Kanbir, Cahit Koççoban, Süleyman Bilgin
Düzenleyen: Ömer L. Eltan

Karikatür Sergisi: Karikatürcüler Derneği

15.30 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu: Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
Sunan: Güneş Çocuk Tiyatrosu/Yazan-Yöneten: Tahsin Melan
YER: Lale Sineması

19.00 SLAYT GÖSTERİSİ
Konut Sorunu
Sunan: Mimarlar Odası
YER: Park Sineması

20.00 HALK GECESİ
Fatsa Halk Korosu/Halk Oyunları
Şiirler
Halk Ozanları: Aşık Arabi, Ali Asker, Alper Usal
YER: Cem Sineması

20.30 TİYATRO
Evler Evler/Halkevleri Gen. Mer. Tiyatro Kolu
Yazan: İsmet Küntay/Yön: Eniş Gençtürk
YER: Lale Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Maden/Yön.: Yavuz Özkan/Oyn.: C. Arkın, T. Akan, H. Soygazi
YER: Şan Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Kara Çarşaflı Gelin/Yön.: Süreyya Duru, Oyn.: S. Özdamar, A. Arman, H. Balamir
YER: Park Sineması

9 NİSAN ÇARŞAMBA

20.00 HALK GECESİ
ODTÜ Korosu/Halk Oyunları
Şiirler
Halk Ozanları: Hüseyin Çırakman, İsmail İpek, Cem Usal, Hüseyin Türkoğlu
YER: Cem Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Maden
YER: Şan Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Kara Çarşaflı Gelin
YER: Park Sineması

20.30 TİYATRO
Yeniden Doğarız Ölümlerde/Sun.: Fatsa Gençlik Tiyatrosu
YER: Lale Sineması

10 NİSAN PERŞEMBE

10.30 ÇOCUK TİYATROSU
El Üstünde Kimin Eli Var/Sun.: Ordu Belediye Tiyatrosu Çocuk Tiyatrosu Kolu
YER: Lale Sineması

15.00 ÇOCUK TİYATROSU
El Üstünde Kimin Eli Var
YER: Lale Sineması

19.00 TİYATRO
Kendini Yazan Şarkı/Sun.: Ordu Bel. Tiyatrosu
YER: Lale Sineması

19.00 SLAYT GÖSTERİSİ
Konut Sorunu/Sun.: Mimarlar Odası
YER: Park Sineması

20.00 HALK GECESİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu/Halk Oyunları
Şiirler
Halk Ozanları: Aşık Arabi, Ali Asker, Alper Usal
YER: Park Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Umut/Yön.: Yılmaz Güney/Oyn.: Yılmaz Güney, Tuncer Kurtiz
YER: Park Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Endişe/Sen.: Yılmaz Güney, Yön.: Şerif Gören
Oyn.: Erkan Yücel, Kamuran Usluer
YER: Şan Sineması

21.00 TİYATRO
Kendini Yazan Şarkı
YER: Lale Sineması

11 NİSAN CUMA

12.00 FİLM
Endişe
YER: Şan Sineması

15.00 TİYATRO
Skeçler/Giresun Gençlik Tiyatrosu
YER: Lale Sineması

18.00 PANEL
Konu: TV'de Dizi Filmler
Katılanlar: As. Dr. Ünsal Oskay, Can Yücel, Erol Mutlu, As. Tuğrul Eryılmaz, Ali Kurt
Yöneten: Özkan Yıldırım
YER: Lale Sineması

20.00 HALK GECESİ
ODTÜ Korosu/Halk Oyunları
Şiirler
Halk Ozanları: Hüseyin Çırakman, İsmail İpek, Cem Usal, Hüseyin Türkoğlu
YER: Cem Sineması

