AN ANALYSIS OF THE OTTOMAN CARPET INDUSTRY, 1843-1914: WORKERS, MERCHANTS AND THE STATE

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the carpet industry across Asia Minor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It shows that various Central and Western Anatolian towns such as Uşak, Kayseri, Isparta, Niğde, Nevşehir and Sivas were significant carpet production centers working in close cooperation with each other. It also reveals that beginning in the mid-19th century, demand for the Ottoman Empire's carpets thrived in the foreign markets and this sparked various transformations in the industry. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the industry became increasingly export-oriented and this development caused significant changes in the carpet production industry, altered traditional production methods and existing relations of productions. It examines how workers and local merchants reacted to these changes and how they took part in this restructuring. This study also demonstrates that the Ottoman state also played a role in the transformations that took place in the carpet industry. Last, the present analysis aims to make the experiences of female carpet workers visible, who constituted the majority of the carpet industry's work force. It investigates what kinds of gender ideologies were at play in regulating the female carpet workers' relationship with the state and how these ideologies influenced female workers' daily and work experiences. It argues that, especially during the reign of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909), the Ottoman government demonstrated a patriarchal attitude towards female workers, in which a father-daughter kind of a relationship was established between the female workers and the state.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, carpet industry, gender and labor, Uşak, Kayseri, the Hereke Imperial Factory, labor activism

ÖZET

Bu çalışma 19. ve 20. yüzyıldaki Anadolu halı endüstrisini incelemektedir. Uşak, Kayseri, Isparta, Niğde, Nevşehir ve Sivas gibi çeşitli Orta ve Batı Anadolu şehirleri birbirleriyle yakın işbirliği içinde çalışmakta olan önemli halı imalat merkezleridir. 19. yüzyıl ortalarında, yabancı pazarlarda Osmanlı halılarına karşı ilgi artmış ve bu ilgi endüstride çeşitli değişimleri tetiklemiştir. 19. yüzyılın sonu, 20. yüzyılın başlarında, halı endüstrisi yoğun bir biçimde ihracata yönelik olmuş, bu gelişme halı üretim sanayisinde çeşitli değişimlere yol açmış ve var olan geleneksel üretim biçimlerini ve üretim ilişkilerini değiştirmiştir. Bu çalışmada işçilerin ve yerel tüccarların bu dönüşümlere nasıl cevap verdiği ve halı sanayinin yeniden yapılanmasında bu aktörlerin ne tip roller aldığı incelenmektedir. Bu çalışma ayrıca Osmanlı Devleti'nin de halı endüstrisinde gerçekleşen dönüşümlerde aldığı rolü gösterir. Son olarak, buradaki analiz halı endüstrisinin emek gücünün büyük çoğunluğunu oluşturan kadın halı işçilerinin tecrübelerini görünür kılmayı hedefler. Bu çalışma, kadın halı işçilerinin devletle olan ilişkilerini şekillendirmede ne tip toplumsal cinsiyet ideolojilerinin rol oynadığına odaklanır ve bu ideolojilerin kadın işçilerin günlük ve iş tecrübelerini nasıl etkilediğini inceler. Bu teze göre, özellikle II. Abdülhamid Dönemi'nde (1876 – 1909), Osmanlı devleti kadın işçilere karşı, kadın işçilerle kendisi arasında "baba-kız" ilişkisi kurduğu bir ataerkil tutum sergilemiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, halı sanayii, emek ve toplumsal cinsiyet, Uşak, Kayseri, Hereke Fabrika-i Hümayunu, emek hareketleri.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the carpet production activities that took place within factories, small-scale workshops and households in Asia Minor in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and lays daily and work experiences of the laborers bare in this sector. It focuses on the impact of the economic integration of the carpet production to the world economy. Carpet industry's economic integration meant the reorientation of the production towards export. Due to these changes, foreign merchants began to assume more roles in the industry in the late 19th and the 20th centuries. Their presence transformed the carpet production in the traditional carpet weaving centers such as Uşak, Kula, Gördes and Demirci and encouraged the emergence of new production centers across Asia Minor such as Isparta, Kayseri, Konya, Nevşehir, Niğde, and Sivas.[1] In addition to the foreign merchants, some local merchants also played a role in carpet industry's restructuring and they took part in the alterations of existing production methods and relations.

The transformation of the industry caused significant changes in the lives of the laborers who were employed at various phases of the carpet production, such as dyeing, spinning and weaving. Whereas expanding carpet production across Asia Minor created new employment opportunities for especially young girls and women as weavers, changes in the production process threatened the jobs of some spinners and dyers.[2] However, producers were not the passive objects of these changes. To the contrary, in some cases, they became the agent of change and restructured production relations in

[1] Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1820-1914," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire vol.2, 1600-1914* eds. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 914; Donald Quataert, "Machine Breaking and the Changing Carpet Industry of Western Anatolia, 1860-1908," *Journal of Social History* 19 (1986): 473-489.
[2] Yavuz Selim Karakışla "Arşivden Bir Belge: Uşak'ta Kadın Halı İşçilerinin İsyanı (1908)," Toplumsal Tarih 36 (2002), 54-57; Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".

order to respond to the forces of export-oriented production. In other instances, they engaged in various forms of working class activism such as strikes and street protests. The present study mainly inquires how the aforementioned transformations in the carpet production sector influenced the lives of carpet workers and how they responded to these changes. In so doing, this analysis also seeks to shed some light on the experiences of female carpet workers visible who constituted the majority of the work force in the sector.

1.1 Scholarship on Ottoman Labor History

During the 1960s, inspired by the work of E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* and the global 1968 movement which demanded greater equality and justice, social historians in the United States and Europe aimed at shedding light on the activities of the popular classes in an attempt to rescue their experiences from elite-based narratives. Labor history got its share from this shift in perspective and historians paid more attention to the experiences of the working classes in Europe and the United States. Nevertheless, as Donald Quataert states "Ottoman labor history has not quite emerged as a subfield in the way that there are separate labor history subfields in US, British or French history"[3]. According to Quataert, in the pre-1970 period this problem stemmed from the dominance of the modernization paradigm and Orientalism that placed greater emphasis on the experiences of elites. The problem of the post-1970 period was greater interest in the economic history with a little concern for the individuals who were laboring in the industrial and agricultural sectors.[4]

[3] Donald Quataert, "Labor History and the Ottoman Empire, c.1700-1922," *International Labor and Working Class History* 60 (2001), 95.
[4] Ibid.

Despite these problems, in the 1960s and 1970s scholars produced the first studies on Ottoman labor history. They were heavily influenced by the Marxist historiography and focused mainly on the emergence of socialist ideas, labor unions and political organizations as signs of workers' class-consciousness.[5] These studies contributed to the literature by paying attention to the agency of the workers who were mostly ignored in Ottoman historiography since then. By scrutinizing workers' organizations, ideas and the strikes, they challenged the dominant historiography which was mainly interested in the political history of the Ottoman Empire and which focused on the activities of the state elites rather than ordinary people. Yet, these scholars' analyses remained short of providing information about the so-called non-material dimensions such as gender, religion, ethnicity and culture that also has an influence on the class experiences of workers. Most of these studies considered the "worker" as a unified category and ignored the significance of other axes of differences. Furthermore, as Zachary Lockman has argued, this kind of orthodox Marxist perspective on labor history has created an "epistemology of absence". Confining scholarly interest to strikes, the emergence of socialist ideas and class consciousness created a teleological understanding of history, in which transition to a post-capitalist socialist order was expected.[6]

Following these studies, scholars also produced more nuanced studies on labor activism in the late Ottoman era. For instance, Şehmus Güzel documents the strikes that took place in this period and investigates the regional and sectoral distribution of these

[5] Mete Tunçay, *Türkiye'de Sol Akımlar* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi, 1967); Oya Sencer, *Türkiye'de İşçi Sınıfı: Doğuşu ve Yapısı* (İstanbul: Habora Kitabevi, 1969); Kemal Sülker, *100 Soruda Türkiye'de İşçi Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1976); Hüseyin Avni Şanda, *1908 İşçi Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1976).

[6] Zachary Lockman, "Introduction," in *Workers and Working Classes in the Middle East* ed. Zachary Lockman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994): xi-xxxi.

strikes.[7] Güzel also acknowledges the significance of alternative forms of labor activism other than strikes such as machine breaking and demonstrations. He also challenges previous studies' focus on the "universal male worker" and underlines the participation of women to labor activism.[8] Following Güzel's study on the strikes in the late Ottoman era and the strike wave of 1908, some other scholars provided new insights to the same issue. Yavuz Selim Karakışla, for instance, also documents the strikes that took place in the Ottoman Empire in late 19th and the early 20th centuries and places a special emphasis on the strike wave of 1908. He analyzes the reasons behind the 1908 strikes, reveals the demands of the workers and investigates the consequences of these strikes in various industries and cities.[9] Despite his meticulous effort to document working class activism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Karakışla's account has two major drawbacks. In the first place, by mostly focusing on those workers who were employed in the railroad companies, mines and factories, Karakışla's study overlooks the experiences of workers who were employed in small-scale workshops or who engaged in household based production. Furthermore, Karakışla's interest in strikes disregards the significance of other kinds of resistance by the workers which did not manifest itself in the forms organized action. Like Karakışla, Kadir Yıldırım, in his study on the working class institutions and strikes in the period from 1870 to 1922, also limits his attention mainly to the strikes that took place in the Ottoman Empire from 1870 to 1922. Yet, his detailed account gives important details regarding the profile of the workers, their organizations and demands during the strikes. Yıldırım carries the contribution of Karakışla and Güzel to a further level and presents

[7] M. Şehmus Güzel, *Türkiye'de İşçi Hareketleri* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1996).
[8] M. Şehmus Güzel, *İşçi Tarihine Bakmak* (İstanbul: Sosyal Tarih Yayınları, 2007).
[9] Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda 1908 Grevleri," *Toplum ve Bilim* 78 (1998).

a comprehensive narrative on the role of legal regulations on workers' activism during the late Ottoman era.[10]

In the last three decades, some scholars of the Ottoman and Middle Eastern labor history have begun to produce studies that seek to overcome the shortcomings of the abovementioned works. These scholars do not limit the agency of workers to the moments of strikes and do not exclusively focus on the emergence of class-consciousness but outline a more nuanced picture of workers' experiences by focusing on their daily experiences that were shaped by gender, culture, religion and ethnicity. Furthermore, these studies also pay attention to the labor processes outside of the factory shop floor and took the experiences of non-factory laborers into consideration. For instance, Donald Quataert demonstrates the existence of a vibrant manufacturing sector in the urban and rural areas of the Ottoman Empire and points out the indispensible role of female labor in this sector. His works underline the importance of workshops and households in textile manufacturing and points out the coexistence of this type of production with that of industrial kind. He strongly challenges the decline paradigm which assumed the decay of manufacturing activities in the empire with the advance of European industrialism. Quataert proposes that investigating manufacturing activities beyond the guild-based and urban-based production would reveal the vibrant manufacturing activities that took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries of Ottoman Empire. [11] In parallel to the contributions of Quataert, Sherry Vatter also

[10] Kadir Yıldırım, *Osmanlı'da Işçiler: Çalışma Hayatı, Örgütler, Grevler (1870-1922)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2013).

[11]Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of Industrial Revolution*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Roger Owen emphasizes the significance of going beyond dichotomies such as "modern vs. traditional", "pre-capitalist vs. capitalist" and "factory vs. workshop" in the historiography by focusing on the Lebanese silk and Egyptian sugar industries and points out the assets of looking at coexistences of abovementioned binaries. See Roger Owen, "The Study of Middle Eastern Industrial History: Notes on the Interrelationship Between Factories and Small Scale Manufacturing With Special References to Lebanese Silk and Egyptian Sugar, 1900-1930," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 16 (1984): 475-487.

focuses on non-industrial forms of production in the textile industry of Damascus from 1850 to 1914. Her account illustrates the struggles of the waged artisans against their masters. In so doing, Vatter's study gives agency to the actors other than factory workers who were in small-scale non-mechanized workshops and contradicts the view which presumed the existence of large capitalist factories as a precondition for labor activism.[12] Likewise, John Chalcraft's work on the late 19th and early 20th century Egypt brings attention to the experiences of non-factory laborers such as artisans and service workers whose narratives were mostly left out by the previous studies. In this study, Chalcraft analyzes the one-day strike of cab drivers in Egypt in 1907. In addition to paying attention to the experiences and struggles of the service workers, Chalcraft's study also presents a challenge to the decline paradigm by demonstrating the vibrant craft-based activity in Egypt in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[13]

Inspired by the aforementioned studies, this analysis seeks to present a holistic approach and attempts to bring manufacturing activities that took place in the households, small-scale workshops, and factories together. Vibrant carpet weaving activities took place in the households or workshops of various Central and Western Anatolian towns. For instance, in Uşak, Kayseri, Niğde and Isparta most of the female workers were weaving carpets either in their own households or at homes other than their own.[14] Putting-out networks were quite widespread in these cities 19th and 20th centuries, due to the increasing control of the foreign and some local merchants on the

[12] Sherry Vatter, "Militant Textile Weavers in Damascus: Waged Artisans and Ottoman Labor Movement," in *Workers and Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic 1839-1950* eds. Eric J. Zürcher and Donald Quataert, (London: Taurus, 1995): 35-57.
[13] John Chalcraft, *The Striking Cabbies of Cairo and Other Stories: Crafts and Guilds in Egypt, 1863-1914* (New York : State University of New York Press, 2001).
[14] Bela Horvath, *Anadolu 1913* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 81-82; J. W. Childs, *Across Asia Minor on Foot* (London: n.p., 1917), 179; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA.), Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (hereafter DH. MKT.) 2179/9 (6 Mart 1315 / 18 March 1899), BOA., DH. MKT. 1238/18 (21 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1323 / 3 February 1908).

carpet industry. In Uşak and its environs, the foreign and local merchants provided the local producers with necessary raw materials for carpet production or gave them cash, and took the finished carpets after a while.[15] Thus, households through putting-out networks and small-scale workshops occupied a significant place in the carpet production. In addition to investigating household and workshop based production, the present study also focuses on the Hereke Imperial Factory that was established in İzmit in 1843, whose precious silk carpets occupied a significant place in Ottoman carpet industry.[16] In addition to demonstrating the coexistence of different scales of production, the present study also examines the communication among these different carpet production centers. It argues that carpet production centers in Asia Minor did not operate in isolation. On the contrary, they constantly exchanged skillful masters, workers and ideas among each other. This interaction was a significant factor in the advance of the craft in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Regarding labor activism, the present study attempts to bring a comprehensive approach to working class actions. In the first place, it does not limit its focus to workers in action. To the contrary, it seeks to shed light on the daily experiences of carpet workers, particularly those of female workers. In addition to incorporating the moments of activism such as strikes, machine breakings and street demonstrations into account, this analysis also includes women's daily struggles and how they experienced work into the narrative. Secondly, it presents a holistic approach to class relations by examining the societal and political coalitions behind labor activism. Some recent studies in labor history demonstrate the link between worker's grievances and the local politics and

[15] Orhan Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi* (İstanbul: Yordam Kitap, 1974); Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[16] Although the Hereke Imperial Factory was called as a factory, we can assume that it was more like a big-scale workshop.

broader political developments. In a recent study, Can Nacar analyzes the relationship between the Ottoman state and the tobacco workers during the last years of Abdülhamid II's rule. Nacar shows how the Ottoman government played a mediatory role between tobacco workers and merchants in two strikes of tobacco workers in İskeçe and Kavala in 1904 and 1905 respectively, and how the sultan's government used this mediatory role to secure the loyalty of workers.[17] Similarly, in his study on coal heavers in Egypt, John Chalcraft demonstrates the link between broader political dynamics such as state-making and reform in Egypt and workers' protests. Chalcraft demonstrated that the state was not an external adversary to workers' protests.[18] Inspired by these works, this study underlines that the work-related struggles of the workers were not independent from the broader socio-economic and political dynamics outside of the workplace. In Uşak for instance, the machine-breaking incident that took place in 1908 reflected the conflicts among some local and foreign merchants. Similarly, the struggle of Armenian female carpet weavers in Karahisar, Sivas in 1904, against rising cotton and yarn prices was not autonomous from the struggles between the Armenian community and the Ottoman state during that era. Thus, factory and workshop owners, government officials, local notables and merchants were other important actors in my narratives and the power relations among these actors were significant in shaping workers' daily and work experiences.

1.2 Gender and Labor in the Ottoman Historiography

After the 1960s, inspired by the work of E.P. Thompson, European and American labor historians challenged the narrow focus of conventional labor history on formal

[17] Can Nacar, "Labor Activism And The State In The Ottoman Tobacco Industry," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46 (2014): 533-551.
[18] John Chalcraft, "The Coal Heavers of Port Sa'id: State Making and Worker Protest, 1869-1914," *International Labor and Working Class History* 60 (2001): 110-124.

labor organizations and strikes, and expanded the labor history's field of interest by incorporating "non-material" factors such as gender, culture, ethnicity and religion into analysis. This increasing interest in gender was part of a broader shift in the 1980s and 1990s in the feminist literature that paid more attention to gendered aspects of historical writing. Being aware of the gender bias in the discipline of history, feminist historians aimed at showing the presence of female subjects when history was in its making. From the point of view of these historians, women's subordination is also ensured by their invisibility in the historical accounts. Hence, making women visible in history was part of the emancipation project. Joan W. Scott, for example, underlines the viability of "gender as a useful category of historical analysis".[19] She redefines gender as a term which entails relations of power and as a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes. Scott points out the exclusiveness of class to other axes of differences and proposes that using gender as a tool of historical analysis has a potential to destabilize conventional notions of class. Similarly, Kathleen Canning concentrates on the relationship between gender/women's history and labor history and emphasizes the existence of "mutual distancing" among these two fields. She acknowledges the merits of Scott's contribution and states that the basic concepts of social history such as class, agency and experience were challenged and redefined by the feminist scholarship.[20]

Earlier studies on Ottoman labor history in the 1960s and 1970s were gender-blind and ignored the constitutive power of gender in shaping daily and work experiences of the laborers. The gender blindness of these studies was due to their uncritical evaluation

[19] Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review*, 91 (1986): 1053-1075.
[20] Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation: Rethinking German Labor History," *The American Historical Review* 97 (1992), 736.

of the archival documents. Combined with their narrow focus on formal labor institutions, strikes and the industrial labor force, this unsuspecting point of view created a gender bias in their analyses; since women were rarely welcomed in the labor institutions, and their employment in the factories was limited.[21] Part of this blindness was also due to the gender bias in the historical records in which women were mostly invisible.

Later generation of scholars employed a more critical perspective and overcame the shortcomings of earlier works. They incorporated gender to their analysis and scrutinized the intersection of gender and class in various examples. Their studies have demonstrated that neither the working class in the Ottoman Empire nor the working class activism in the late Ottoman era was universally male. They revealed both the significance of female labor in various sectors such as the textile, tobacco, and carpet making and the significance of gender in shaping laborers' daily and work experiences. Employment of thousands of women at these sectors was mostly due to employers' desire to have a cheaper and more submissive work force. Donald Quataert, for instance, emphasizes the central role female labor played in Ottoman textile industry and emphasizes that focusing on households and women's work is a key to understand the history of textile manufacturing in the late Ottoman Empire.[22] Other scholars investigate the two-way interaction between gender and class at different industries and scrutinize female workers' participation at various forms of labor activism. Gülhan Balsoy's study, for instance, comes to conclusions regarding gendered division of labor,

[21] Hadar argues that although women were also members of the unions, their influence in the decision making processes was limited. See Gila Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers in Salonica: Gender and Family in the Context of Social and Ethnic Strife" in *Women in the Ottoman Balkans: Gender, Culture and History* eds. A. Buturovic, & S. C. Irvin (London: I.B Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007), 134.

[22] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*; Donald Quataert, "Ottoman Women, Households and Textile Manufacturing, 1800-1914," in *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender* eds. Nikki R. Keddie, & B. Baron (Yale University Press, 2008): 161-176.

workplace hierarchies, ethnic component of the labor force and the production processes in the Cibali Tobacco Factory by drawing mainly on photographs taken by the Swedish photographer Guillaume Berggren at the factory at the turn of the 20th century. Balsoy also demonstrates the active role of female workers in the organization of strikes in the early 20th century.[23]

Similarly Gila Hadar's study on Jewish tobacco workers in Salonica examines how class consciousness developed among the young female workers and how this consciousness was translated into working class activism. She also examines the process whereby gender, ethnic and class identities are constructed among the female tobacco workers and shed lights on the way that their entrance into the workforce influenced how they conceived of themselves in the private and the public spheres.[24] Although Hadar's account is important in terms of emphasizing female workers' activism, her analysis remains shorts of showing the interaction between their activism at the work place and their experiences as women at the everyday level. Towards the end of her article, she concludes that participation of female workers caused no substantial change in their way of life. In other words, Hadar assumes that the patriarchal structure and family relations in the households were not challenged or modified by female workers' participation in collective labor protests. In so doing, she overlooks the two ways interaction between gender ideologies and the class.