20.30 FİLM
İsyan/Yön.: Gillo Pontecorvo/Oyn: Marlon Brando, Renato Salvatori
YER: Şan Sineması

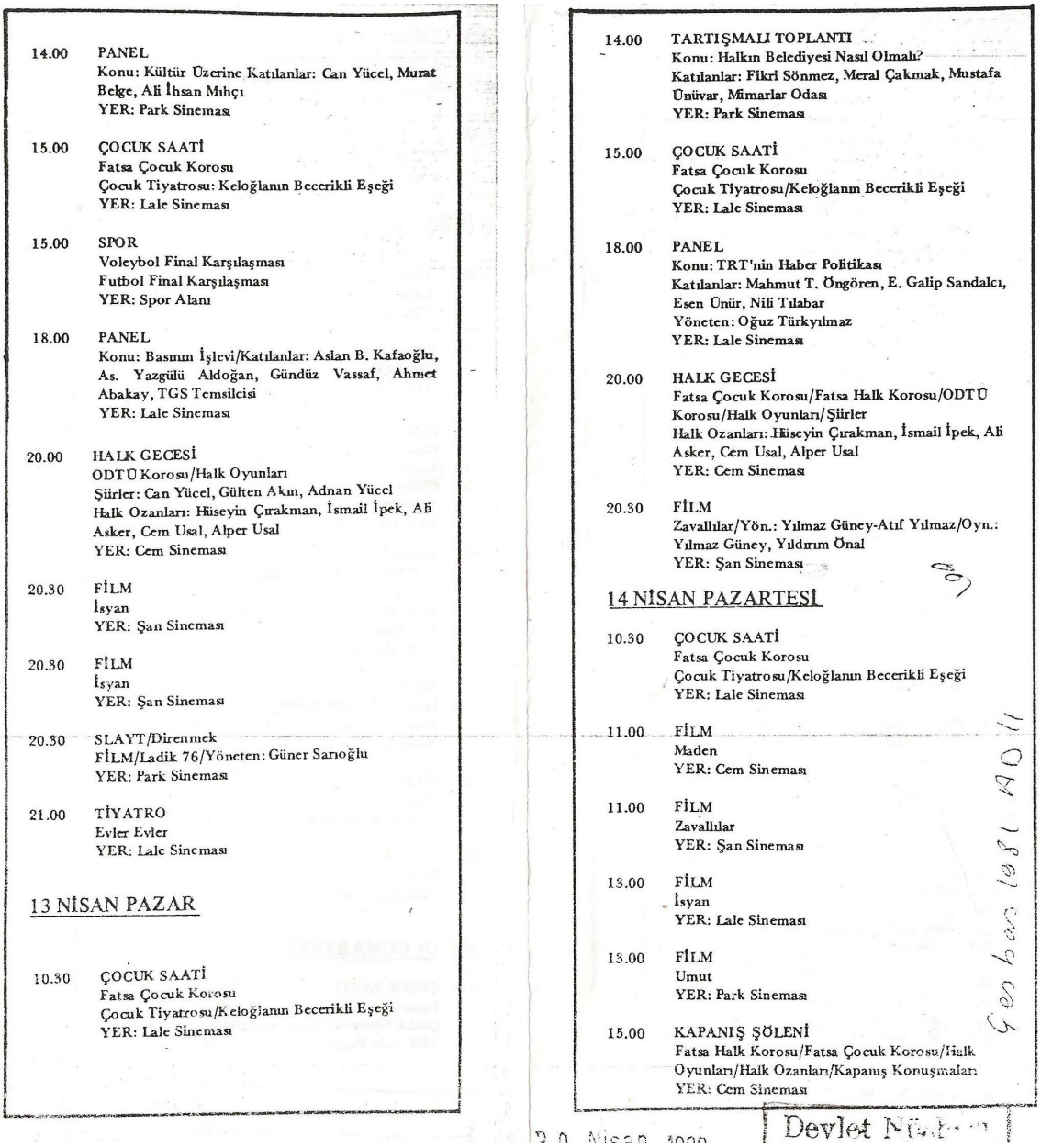
20.30 FİLM
Umut
YER: Park Sineması

21.00 TİYATRO
Evler Evler
YER: Lale Sineması

12 NİSAN CUMARTESİ

10.30 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu: Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
YER: Lale Sineması

Fig. 11. Festival Program Page 2.