In addition to examining women's participation in the strikes, some studies focused on other forms of resistances employed by women. Donald Quataert's study on Uşak's carpet workers, for instance, investigates how more than a thousand women and

[23] Gülhan Balsoy, "Gendering Ottoman Labor History: The Cibali Régie Factory in the Early Twentieth Century," *International Review of Social History* (2009): 45-68.
[24] Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers,".

children attacked the three yarn factories in Uşak in 1908 and destroyed the raw materials and the machinery in these factories. Like their Luddist counterparts in Britain, these women opted to break the machines that left them unemployed.[25] Similarly, Akhram Fuad Khater, in his study on female silk workers in the 19th century Mount Lebanon, demonstrates how women in silk factories expressed their grievances and demands by slowing down the pace of work or producing lower quality silk. Khater also shows how the increasing employment of female workers in silk factories modifies, challenges but at the same time reproduces the patriarchal structure of the society. He argues that the increasing presence of female workers in the silk factories redefined marriage, family and gender relations in Mount Lebanon and a new patriarchal bargain emerged as a result.[26]

While scrutinizing the transformations that took place in the carpet weaving sector of Asia Minor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this study attempts to make the work and daily experiences of female carpet workers visible. It investigates the two-way interaction between gender and class. On the one hand, it inquires how being a woman shaped female carpet workers' class experiences and on the other hand it questions how their employment interacted with the gender ideologies of the society and the state. While doing so, the present study does not limit its attention to the female workers' activism. It proposes that carpet workers' interaction with the factory owners, co-workers, local notables and the state officials were important indicators to envision their daily experiences as "workers" outside of the workplace and their experiences as workers in their daily lives. It argues that gender ideology of the Ottoman state

[25] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[26] Akhram F. Khater, ""House" to "Goddess of the House": Gender, Class and Silk in 19th Century Mount Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28 (1996): 325-348.

established a father-daughter kind of relation between the state and the female workers and this ideology was significant in shaping female carpet workers' experiences. During the reign of Abdülhamid II (r. 1876 – 1909), when the Ottoman state was facing various political, social and economic challenges, this gender ideology manifested itself in the form of a patriarchal discourse and this discourse was utilized as a legitimation strategy during the Hamidian era.

1.3 Structure and Sources

The documents from the Prime Ministry of Ottoman Archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*) provided most of the primary materials used for this study. Documents on different carpet production centers in Asia Minor that were usually filed under the *Bab-ı Âli Evrak Odası* or *Dahiliye Mektubî Kalemi* divisions provided the basis of this analysis. Other primary sources that are used to conduct this study include newspaper articles published in the *Servet-i Fünun* journal and travelers' memoirs.

The present analysis has two main limitations. In the first place, although it benefits from a variety of archival sources which discuss the vibrant carpet production across Asia Minor, it does not include any documents that were produced by the workers themselves. Yet, through a critical engagement with the archival materials, it does its best to overcome the persistent elite bias in the documents and give voice to the popular classes. The second limitation stems from the gender bias of the archival documents. Although female carpet workers constituted the majority of the carpet industry's workforce, their experiences rarely found a place in the archival materials. In most of the cases, female carpet workers were visible in "extraordinary" cases, such as when they rebelled, or when they were sexually harassed. Due to these limitations, the present account remains inadequate in terms of providing a more detailed analysis on female

workers' work experiences and to what extent their employment outside of their households transformed conventional gender mores of the Ottoman society.

This thesis is composed of three chapters and an epilogue. The first chapter delineates the carpet production activities across Asia Minor in the 19th and earlt 20th centuries. It divides the carpet production centers into three groups: The first group includes Uşak and its environs, namely Kula, Gördes and Demirci. The second group consists of those Central and Western Anatolian towns such as Isparta, Kayseri, Kütahya, Nevşehir and Niğde. These cities became more significant in carpet production in the second half of the 19th century, as a result of the increasing European demand for the Oriental carpets. The third group focuses on the operations of the Hereke Imperial Factory. The second chapter inquires the daily and work experiences of female carpet workers, and explores how gender, class and religion interacted with each other in their case. It also investigates in what ways the patriarchal rhetoric of the Ottoman state during the reign of Abdülhamid II was influential in shaping female workers' experiences. The last chapter focuses on the transformations that took place in the carpet industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, by taking the cases of Uşak and Kayseri as examples. It demonstrates how increasing interaction with the Western economy dismantled the existing mode and relations of production in Uşak's and Kayseri's carpet industries and scrutinizes the social reactions to these changes.

2. CARPET WEAVING INDUSTRY IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1843-1914)

Carpet weaving was a significant traditional craft in the Anatolia, long before the establishment of the Ottoman Empire.[27] Starting with the 13th century, interest in the art of carpet weaving in Anatolia increased and the craft showed significant progress until the 19th century in Asia Minor. By the 16th century, carpet-weaving centers in Western Anatolia such as Uşak, Kula, Gördes and Demirci advanced the craft to a further level. During this era, these cities' carpets were presented to the tastes of Western consumers.[28] Increasing interaction with Western consumers and merchants not only transformed the traditional craft but also encouraged the development of carpet production outside of the traditional weaving centers. In the mid-19th century, already existing small-scale production around Central and Eastern Anatolia expanded and Konya, Kayseri, Sivas, Kütahya and Isparta became important carpet weaving centers.[29] European and Ottoman merchants assumed significant roles in this restructuring, by creating new jobs, altering the employment patterns and lifestyles of the Ottoman producers. As Donald Quataert notes on the carpet industry: "By 1914, contemporary observers suggest, some 60,000 persons were working in the carpet industry of Asia Minor. Thus in the midst of post-1870 European industrial flowering, an Ottoman industry, producing a finished good (carpets), thrived."[30] The boom in European per capita income and European middle classes' increasing purchasing power

[27] Şerare Yetkin, *Türk Halı Sanatı* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1974); Oktay Aslanapa, *Türk Halı Sanatının 1000 Yılı* (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1986); Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 134; Besim Atalay, *Türk Halıcılığı ve Uşak Halıları* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1967).
[28] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*.
[29] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,"; Atalay, *Türk Halıcılığı*, 17.
[30] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".

made Oriental carpets[31] more popular for the emerging consuming classes in the West.[32]

Though there is a good deal of studies on the history of Anatolian carpets, they are mostly employing an art history perspective. Such studies provide rich information on the size, shapes, colors and patterns of Anatolian carpets. With a few exceptions, they remain short of giving details on the working conditions, division of labor and wages.[33] This chapter attempts to contribute to the literature by filling this gap. The first section revisits the decline paradigm in the historiography of Ottoman manufacturing and shows that there were vibrant manufacturing activities in the late Ottoman era. The second section portrays the carpet weaving activities across Asia Minor in the late Ottoman era. It divides carpet weaving centers into three groups: The first group includes established carpet weaving centers in Anatolia, such as Uşak and its environs, namely Kula, Gördes, and Demirci. Second group consists of carpet weaving centers outside of these traditional cities, in Central and Western Anatolia such as Isparta, Kayseri, Kütahya, Nevşehir and Niğde. These centers emerged in order to break the dominance of Uşak and its environs in the industry. Cheaper and unorganized labor and the availability of cheaper raw materials made these centers more attractive for the local and foreign merchants. The last group includes the Hereke Imperial Factory, in İzmit. In contrast to the first two groups, the Hereke Imperial Factory was a state initiative

[31] Oriental Carpets are the handmade rugs from the "Orient". European and American buyers and merchants named carpets that are produced in the Middle East or in Asia as Oriental Carpets. These carpets were made of silk, wool or cotton. Such carpets were the symbols of status and luxury for Western consumers. In this thesis, the term Oriental Carpets refers to those carpets that were produced in the Ottoman territories. For details see: Kurt Erdmann, *Seven Hundred Years of Oriental Carpets* (London: Faber, 1970).

[32] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 473, emphasis mine.

[33] See Atalay, *Türk Halıcılığı*; Yetkin, *Türk Halı Sanatı*; Oktay Aslanapa *Türk Halı Sanatının Bin Yılı* (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1987); Önder Küçükerman, *Anadolu'nun Geleneksel Halı ve Dokuma Sanatı İçinde Hereke Fabrikası: Saray'dan Hereke'ye Giden Yol* (Ankara: Sümerbank, 1987). Donald Quataert's studies on Ottoman manufacturing go beyond this art history perspective and provides information on wages, division of labor and working conditions.

and it was part of the Ottoman Empire's industrialization attempts during the Tanzimat era. The Hereke Imperial Factory produced for the needs of the Ottoman palaces and its products were presented as precious gifts to foreign rulers. It also undertook carpet production for the domestic market and did not engage in export-oriented production. Following this part, the analysis here focuses on the interaction and cooperation among these different production centers. It inquires the benefits of such interaction and the role the Ottoman state played in this communication.

2.1 Revisiting the Decline Paradigm: Ottoman Manufacturing during the 19th and early 20th Centuries

The scope and trajectory of manufacturing activities in the Ottoman Empire in particular and the non-Western in general in the 19th and 20th centuries cannot be studied in isolation from the developments in more industrialized countries.[34] The developments in the West and the increasing interaction between the Ottoman Empire and Europe caused significant transformations in the Ottoman manufacturing sector. Although there were close economic interactions between the Ottoman Empire and the European states already in the 16th century,[35] the volume of this interaction expanded with the beginning of 19th century, especially after the 1840s. Whereas foreign trade increased only two-fold during the 18th century, it grew more than ten times between the 1820s and 1914.[36] During this era, Ottoman Empire was exporting various agricultural outputs, raw materials and manufactured goods to the Western countries such as cotton, raw silk, tobacco, figs, grapes, nuts and olive oil. During the 18th century, French merchants played a dominant role in managing the foreign trade

[34] Şevket Pamuk, "The Decline and Resistance of Ottoman Cotton Textiles 1820-1913," *Explorations in Economic History* 23 (1986): 205-225.
[35] Quataert "The Age of Reforms," 824-834.
[36] Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı – Türkiye İktisadî Tarihi 1500-1914* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 210-212.

between the Ottoman Empire and the European countries. Yet, beginning in the 1820s, Britain became the key player in the Ottoman Empire's foreign trade. Together with the developments in communication, transportation and the relaxation of fiscal constraints of the previous era, Britain removed the obstacles before the capitalist development. These developments strengthened the position of Britain as the main center of accumulation in the world economy.[37] Following the 1820s, Britain's influence on the Empire's foreign trade regularly increased and reached its peak in the 1870s.[38]

In their quest for new markets for their capitalist expansion, the British secured the free movement of goods and capital through the use of political and military means.[39] In this way, Britain managed to incorporate new countries into the emerging capitalist economy. One such agreement, the Treaty of Baltalimanı, was signed between Britain and the Ottoman Empire in 1838. This "prohibited all monopolies and allowed British merchants to purchase goods anywhere in the Empire without payment of any taxes or dues, other than import duty or its equivalent in interior duty, and imposed duties of 3 percent on imports, twelve percent on exports and three percent on transit."[40] Other European countries soon followed the path opened by Britain and between 1838-1841 similar treaties were signed with other European states. These free trade treaties expanded the volume of foreign trade in the Ottoman Empire.[41]

[37] Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 41.
[38] Ibid. France's declining hegemony on Ottoman Empire's foreign trade was due to the influence of French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars (1799-1815).
[39] Ibid.
[40] Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Turkey, 1800-1914* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).
[41] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,"; Issawi, *Economic History of Turkey*.

Free trade agreements of the mid-19th century, and integration to the world economy significantly affected the Ottoman manufacturing sector. Yet, scholars present different perspectives on the ways in which the increasing interaction with the world economy influenced the manufacturing activities in the Ottoman Empire. The dominant paradigm in the history of Ottoman manufacturing underlines that these free trade treaties froze import duties on very low levels and proposes that this caused an uneven competition between the European states and the Ottoman Empire. Looking at these developments, the dominant view on Ottoman manufacturing emphasizes that manufacturing activities experienced a period of decline and de-industrialization during the 19th century.[42] According to Şevket Pamuk:

> "They (free trade treaties) set the ad valorem tariffs on imports at 5% which were raised to 8% in 1861. Later in the century when Ottoman governments attempted to raise tariffs rates on imports primarily for fiscal and to some extent protectionist reasons, the European powers refused to allow this change. As a result, ad valorem tariffs on all imports remained at 8% until after the turn of the century. They provided virtually no relief to domestic manufacturers once the onslaught of imports started."[43]

This view on Ottoman manufacturing fails to grasp the methods of adaptation and resistance adapted by the manufacturers. Though Ottoman manufacturing went through significant transformations, it continued to remain as a significant economic activity both within the root of newly established factories, workshops and households. As Quataert proposes new manufacturing centers emerged within and outside of Anatolia and "widespread and vigorous industrial activities revealed themselves, largely based on non-mechanized forms of organization, located in urban areas and the

[42] Issawi, *Economic History of Turkey*; Charles Issawi, "De-Industrialization and Re-Industrialization in the Middle East since 1800," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12, (1980), 469-472. Ömer C. Sarç, *Tanzimat ve Sanayimiz* (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940); Aydın Yalçın, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi* (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1979).
[43] Pamuk, "Ottoman Cotton Textiles," 209.

countryside."[44] In addition to these small-scale manufacturing activities, during the 1830s and 1840s, for instance, the Ottoman state opened new textile workshops and factories around Istanbul in order to provide the needs of the military, navy and the palace. The Hereke Imperial Factory that was a significant center of woven wool fabrics and silk carpets was part of this state initiative. Similarly, the state and the local and foreign entrepreneurs established new factories in Baghdad, Balıkesir, Bursa and Tokat which produced various materials from wool cloth to paper. Though most of these factories went bankrupt by the 1850s, they were important actors of Ottoman manufacturing.[45]

Similarly, important manufacturing activities took place within small-scale workshops and urban and rural households. According to Pamuk, though the forces of free trade agreements challenged Ottoman cotton textiles, cotton textile manufacturing survived with various transformations and adaptations. Pamuk argues that the influx of imported yarns led to the "disappearance of full time employment for 142,500 spinners between 1820 and 1870, 90,000 of which were displaced by imports after 1840."[46] Though hand-spinning activities witnessed a period of decline and disappearance, weaving activities adapted to the changing environment and managed to survive until 1870s and beyond.[47] The case of cotton textiles in the 18th and early 19th centuries as briefly summarized in Pamuk's account has important implications for the study of the more general process of decline of handicrafts-based manufacturing activity in the Ottoman Empire. As Quataert argues, although there is no doubt that the technological

[44] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 161.
[45] Edward C. Clark, "The Ottoman Industrial Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5 (1974), 66-68; Pamuk *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi*, 201-202. The main reasons behind this failure were Crimean War in 1856 and labor scarcity. See Sarç *Tanzimat ve Sanayimiz* and Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*.
[46] Pamuk, "Ottoman Cotton Textiles," 226.
[47] Ibid., 216-217.

and organizational advances of the European industrialization overwhelmed the Ottoman manufacturing sector, there was not a continuous industrial decline in the Ottoman Empire. For Quataert, the conclusion that Ottoman manufacturing sector had declined was due to the bias of scholars who mainly focused on urban-based and guild-organized production. He proposes that looking at the manufacturing activities that took place in the rural areas and in urban households would reveal how the Ottoman manufacturing resisted against European industrialism and how it expanded and restructured its own markets against the forces of economic integration.

The Ottoman Empire's economic integration to the world economy had significant impacts on the carpet industry as well. In contrast to the many other branches of the textile industry, it did not lead to the disappearance of the craft. On the contrary, the impact of economic integration on carpet weaving industry came into existence in the form of increasing export-oriented production. Thus, the scale of carpet production thrived in beginning in the late 19th century. In Uşak for instance, carpet production increased from 150,000 square meters of carpet in 1873 to 490,000 square meters of carpet in 1900.[48] The following sections examine the vibrant carpet production that took place in the late Ottoman era.

2.2 Carpet Weaving in Traditional Centers: Uşak and its Environs

Uşak and its environs were the most significant centers of carpet production during Ottoman rule. Carpet weaving in Uşak first started among the nomadic tribes of the town, who migrated to Anatolia from Central Asia. Nomadic tribes brought the craft to Uşak, and transferred their knowledge of the art to sedentary people. Beginning in the 16th century, British merchants based in İzmir started to purchase Uşak carpets. In the

[48] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 139.

17th and 18th centuries, this interest in the so-called Oriental carpets became widespread across the European continent and partly in North America. European kingdoms ordered Oriental carpets for their churches and palaces. During the same era, Ottoman palaces and mosques were also decorated with the carpets of Uşak.[49] In the 19th century the carpet production in this region increased. It "accounted for the two-thirds to three-quarters of all carpets produced and sold in Anatolia between c.1860 and 1900."[50] These carpets were mainly exported to Great Britain for domestic consumption through İzmir, the principal port for Uşak; and re-exported to Europe and North America from Great Britain.

During the 1860s, local and foreign merchants mediated the interaction between the local producers and the Western consumers through putting-out networks. One such local merchant was Hacı Ali Efendi. He placed orders on local producers by either providing them with the necessary raw materials or cash. Hacı Ali Efendi's production network included 3,000 households weaving approximately 84,000 square meters carpet per year.[51] Foreign merchants assumed similar roles. In 1864, three British merchants started to export the carpets that were woven on a pre-order basis, by providing the yarns and models to the producers. By 1880, British merchants based in İzmir started to increase their influence on the carpet weaving industry of Western Anatolia and they began to control various phases of carpet production from spinning of the yarn to dyeing and weaving.[52] By the end of the 19th century, Uşak's carpet exports to Europe and the United States were over 440,000 square meters. As a consequence of this development, the number of looms in the town increased from 600

[49] Atalay, *Türk Halıcılığı*, 20-24.
[50] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 474.
[51] Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 174.
[52] Ibid.

in 1880 to 1,200 in the early 1900s. Most of these looms were located at the homes of the weaver families and female workers operated them. In some cases the weaver families owned the looms, in other cases the merchants provided the looms. By 1908, a significant portion of Muslim and non-Muslim women were employed in the carpet weaving industry.[53] The number of looms in the households mostly depended on the number of girls in the households, who could be employed as workers. The wages of female weavers depended on their talent, pace of work and number of knots they could make per day.[54]

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, British merchants expanded the putting-out system in Western Anatolia. In this way, they kept the home-based production intact, without necessarily making new investments in the region, except for a few factories and small workshops. Thanks to the putting-out system and low labor costs in the region, they managed to make significant profits. It was the Austrian merchants who first challenged the British hegemony on the carpet weaving industry of Western Anatolia. Austrians established their own network for carpet weaving during the late 19th century around Uşak and made significant profits. Some Muslim and non-Muslim entrepreneurs followed the path opened by the Austrians and fifteen new carpet factories were opened in the Western Anatolia in the same era.[55] Aware of their decreasing hegemony in the region, six British merchants came together and established Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company in 1908.[56]

[53] Karakışla, "Arşivden Bir Belge,", 57.
[54] Vedat Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 1970).
[55] Although Kurmuş names these initiatives as factories, we can assume that these were more like big workshops, rather than factories.
[56] Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 175-178.

The establishment of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company caused some transformations in the carpet production industry of the Western Anatolia in particular and broader Anatolia in general. In Uşak, for instance, the company provided their own carpet models to the weavers.[57] Oriental Carpet Manufacturers also established two factories in İzmir in an attempt to centralize wool yarn production and dyeing. They brought machines and experts from Europe, reorganized and revitalized the putting-out network in Anatolia and opened new workshops across Asia Minor. This British restructuring in the carpet weaving industry of the Anatolia made them the primary actor in the industry.[58] Between 1910-1913, the Company opened eleven new carpet-weaving factories in the Western Anatolia.

Operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers caused significant changes in the carpet industry of Uşak. The company had local and foreign merchants in the town and they facilitated the expansion of the industry in the town. In Uşak, the average wage of a worker who knotted 5,000-6,000 knots per day was two and half piasters per day. In 1913, there were more than a thousand carpet looms in Uşak, more than 5,000 people were employed at these looms, producing approximately 150,000 square meters of carpets.[59] This amount was more than three times of the square meters of carpet woven in 1910.[60] In Kula, Gördes and Demirci, approximately 8,000 workers were employed in the carpet weaving industry in total, operating more than 2,500 looms and weaving 120,000 square meters of carpet in 1913.[61] Yet, the establishment of new carpet weaving workshops and factories and expansion of the putting out networks in other

[57] Atalay, *Türk Halıcılığı*. Atalay states that, prior to the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers, the female weavers were either using simple models like bird, tree, and leaves. These were not fixed models and female carpet weavers were weaving these models by using their imagination.
[58] Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 179.
[59] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 86.
[60] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 477.
[61] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 86.

Western and Central Anatolian towns other than Uşak and its environs meant that the carpet production was gradually being carried outside of Uşak region. Furthermore, increasing volume of carpet production expanded the need for raw materials that were necessary for carpet production. Prior to mid-19th century, local producers were manually spinning the yarn. Yet, this production method could not meet the increasing demand for the yarn. As a consequence, three yarn factories were established in Uşak by Tiridzade Mehmet Paşa in 1898, Bıçakzade Ali and his partners in 1900 and Yılancızade Osman Efendi in 1903. The operations of these yarn factories mechanized the yarn production in the region and this gradually left the yarn spinners unemployed. This development augmented the already existing tensions in the town, which led to the massive protests in 1908.[62]

2.3 Carpet Production Outside of Uşak: Central and Western Anatolia

As an outcome of rising foreign demand, new carpet-weaving centers began to emerge in Western and Central Anatolia in the second half of the 19th century. Carpet weaving became a vibrant economic activity in cities such as Isparta, Kayseri, Kırşehir, Konya, Nevşehir and Niğde. In these cities, merchants were able to find cheaper and more submissive work force, and lower quality raw materials.[63] With the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers in 1908, fourteen new carpet-weaving workshops were opened in these regions. This situation created new employment opportunities for female weavers. For instance, in Kütahya and Kayseri, merchants started to employ more and more Greek orthodox and Armenian women for carpet weaving.[64] Although carpet weaving was a widespread economic activity in Kayseri prior to the mid-19th

[62] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[63] Quataert, "Age of Reforms," 919.
[64] Ibid., 919-920.

century, the scale of production expanded during the 1850s and reached its peak during the early 20th century. Between 1910 and 1913, Kayseri had 3,300 carpet weaving looms, employed 8,500 people and produced approximately 160,000 square meters of carpets.[65] Carpet weaving was interwoven with the practices of everyday life of the early 20th century Kayseri. In his book *Across Asia Minor on Foot*, W. J. Childs points out the vibrant activity of carpet making in Kayseri in the early 20th century. As he states:

> "A good deal of rug and carpet weaving goes on in this Kaisariyeh country. The art comes also into daily life, and reveals itself in strange places and when at least expected. When I first saw an irregular patch of carpet pattern worked on the seat of a peasant's white cotton breeches, I thought it a botching attempt at repair; but noticing similar patches on other breeches, I recognized them as an expression of art and entitled to respect. I heard that they were experiments—studies of patterns, as one might say."[66]

Kayseri also made significant contributions to the improvement of the craft of carpet weaving in the Ottoman Empire, by mobilizing its masters around Asia Minor. Carpet weaving masters and skillful dyers of Kayseri traveled to newly emerging centers to give necessary instructions on dyeing and weaving.