14.00 PANEL
Konu: Kültür Üzerine Katılanlar: Can Yücel, Murat Belge, Ali İhsan Mıhçı
YER: Park Sineması

15.00 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu: Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
YER: Lale Sineması

15.00 SPOR
Voleybol Final Karşılaşması
Futbol Final Karşılaşması
YER: Spor Alanı

18.00 PANEL
Konu: Basının İşlevi/Katılanlar: Aslan B. Kafaoğlu, As. Yazgülü Aldoğan, Gündüz Vassaf, Ahmet Abakay, TGS Temsilcisi
YER: Lale Sineması

20.00 HALK GECESİ
ODTÜ Korosu/Halk Oyunları
Şiirler: Can Yücel, Gülten Akın, Adnan Yücel
Halk Ozanları: Hüseyin Çırakman, İsmail İpek, Ali Asker, Cem Usal, Alper Usal
YER: Cem Sineması

20.30 FİLM
İsyan
YER: Şan Sineması

20.30 FİLM
İsyan
YER: Şan Sineması

20.30 SLAYT/Direnmek
FİLM/Ladik 76/Yöneten: Güner Sarıoğlu
YER: Park Sineması

21.00 TİYATRO
Evler Evler
YER: Lale Sineması

13 NİSAN PAZAR

10.30 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu/Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
YER: Lale Sineması

14.00 TARTIŞMALI TOPLANTI
Konu: Halkın Belediyesi Nasıl Olmalı?
Katılanlar: Fikri Sönmez, Meral Çakmak, Mustafa Ünüvar, Mimarlar Odası
YER: Park Sineması

15.00 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu/Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
YER: Lale Sineması

18.00 PANEL
Konu: TRT'nin Haber Politikası
Katılanlar: Mahmut T. Öngören, E. Galip Sandalcı, Esen Ünür, Nili Tılabar
Yöneten: Oğuz Türkyılmaz
YER: Lale Sineması

20.00 HALK GECESİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu/Fatsa Halk Korosu/ODTÜ Korosu/Halk Oyunları/Şiirler
Halk Ozanları: Hüseyin Çırakman, İsmail İpek, Ali Asker, Cem Usal, Alper Usal
YER: Cem Sineması

20.30 FİLM
Zavallılar/Yön.: Yılmaz Güney-Atıf Yılmaz/Oyn.: Yılmaz Güney, Yıldırım Önal
YER: Şan Sineması

14 NİSAN PAZARTESİ

10.30 ÇOCUK SAATİ
Fatsa Çocuk Korosu
Çocuk Tiyatrosu/Keloğlanın Becerikli Eşeği
YER: Lale Sineması

11.00 FİLM
Maden
YER: Cem Sineması

11.00 FİLM
Zavallılar
YER: Şan Sineması

13.00 FİLM
İsyan
YER: Lale Sineması

13.00 FİLM
Umut
YER: Park Sineması

15.00 KAPANIŞ ŞÖLENİ
Fatsa Halk Korosu/Fatsa Çocuk Korosu/Halk Oyunları/Halk Ozanları/Kapanış Konuşmaları
YER: Cem Sineması

Fig. 12. Festival Program Last Page.



Fig. 13. *Tercüman* celebrating Target Operation. Souce: *Tercüman*, 12 July 1980.



Fig. 14. Governor Reşat Akkaya (on the left) and Lieutenant Colonel İbrahim Karakaya a few hours after the beginning of the operation. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 15. A group of military troops during the operation. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 16. A tank patrolling the town during the operation. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 17. A masked *ülkücü* (in white clothes) guiding the security forces in house-to-house searches. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 18. *Ülkücü*s setting up the bureau of Hergün newspaper in Fatsa after the operation. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 19. Curfew. After the operation the people of Fatsa did not celebrate their "Second Liberation" as *Tercüman* claimed. As seen, there were no one, but only journalists and soldiers in the streets. Source: Saim Tokaçoğlu Archive.



Fig. 20. Grave of Fikri Sönmez in the Kabakdağ village of Fatsa. In the gravestone it reads “Whatever I have done, I have done for and with my people.”



Fig. 21. People of Fatsa waiting for Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in April 2007. The picture gives a clue about the dramatic social and political transformation in the town.



Fig. 22. Producers in the hazelnut meeting organized by the ÖDP in Fatsa in July 2006. The picture shows that there is still room for hope. Source: ÖDP e-mail group.

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