Increasing export-oriented production transformed the modes of production in Kayseri as well. As in Uşak, synthetic and artificial dyes flowed into the market and this created confusion for the dyers as well as the merchants. Similarly, low quality raw materials imported from Europe such as rotten silk became widespread in Kayseri. These resulted in the declining quality of Kayseri's carpet in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As will be analyzed in chapter four, Kayseri's local merchants responded to these challenges by establishing a carpet commission which aimed to control the carpet

[65] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 86.
[66] Childs, *Across Asia Minor*, 179.

production in the city and to preserve the quality of Kayseri's carpet.[67] It seems that increasing presence of the foreign merchants and the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers not only decreased the quality of carpets in Kayseri but also deteriorated the working conditions of the carpet workers. For instance, carpet weavers who were employed at the workshops that were operated by the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers in Kayseri rebelled in the early 20th century due to bad working conditions.[68]

As Kayseri, Niğde was a significant center of carpet production. Masters from Kayseri came to Niğde to teach the art of carpet making and thanks to this interaction the craft in Niğde made significant progress. In the early 20th century, there were 900 carpet weaving looms in the town and around 3,000 weavers were employed at these looms.[69] According to the account of Hungarian traveller Bela Horvath, there was even a carpet factory in Niğde that employed approximately eighty female workers in the early 20th century. While some female workers were weaving the carpets, others were spinning the wools. In some cases, these spun yarns were dyed with synthetic dyes within the households. According to Horvath's account, although synthetic dyes were less durable in comparison to the natural ones, they were pretty common in Niğde. In addition to the locally produced yarns, Manchester yarn was also available in the region. Women were using Manchester yarn at the bottom row of the carpets. Horvath states that she was unable to watch Muslim women while they were weaving carpets since she was not welcomed to the Muslim households. Muslim women were weaving carpets behind the iron cages. Yet, she had an opportunity to observe Armenian and Greek Orthodox women while they were weaving carpets in their households. In the

[67] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (8 Mart 1320 / 21 March 1904).
[68] Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 174. Though Kurmuş states that a group of carpet workers rebelled due to bad working conditions, I was unable to find any related documents in the Ottoman archives.
[69] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 86.

Greek Orthodox neighborhoods, women were weaving the carpets in front of their households while chatting with their neighbors at the same time. These women were wearing uniform gray dresses. Horvath was impressed by the dexterity of these women. The guide who brought Horvath to this neighborhood proudly emphasized that these women learnt carpet weaving at the ages of seven and they were so good at their jobs that they never made mistakes despite the high speed of their weaving.[70] Though Horvath had an opportunity see the carpets of Nevşehir and Kırşehir and met carpet merchants in these towns, the local carpets in these cities did not impress her as in Niğde. This can be a clue to envision the quality of carpets in these three cities.

Another important carpet production center was Isparta. During the early 20th century, there were 2,160 carpet weaving looms in Isparta, employing approximately 6,500 carpet weavers. An average carpet weaver was paid approximately two piasters per day.[71] Eight hundred of these looms were established in the early 20th century.[72] As will be discussed in the following chapter, Ottoman archival documents suggest that these looms were mostly established at the Christian households and mostly Muslim women were operating these looms. Ottoman authorities found this situation inappropriate and they encouraged Muslim artisans to establish more looms in Muslim households. From their point of view, this would create an appropriate work environment for Muslim women.[73]

2.4 State Initiative in Carpet Production: The Hereke Imperial Factory

[70] Horvath, *Anadolu 1913*, 81-82.
[71] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 86.
[72] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 138.
[73] BOA., DH. MKT. 2179/9 (6 Mart 1315 / 18 March 1899). BOA., DH. MKT. 1238/18 (21 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1323 / 3 February 1908).

The Hereke Imperial Factory was established in 1843 by the Armenian brothers, Ohannes and Boghos Dadyan. Dadyan brothers were dealing with the management of many of the sultan's enterprises.[74] The factory played a significant role in the textile industry and carpet production of the Ottoman Empire. Located in the northwestern Anatolia, the factory had been producing silk clothes during its early years and these silk fabrics were utilized to decorate the furniture of the Ottoman palaces. The factory building and workshops formed a complex and it was like a small village.[75] Aslanapa writes that in the mid-19th century, the factory's main plant in Hereke had one hundred looms. Fifty more looms were established in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul during the same era. Because of a fire in 1878, the main factory building in Hereke was burnt to ground and stopped its operations for five years. In 1883, the new factory building opened its doors as Halıhane (carpet workshop) with one hundred looms and the main production item of the factory became silk carpets. Craftsmen from Manisa and Sivas were brought to Hereke during this time to teach the art of carpet making to the workers. In addition to the carpet workshop based in Hereke, the imperial factory operated small-scale workshops in Istanbul, and various Central and Western Anatolia towns such as Kırşehir, Kayseri, Isparta and Denizli. Precious silk carpets and prayer carpets produced in these workshops were used to decorate the palaces and mosques in the Ottoman Empire, sold at domestic markets, and presented to the rulers of foreign countries as special gifts.[76]

For raw silk, Hereke mill depended on the traditional silk cultivation region surrounding Bursa. The Ottoman state established a steam powered silk mill in Bursa in order to supply the Hereke Imperial factory with superior quality silk. All the

[74] May Beattie, "Hereke," *Halı.* 4 (1981).
[75] Beattie,"Hereke,".
[76] Aslanapa, *Halı Sanatının Bin Yılı*, 193; Küçükerman, *Saraydan Hereke'ye*, 47-57.

required machinery for the Hereke Imperial factory was imported from Europe.[77] Mostly Greek Orthodox women and young girls were employed as the carpet weavers in the Hereke Imperial Factory. In addition to Greek Orthodox girls, some Armenian women were also employed in the Imperial Factory.[78] Some of these young girls and women were from distant Istanbul villages. While some of them were staying in the dormitories of the factory, other women who lived in the nearby towns were commuting daily between home and their workplace. During the first decade of the 20th century, their average wage per day was four piasters. This price was pretty high in comparison to the daily wages of the carpet weavers in Uşak, Isparta and Sivas that was 2.5, 2.1 and 1.8 piasters respectively.[79] Yet, despite higher wages in October 1908 there was a strike in the Hereke Imperial Factory. The strike was organized by a few masters when the factory administration did not pay their wages for a while.[80]

The Hereke Imperial Factory was considered as one of the prominent symbols of the empire's industrial progress by the state elites and some Ottoman intellectuals. According to the narrative of a journalist from Servet-i Fünun, the products of Hereke were the proof of Ottoman Empire's ability to produce high quality manufactured goods and carpets and its ability to compete with European products. The local demand for the carpets of Hereke was on very high levels and the Imperial Factory opened several branches in Cami-i Kebir and Beyoğlu districts of Istanbul in order to meet this demand in the 1890s. Yet, despite these newly established branches and their high level of productivity, the Hereke Imperial Factory was still incapable of responding to the increasing consumer demand. As a solution, there was a common belief among

[77] Clark, "The Ottoman Industrial Revolution," 69.
[78] Beattie, "Hereke,".
[79] Eldem, *Tetkik*, 85.
[80] BOA., Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası (BEO hereafter) 3425/256815 (23 Eylül 1324 / 6 October 1908).

Ottoman people that the Hereke Imperial Factory should open more branches in Istanbul and other places that were considered suitable by the sultan, and should increase the number of looms and number of workers in its existing branches.[81]

Given the significance attributed to the Hereke Imperial Factory and its products by the state elites and intellectuals, some Ottoman sultans organized visits to the factory complex. According to Clark, Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839 – 1861) made inspection trips to Hereke during the factory's establishment. Sultan Mehmed V's (r. 1909 – 1918) also visited the Hereke Imperial Factory in 1909. He had been to the Halıhane (carpet workshop) of the Imperial Factory which was located in the seaside. He carefully investigated the looms and the way carpets were woven. During his visit at Halıhane, Mehmed V appreciated the workers who wove the carpets.[82] In addition to the Ottoman sultans, German Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II made a journey to Hereke, following his visit to Istanbul in 1898.[83]

The Hereke Imperial Factory and its products became very popular that some Ottoman people also wanted to visit the factory in order to have a first-hand impression of the factory complex and its products. As a result, Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876 – 1909) issued an edict which allowed ordinary people to visit the Hereke Imperial Factory. Following this edict, two journeys (*Tenezzüh Kataı*) were organized from Istanbul to Hereke. A journalist from the Servet-i Funun journal was also present in these journeys. His account provides important details about the Imperial Factory as well as the perception of Hereke carpets on the eyes of the common people. According

[81] Author unknown, "Hereke Fabrika-ı Hümayun," *Servet-i Fünun* (30 Haziran 1310 / 12 July 1894), 159.
[82] Sultan Mehmed V went to Hereke by sea. Mehmed V and his accompaniers left Dolmabahçe Palace during early afternoon. Whereas sultan took the imperial yatch, *Ertuğrul*; his accompaniers followed him with seven other small boats. See Author unknown "Herekeye Seyahat-i Şahane," *Servet-i Fünun* (11 Haziran 1325 / 24 June 1909), 53.
[83] Beattie, "Hereke,".

to his narrative, more than 300 people were present in the first visit and the second visit was as crowded as the first one. Though this article does not present any information on workers and the production process in the Hereke Imperial Factory, it gives important details on the significance of Hereke carpets and how the people perceived the factory and the its products. In addition to giving hints on the fame of the factory and its products, this article confirms that the carpets of Hereke were sold in Istanbul's shop.[84] According to Clark, these silk products that were marketed in the Istanbul's shops were the excesses of the goods that were produced for the use of the palaces.[85]

2.5 The Interaction among Different Carpet Production Centers and the Role of the Ottoman State

As the previous section illustrates, starting in the mid-19th century, the hegemony of Uşak, Demirci, Kula and Gördes in carpet production started to dissolve and by the late 19th century, geographic diversity in the industry increased. This section inquires the level of interaction among these different carpet making centers and the extent to which these different production exchanged workers, ideas and raw materials.

First manifestation of this interaction among different carpet weaving centers were the exchange of masters. For instance, when the Hereke Imperial Factory was first established in 1843, the factory administration brought masters from Manisa and Sivas in order to train newly recruited workers on carpet weaving.[86] Similarly, during the late

[84] The journalist starts his account by describing how they arrived at Hereke. Following the advice of the Factory Administration, the passengers took the train from Istanbul to Hereke. In the rest of his account, the journalist narrates the conversation between him and other people in the train. All the visitors were enthusiastic about the journey and grateful to the sultan who made this journey possible. They were also curious about the factory which made the production of excellent silk carpets possible. According to passengers, the Hereke Imperial Factory's products served as a model for other carpet production centers in the Ottoman Empire in particular and in the world in general. Furthermore, they believed that thanks to the endeavors of the artists who designed and woven these carpets and merchants who marketed these products, the Ottoman industrialization would make significant progress. See Author unknown "Hereke Fabrika-ı Hümayununu Ziyaret," *Servet-i Fünun*, (23 Haziran 1322/12 July 1906), 120-121.
[85] Clark, "The Ottoman Indsutrial Revolution," 73.
[86] Aslanapa, *Türk Halı Sanatının Bin Yılı*.

19th and early 20th centuries, masters from the Hereke Imperial Factory went to Kayseri to train the local workers on dyeing. In the early 20th century, Hereke and Kayseri regularly sent masters to various Central Anatolian towns in order to guide the local workers regarding weaving and dying techniques. Moreover, masters from different cities were brought to Hereke to learn the craft of carpet weaving. In other words, Hereke and Kayseri were the main centers of interaction among different carpet weaving centers. This kind of continuous interaction made significant contributions on the advancement of craft in Asia Minor.

Karelkeyan Mıgırdiç Efendi from Sivas, for instance, came to Hereke under the sponsorship of Ministry of Finance to get instructions on carpet weaving, and stayed there for a few years with his family.[87] Similarly, in December 1898, Mehmed Efendi and Boyacı Simon oğlu Anastaş (the son of dyer Simon, Anastaş) came to the Hereke Imperial Factory in order to learn the dying techniques necessary to improve the quality of wool and silk prayer rugs and carpets in Kayseri.[88] Two months later, Ministry of Interior notified governor of Kayseri that Mehmed Efendi and Anastaş successfully completed their training on dyeing and weaving techniques, and they were granted their testimoniums.[89] In both instances, the Ottoman state undertook the financial costs of the exchange of journeymen since the role of Ministry of Finance was emphasized in both documents. The local producers and the Ottoman authorities belived that thanks to this interaction between Hereke and Kayseri, the quality of carpets in Kayseri increased.

[87] BOA., DH. MKT. 2414/3 (30 Ağustos 1316 / 12 September 1900).
[88] BOA., DH. MKT. 2155/19 (19 Kânûn-ı Evvel 1314 / 31 December 1898).
[89] BOA., DH. MKT. 2169/89 (11 Şubat 1314 / 23 February 1899).

Encouraged by this interaction between Hereke and Kayseri and satisfied with the result of this cooperation, Kazaryan Karabet from Niğde wrote a petition to the Ministry of Interior. He requested necessary permission to send some journeymen from Niğde to the Hereke Imperial Factory. In this petition, Kazaryan Karabet emphasized that the demand for the local carpets of Niğde was on decline. He proposed that this declining interest was probably due to masters' inability to dye the silk in proper ways. Karabet referred to the case of Kayseri which faced similar challenges in the past years. To overcome these challenges, Karabet emphasized, some masters from Kayseri were sent to the Hereke Imperial Factory and got instructions on dyeing and weaving in there. Thanks to this cooperation, Kayseri's carpets reached their previous excellence. He requested that similar opportunity should be provided to the masters of Niğde. Upon this petition, Ministry of Interior asked Ministry of Finance under what conditions masters from Niğde could be accepted to the Hereke Imperial Factory and whether their expenses can be met by the Ministry of Finance during their stay at Hereke.[90]

Kırşehir was another city which was involved in this network of cooperation and labor mobility. Similar to the case of Niğde and Kayseri, the declining interest in the carpets of Kırşehir because of the use of low quality and synthetic dye created a concern among local notables in Kırşehir. In 1898, the governor of Kırşehir wrote to the Ministry of Interior and asked whether it was possible to send masters from the Hereke Imperial Factory to Kırşehir to train local workers on carpet weaving and the production of natural dye. Yet, it appeared that it was not possible to send journeymen from Hereke to Kırşehir. Consequently, governor of Kırşehir proposed to send journeymen from

[90] BOA., DH. MKT. 2414/3 (30 Ağustos 1316 / 12 September 1900).

Kayseri to Kırşehir or to create convenient conditions in Kırşehir to educate their local masters.[91]

A document written by the Ministry of Interior to the governor of Kastamonu affirms that the extent of the Hereke Imperial Factory's network also included some Black Sea towns. According to this document, Mehmed Galib Usta who had been trained in Hereke on dyeing of silk and yarn and on carpet weaving wanted to be a teacher at Kastamonu School of Industry, and for this purpose wrote a petition. This report was like a reference letter written for Mehmed Galib Usta. It praised his qualities in dyeing and weaving techniques, and emphasized that it would be an important step for the progress of carpet weaving in Kastamonu if the authorities would accept Mehmed Galib's petition and allow him to be a teacher in the industrial school.[92]

In addition to facilitating the interaction among different carpet production centers across Anatolia, the Ottoman state also undertook the role of protecting the quality of carpet production in Asia Minor. As aforementioned, in most of the documents the state officials expressed their concerns for the decreasing quality of the carpets and declining demand for Ottoman carpets. In addition to sending masters and workers to those cities in which they think there was a decline in demand for the carpets and quality of carpet weaving, the Ottoman government also employed more symbolic ways of fostering the industry. It encouraged and showed its appreciation of those merchants, masters, workers and teachers who played a role in the advancement of the craft by granting medals. In Sille, Konya, for instance, governor of Konya proposed merchants Bodos and Bali as qualified for a sultanic medal because of their efforts in the art of carpet making into consideration. Bodos and Bali, according to the governor, not only

[91] BOA., DH. MKT. 2104/118 (30 Temmuz 1314 / 11 August 1898).
[92] BOA., DH. MKT. 2513/29 (10 Temmuz 1317 / 23 July 1901).

established carpet-weaving looms in the town, but also provided significant benefits to the art of carpet making.[93] Similarly, female teachers who were employed in the Hereke Imperial Factory, namely Konike, Atmasya, Enko and Sivasidiye were appreciated due to their hard and diligent work in the factory. They were experts in attaching and spinning dyed silk and as a result of their service in the factory each of them were considered as qualified for getting a medal.[94]

Altogether, these Ottoman archival documents prove that different carpet production centers across Asia Minor did not work in isolation. In this interaction, Kayseri and the Hereke Imperial Factory acted as the centers of this network of carpet production. They provided the transmission of necessary skills regarding weaving and dyeing techniques towards various towns and educated masters and workers from different towns of Asia Minor.

2.6 Conclusion:

This chapter attempted to delineate the carpet weaving activities across Asia Minor during the late Ottoman era. It confirms that as a result of the increasing Western demand for the Ottoman carpets, starting in the mid-19th century, newly emerging production centers challenged the dominance of Uşak and its environs in carpet making. Various Central and Western Anatolian towns devoted more time to carpet making during this era and in the following century. In addition to these centers that emerged as cheaper alternatives to traditional carpet making centers, namely Uşak, Kula, Gördes and Demirci, there were also state initiatives, such as the Hereke Imperial Factory. Hereke's silk carpets were as famous as the Uşak carpets.

[93] BOA., DH. MKT. 383/74 (30 Mayıs 1311 / 11 June 1895).
[94] BOA., İrade Taltifat (hereafter İ. TAL.) 36/16 (5 Teşrin-i Evvel 1309 / 17 October 1893).

This chapter also proposes that different carpet making centers across Asia Minor did not work in isolation. On the contrary, they established a network of production, in which there was a constant mobility of workers, and transmission of knowledge. The Hereke Imperial Factory and Kayseri stand in the middle of this interaction and they sent their skillful masters and workers to various towns to other carpet making centers.

The communication among different carpet making towns not only made significant contributions on the development of the craft of carpet weaving in Asia Minor, but also enabled these centers to respond to the challenges brought by increasing integration to the World Economy and export oriented production. These forces resulted in the declining quality of Ottoman carpets due to the use of lower quality raw materials such as synthetic dyes and low quality yarn and silk. By facilitating this interaction among different towns that engaged in carpet production, increasing mobility of the workers and the masters, and providing financial support in most of the cases, the Ottoman state attempted to respond to this decreasing quality of carpets.

3. FEMALE CARPET WORKERS IN ASIA MINOR: THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER, CLASS, AND RELIGION

This chapter attempts to provide an insight on the work and everyday experiences of female carpet workers during the late Ottoman era. As mentioned in the second chapter, though male workers were employed at different segments of the carpet production sector such as dyeing, it was mostly the female workers, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, who were the weavers and the spinners. The analysis here seeks to shed some light on their experiences by investigating how gender, class and other axes of differences such as religion and ethnicity interact with each other in this specific case. It argues that meanings attached to gender identity and religion were decisive in shaping their experiences.

In addition to demonstrating the interplay between gender, class and other axes of differences and its impact on the experiences of female carpet weavers, the present chapter proposes that the patriarchal attitude of the Ottoman state officials, and the Ottoman society was also influential in influencing female workers' experiences, especially during the reign of sultan Abdülhamid II. It argues that the patriarchal rhetoric of the Hamidian state towards female carpet workers served two main purposes. First, existing gender norms in Ottoman society was reinforced through a continuous emphasis on women's vulnerability and their need for protection. Second, this patriarchal attitude was used as a tool to ensure legitimacy of sultan Abdülhamid II in the eyes of the Ottoman people by showing his omnipresence. In an era, in which the Ottoman state faced various social, political and economic challenges, the state mobilized its patriarchal discourse as a legitimation strategy. This chapter also underlines that this patriarchal rhetoric also aimed to sustain the continuity of female labor in the carpet industry.

The first part of this chapter emphasizes the usefulness of discourse analysis on labor history by reviewing the relevant literature. In the following part, the impact of the patriarchal discourse on work experiences is discussed through focusing on gender norms, legitimacy and labor movement.

3.1. Gender, Class and other Axes of Power: What did Linguistic Turn Brought to the Study of Labor?

The seminal work of E. P. Thompson brought new research agendas into labor history in the 1960s. It allowed to expand the narrow focus on formal labor institutions and to incorporate other factors which were previously considered as secondary to one's position in the relations of production. Thanks to Thompson's modifications on orthodox Marxism and old labor history, scholars began to pay attention to the importance of religion, culture and popular politics.[95] In the 1970s, historians inspired by Thompson challenged old labor history focusing primarily on labor organizations and their leaders and began to produce works on communities and everyday lives.[96]

Scholars who worked under the influence of post-structuralism and the linguistic turn in late 1970s and 1980s carried the contributions of Thompson to labor history to a further level. The term linguistic turn in history "denotes the historical analysis of representation as opposed to the pursuit of a discernible retrievable historical "reality"".[97] This development in the social sciences in general and history in particular has thrown the dominant paradigms that guided labor and social history until then into question. Accordingly, scholars such as Berlanstein, Canning and Frader questioned the primacy and value of class as both a category of historical

[95] Edward P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963).
[96] David Broody, "The Old Labor History and the New: In Search of an American Working Class," *Labor History* 20 (1979): 11-26; Ava Baron, "Introduction," in *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor*, ed. Ava Baron, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991): 1-46.
[97] Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn: Historicizing Discourse and Experience," *Signs* 19, no. 2 (1994), 369.

analysis and as a social formation constituted primarily by material conditions. They deconstructed the main categories of labor history such as class, wage, skill and market. According to them, such an exercise would reveal how these terms limited and shaped subjects' action and perpetuated oppression They also challenged the uniform category of the working class and called attention to the significance of other axes of differences such as race, gender and ethnicity that cross cut one's class position. Issues such as everyday life, culture, constitutive power of language and discourse became the central themes of much of the studies on labor. They contradicted the experience-oriented analysis of conventional history and insisted on the necessity of considering language as a key to reality. As opposed to traditional labor history which analyzed socio-economic forces that create tensions which were reflected in the form of class based protests, post-structuralists have focused on discourses. They emphasized that meaning is socially constructed and inquired socially institutionalized modes of speech with the effects of power. Accordingly, human responses are primarily shaped by the publicly available, learned symbolic patterns that are called culture or ideas.[98]

Nevertheless, other scholars have criticized the post-structuralist turn in history for totally neglecting the value of the materialist analysis. Instead of privileging the ideational over the material, they emphasized the need to embrace both. William H. Sewell, Jr, for instance, underlines that the distinction between the material and non-material is arbitrary. He emphasizes labor historians' need to go beyond the limits and dichotomies of materialist perspectives but also the necessity to build on the merits of materialist analysis. Hence, the kind of post-materialist labor history that is embraced by Sewell, Jr acknowledges the constitution

[98] Lenard R. Berlanstein, "Introduction," in *Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis* ed. Lenard R. Berlanstein, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993): 1-14; Kathleen Canning, "Rethinking German Labor History,"; Laura F. Frader, "Dissent Over Discourse: Labor History, Gender and the Linguistic Turn," *History and Theory* 34, no. 3 (1995): 213-230.

of labor relations by language, culture and politics but it also refuses to dismiss the importance of the material realm.[99]

Post-materialist influence in history has enlarged the analytical space for scholars who sought to bring a gender perspective to the field. Feminist scholars benefited from the post-structuralism/linguistic turn's offerings to history and attempted to introduce gender as a category of historical analysis.[100] Gender became a significant analytical lens in labor history both in Europe and the United States beginning in the 1980s. Feminist scholars went beyond focusing on gendered division of labor by investigating how the categories of work, class, wage and skill were constructed on the basis of notions of masculinity and femininity.[101] They demonstrated how conventional family relations were reflected in the work place by investigating shop floor gender hierarchies.[102] Accordingly, women, work and family were inseparable categories since family relations responded to and reinforced the asymmetries of the workplace.[103] Other scholars challenged the separate spheres argument of the old labor history by revealing the links between the realms of the public and the private. According to them, privileging public institutions and activities marginalized the private sphere as both a site of resistance and as an area of social formation for working class and for the development of class identities.[104] They all emphasized the need to reconsider labor history by pointing out the

[99] William H Sewell, Jr., "Toward a Post-materialist Rhetoric for Labor History," in *Rethinking Labor History: Essays on Discourse and Class Analysis*, ed. Lenard R. Berlanstein (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993): 15-38.
[100] Joan W. Scott, "On Language, Gender, and Working-Class History," *International Labor and Working Class History* 31 (1987): 1-13.
[101] Laura F. Frader, "Labor History after the Gender Turn: Transatlantic Cross Currents and Research Agendas," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 63 (2003): 21-31.
[102] Sonia O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 1992).
[103] Louise A Tilly and Joan W.Scott, *Women, Work and Family (*Routledge: New York, 1987), 3.
[104] Sonia O. Rose and Laura F. Frader, *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 16.

significance of gender for understanding work, economy and class, as well as the relations between men and women workers.[105]

In addition to highlighting the need to bring a gender perspective to labor history, feminist scholars of the late 20th century specifically emphasized the value of linguistic turn/post-structuralism for such an endeavor. Kathleen Canning, for instance, pointed out that the link between feminism and post-structuralism led to "rewriting", "reinscribing" or "redeploying" key concepts of political and historical vocabulary.[106] Likewise, Joan Scott underlines the importance of combining the study of language and study of gender. As she states:

> "[t]heories of language, by providing historians with a way to "see" how gender figures in the construction of social and political meaning, thereby provide us with a way to recast our understanding of the place of gender in history, of the operations of sexual difference in the "making" of a working class."[107]

Nevertheless, the post-structuralist critique emphasized that the primacy given to the representations and language may lead to overlooking the significance of agency. Some scholars such as Hartsock and Bordo find the idea of the post-structuralists that subjectivities are primarily shaped by discourses inadequate and deterministic. They argue that this kind of approach considered people as objects of their historical analysis rather than as subjects.[108] Canning underlined the necessity of reflecting on this problem and she claims that as discourses shape people, subjects also contest power in its discursive form. She clarifies that agency lies at the intersection of discourse and experience. That is to say, while discourses construct people's experiences; they are also molded by the experiences of the people the text claims to represent.[109]

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[105] Baron, "Introduction,".
[106] Canning, "Historicizing Discourse," 373.
[107] Scott, "Gender as a Useful Category," 3.
[108] Susan Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, and Gender Scepticism," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson, (New York: Routledge, 1990): 133-156; Nancy Hartsock, "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women?," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda J. Nicholson, (New York: Routledge, 1990): 157-175.
[109] Canning, "Historicizing Discourse," 378 .

Feminist endeavors of making gender visible in labor studies and the influence of the linguistic turn led scholars to develop new research tools which analyze other axes of differences that are at play in defining one's position in the matrix of social stratification. Feminist scholars' contributions that demonstrate the interplay between gender and class encouraged other scholars to investigate other dynamics of power such as race, sexuality, religion and ethnicity and the discourses that accompany these differences. As a result, a more powerful analytical lens emerged which is capable of understanding the interdependence of these overlapping social differences.[110] As Frader states:

> "The working class has not disappeared, but its contours and composition have changed dramatically. It is no longer overwhelmingly white, male, and heterosexual; it is female, black and brown: its members' sexuality is not already defined. It is by incorporating into our work the intersections of these differences that we can create more powerful analytical tools for understanding the past and perhaps also the present." [111]

In light of the literature discussed above, the present study argues that the study of discourses reveals important details regarding the experiences of working men and women and it allows us to observe the interactions between gender, class and religion. Looking at the rhetoric that is utilized by the Ottoman state elites is useful since it provides us with information regarding how the female workers were perceived by the Hamidian state. The analysis here argues that the perception of the Hamidian state was important since it defined what is (im)proper to do for the female carpet workers and affected their work experiences and individual and collective struggles.

This chapter demonstrates that as in many other kinds of interactions, it is possible to observe Hamidian state's patriarchal attitude in the state's approach toward female carpet workers. Accordingly, father-daughter kind of a relationship was constructed between the workers and the Hamidian government during this era. The patriarchal discourse of the

[110] Laura Tabili, "Dislodging the Center/Complicating the Dialectic: What Gender and Race Have Done to the Study of Labor," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 63 (2003): 14-20.
[111] Frader, "Gender Turn," 28.

Hamidian government towards the workers can be analyzed by focusing on how the Hamidian state handled cases of sexual harassment toward female workers and the way the Ottoman officials provided the "security" of the female workers when they needed to be in the public spaces. As this chapter will indicate, this fatherly approach toward female workers not only aimed at protecting the honor of the female carpet workers but at the same time reinforced existing gender norms, and attempted to overcome the social, political and economic challenges of the era.

3.2 "Vulnerable" Female Workers in Need of Protection: The Fatherly State and Female Carpet Workers

As in other branches of the textile industry, carpet production was a female labor-intensive sector. Female workers participated in various processes of production such as weaving, dyeing and spinning of the wool, and silk reeling.[112] In traditional carpet weaving centers such as Uşak, Kula, and Gördes, female workers worked at the factories, small scale workshops and engaged in home based production. As shown in the previous chapter, after the European interest in Anatolian carpets spurred the demand for Oriental Carpets in the 19th century, merchants in Izmir and Istanbul established new workshops in various districts such as Isparta, Kayseri, Kütahya and Sivas.[113] According to Quataert's account, mostly girls and women knotted at these workshops.[114] In addition to these workshops, state owned Hereke Imperial Factory that was located in Izmit and which operated workshops around İstanbul was also significant in carpet production. As discussed in the previous chapter, there were significant numbers of women and girls who were employed in Hereke.

The employment of women outside of their own households was not easily accepted by the Ottoman society. As Hadar's and Khater's studies demonstrate, the term "factory girl" created

[112] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[113] Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 174.
[114] Quataert, "Households and Textile Manufacturing," 171.

a social stigma in Salonica and Lebanon, for Muslim and non-Muslim female workers alike.[115] The purity and honor of the young girls and women who worked outside of their homes were considered as polluted and this created a reluctant attitude toward factory work. As Roger Owen states, during mid-19th century, many families in Mount Lebanon were hesitant to release their daughters for work since factory work usually meant being in contact with stranger men.[116] Nevertheless, given the need for female labor in the textile industry, various strategies were developed in order to solve this problem. As Quataert shows:

> "Around the 1860s, the Roman Catholic pope issued a decree permitting Bursa-area girls of Armenian background to work in the mills, and in Lebanon local ulama as well as the Christian clergy played key roles in persuading local girls to work under foreign women supervisors in foreign-owned silk-reeling mills."[117]

As Owen states, in Mount Lebanon "two archbishops finally gave their official sanction to the employment of Christian women –given certain safeguards, after more than a decade of opposition."[118] There were similar attitudes in the tobacco industry toward the employment of female workers. For instance, in the case of Salonica's tobacco industry, chief rabbis visited tobacco stores and ensured that men and women were working at different places.[119] In Cibali Tobocco Factory and in Aydın, women's and men's work places were segregated.[120]

Though this study could not find any information regarding whether religious figures played a role in persuading families to send their female family members out to work at the carpet workshops of Anatolia and at the Hereke Imperial Factory, the Ottoman archival documents affirm that in sme cases the Ottoman state itself took initiative to protect the honor

[115] Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers,"; Khater, "Gender, Class and Silk,".
[116] Roger Owen, "The Silk-reeling Industry of Mount Lebanon, 1840-1914: A Study of the Possibilities and Limitations of Factory Production in the Periphery," in *The Ottoman Empire and the World-Economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987): 271-283.
[117] Quataert, "Households and Textile Manufacturing," 164.
[118] Owen, "Silk-reeling Industry," 276.
[119] Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers,".
[120] Can Nacar, "Tobacco Workers in the Late Ottoman Empire: Fragmention, Conflict, and Collective Struggle," (Ph.D Thesis, SUNY Binghamton, 2010). Nacar states that in Kavala's tobacco industry, women and men were working side by side.

of the female workers and provide security for them. While doing so, the patriarchal attitude of the Hamidian state towards female workers made itself obvious. Accordingly, the state established a father-daughter kind of a relationship between the female carpet workers and itself. In this relationship, the Hamidian state took female workers' vulnerability and their need for protection as given and developed strategies to protect the honor and chastity of the female carpet workers.

3.3 Gender Ideology of the Ottoman State: Women, Work and Honor

Female work in the factory or in the workshops means women's increasing presence in the public space. As aforementioned, since their working status in the public sphere had a potential to pose a threat to their honor and chastity, their presence as workers in the public sphere was a big concern in the eyes of the state. The Ottoman state considered this as a problem and took measures to provide necessary protection to those women who were employed in the carpet weaving industry in different regions.

As shown in the second chapter, for instance, Isparta was an important carpet-weaving center in Western Anatolia. In this city, during the late 19th century, young girls and women were employed at the carpet weaving looms in the city. Most of these looms were in Christian households, and Muslim women were weaving carpets at these looms. According to a report written by the governor of Konya to the Ministry of Interior in 1899, the governor found this situation inappropriate. As a solution, the Ministry of Interior underlined the necessity of establishing new looms at the Muslim households. In this way, the ministry thought, the Muslim women in need of money would be able to earn a living and young girls would learn the art of carpet weaving. In so doing, they implicitly recognized women's right to work outside of their households. However, in its letter to the governorship of Konya, the Ministry of Interior also asked for an investigation on the causes that pushed these women to work outside of their home.

The ministry specifically questioned whether these women were widows, not getting their alimony if they were widows and also questioned whether the employment of women was a routine in the region.[121] Though the ministry emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for Muslim women to weave carpets, it also questioned the motivations of Muslim women who worked at the Christian households. The Ministry of Interior's attitude toward women's employment outside of their home was contradictory in this respect.

Nine years later, in February 1908, while Muslim women in the city were still working at the Christian households, the Ministry of Interior reemphasized the inappropriateness of Muslim women's employment at the looms of Christian households. Accordingly, there was a challenge to the honor of female workers who were employed in the Christian looms since they were working together with Christian male artisans and it was against the orders of Islam. They also underlined the importance of establishing opportunities for young Muslim girls and women to weave carpets in Muslim households. The ministry officials stated that there was no need for big factories for the advancement of the craft of carpet weaving, and it was possible to weave carpet at small-scale looms as well. In addition to this low cost solution, the Ministry also proposed that local notables should be allowed to get loans from the Agricultural Bank to establish more looms in Muslim households and young Muslim girls should learn the art of carpet making.[122]

This example from Isparta reveals the confusion on behalf of the Ottoman state officials toward female work. On the one hand, the correspondences between the Ministry of Interior and governor of Konya present an encouraging attitude toward women's and young girls' employment in the carpet weaving industry. On the other hand, however, the reports question the motivations behind women's employment outside of their home. In this case, it seems that

[121] BOA., DH. MKT. 2179/9 (6 Mart 1315 / 18 March 1899).
[122] BOA., DH. MKT. 1238/18 (21 Kânûn-ı Sanî / 3 February 1908).

the problem was not only Muslim women's employment at the non-Muslim households, but also their employment in general.

Furthermore, the Ottoman state officials and local authorities' emphasis on women's honor and chastity is a manifestation of the Hamidian state's patriarchal attitude toward female workers. In the relationship between the female workers and the state officials, women's vulnerability was implied through highlighting the need to protect their honor. Yet, women were not passive agents of this patriarchal attitude. On the contrary, they reacted against this patriarchal stance by retaining their jobs at the non-Muslim households for nine more years upon the first correspondence between the governorship of Konya and Ministry of Interior in 1899. Though there are no clues for the methods of resistance female workers employed against this negative attitude toward their employment, women's insistence on their jobs for nine years is enough to prove that they battled against the religious and the patriarchal codes of the Ottoman society.

In addition to women's employment in the non-Muslim households, sexual harassment of female workers also became a serious concern for the Ottoman state officials. A report written to the municipality of Izmit by the Ministry of Interior in 1896 shows that female workers who were working for the Hereke Imperial Factory were sexually harassed by the male workers employed in the nearby coal mines. According to this report, after drinking in the nearby taverns, the miners harassed the female carpet weavers.[123] Although this document does not provide any information regarding the measures taken by the government in order to prevent similar incidents to happen or to protect the honor of the carpet weavers, it is significant in terms of giving hints about the everyday experiences of female carpet workers.

[123] BOA., BEO. 953/71402 (13 Nisan 1312 / 25 Nisan 1896).

Contrary to this document, a police report that was written on January 30, 1907 illustrates the measures implemented by the local authorities to inhibit the cases of sexual harassment toward female carpet weavers who were employed in the Hereke Imperial Factory's branch in *Halıcılar*, Istanbul. According to this report, a group of female carpet weavers who were returning to their homes from the factory were harassed by two men, around *Çatalçeşme* district. After this incident, the Ministry of Interior ordered the local gendarmerie to take measures to prevent similar cases to happen again. The gendarmerie divided female carpet weavers were according to their place of residence and certain place of gatherings were defined for those who lived in the nearby neighborhoods. Female workers gathered at these specific places that were close to their homes and the gendarmerie accompanied them from these points to the factory. Similarly, during their return from the factory, gendarmerie walked together with the women again. In the report, the authorities made it clear that full responsibility belonged to the gendarmerie in case any verbal or physical targeting towards female workers occurred.[124]

Six days after the above mentioned report was written, police officers penned another report concerning female carpet weavers in Istanbul. According to the report, female carpet weavers were harassed despite the accompaniment of the gendarmerie, and the gendarmerie initially arrested the harasser. Then, two police officers intervened and prevented his arrest. Following this incident, the administration of the Hereke Imperial Factory requested an investigation regarding the identity of the harasser in order to know whether the harasser was a member of the military forces or he was an irregular (*başıbozuk).*[125] Approximately a month later, on March 1907, there was a response to the factory administration's request of investigation. This report states that the man who was accused of harassing the female workers was an old man. One police officer stated that he knew this man and he was not that kind of

[124] BOA., Zabıta Nezareti Evrakı (Hereafter ZB.) 380/112 (17 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1322 / 30 January 1907).
[125] BOA, ZB. 473/38 (24 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1322 / 6 February 1907).

person who could harass women. After this statement, the investigation was completed and the man was released.[126]

The cases of sexual harassment not only shed light on female carpet weavers' gendered class experiences, but also give hints on society's attitude towards women's work. Frequent harassment on female workers especially during their daily commuting between the work place and homes reveals the stigma attached to female work. In other words, female workers' transcendence of the socially acceptable norms regarding women's proper place made them more vulnerable to sexual assaults.

In the aforementioned cases, the Ottoman state took precautions after the cases of sexual harassment. The Ottoman state officials also took some measures before any cases of verbal or physical targeting of female carpet weavers took place. In some instances, when female carpet workers went outside of the factory, the state officials ordered the gendarmerie to accompany female workers in order to provide necessary protection. For instance, female carpet weavers who worked for the Hereke Imperial Factory were not exclusively of Muslim background. On the contrary, there were significant numbers of non-Muslim women and girls who were employed both in the main factory in İzmit and in the workshops that were operating in Istanbul. Some of these female workers were from the nearby villages and some of them were staying at the dormitories near the main factory building in Hereke. During the holy days, these female carpet weavers visited their villages and families and their protection was a big concern on the side of the state. For instance, on May 1899, around 150 Ottoman-Greek female workers employed in the Hereke Imperial Factory's Çatalca workshop, visited their village of origin, Şehteros (?) in Büyükçekmece, for the celebration of Easter. In May 1899, governor of Çatalca sent a report to the Minister of Interior, giving a detailed account of the journey between Çatalca

[126] BOA, ZB. 473/95 (18 Şubat 1822 / 3 March 1907).

and Şehteros and informing him on the safe arrivals of female workers in their village.[127] The second part of the document notifies the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding the safe arrival of the female workers in their village.[128]

Similarly, in April 1904, another group of female workers of the Hereke Imperial Factory which consisted of 30 Ottoman-Greek women went to Şehteros for the celebration of the Easter, again, under the companionship of the gendarmerie. According to the report written by the Ministry of Interior to the Porte, gendarmerie was present in each stage of the journey, accompanied the girls in the ferry and in the trailer. The officer who penned this document notified the higher authorities regarding the successful accomplishment of the mission.[129] A different report that was written by the Ministry of Interior to the Port in August 1907 confirms the employment of Orthodox Christian girls in the Hereke Imperial Factory. Although this report does not provide any details on the journey itself, it states that around five hundred Orthodox Christian girls were taken to the Orthodox Christian Monastery in Izmit to perform their religious duties. The report concludes that there was not any threat to the security, the girls safely arrived to the monastery, performed their rituals and securely came back to the factory.[130]

These documents not only provide information regarding the state's attitude towards female carpet weavers and on the experiences of non-Muslim female carpet weavers, but also on the ways gender, class and religion interact with each other. Non-Muslim female workers were able to perform their religious rituals and the state took measures to facilitate this, by providing transportation and security facilities. These documents also give important clues on the non-factory experiences of the female carpet weavers. Apparently, by working outside of their households, female carpet weavers transgressed the socially defined borders between the

[127] BOA., Dahiliye Nezareti Dahiliye Nezareti Tesri-i Muamelat ve Islahat Komisyonu (hereafter DH. TMIK. M.) 69/57-1 (24 Nisan 1315 / 6 May 1899).
[128] BOA., DH. TMIK. M. 69/57-2 (24 Nisan 1315 / 6 May 1899).
[129] BOA., DH. MKT. 843/30 (6 Nisan 1320 / 19 April 1904).
[130] BOA., DH. MKT. 1192/13 (31 Temmuz 1325 / 13 August 1907).

public and the private spheres. This, however, made these women targets of sexual harassment. Cases of sexual harassments and the Ottoman state's response to these incidents were part of female carpet weavers work experiences. Though the voice of the female carpet weavers themselves is not heard in the documents, the state's response to the incidents of harassment and the kind of measures taken by the authorities were significant in shaping their everyday work experiences. Even if there were no physical or verbal targeting of female carpet weavers, the state considered the honor and chastity of female carpet weavers as very fragile and took important measures not to tarnish women's honor. In the eyes of the Ottoman state, female workers presence in the public places and their working status posed a danger to the honor and chastity of the female workers, and the state officials demonstrated a protective attitude as a result. In so doing, the Ottoman state also took initiative to define the terms of this public visibility with a patriarchal protectionism.

In addition to the Ottoman state's attempt to draw the borders of female carpet workers public visibility, it is possible to argue that the protectionist attitude of the Ottoman state towards the female carpet workers also had to do with the state's labor policies. By providing the female carpet workers' security and accompanying them in their visits to their towns of origins during the holy days, the state also might aim to prevent the possibility of labor turnover. The cases of sexual harrasments had a potential discourage families to send their daughters to carpet workshops. Similarly, there was always the possibility that the female workers who went to visit their families might not return back to the carpet workshops. Thus, by creating "convenient" working conditions for female carpet workers and by having a direct control on their visits to their towns of origins, the Ottoman state not only ensured that the honor of the female carpet workers was not tarnished, but also aimed to sustain the continuity of carpet industry's female workforce.

The following part of this chapter argues that the patriarchal attitude of the Hamidian state was the main reason behind this protective approach. The relationship between the female workers and the state was not established on the basis of gender-neutral terms. On the contrary, the vulnerability of the female carpet weavers and their need for protection were taken as given and security measures were taken accordingly. In so doing, the state acted as a "father" whereas the "daughter" status of the female workers was reaffirmed. This kind of relationship implied the incapability of women to protect themselves, and women's subordinate status in the Ottoman society was reinforced. Hence, patriarchal discourse of the sultan that spread around the empire through his bureaucrats shaped the class experiences of female carpet weavers and served to reproduce conventional notions of femininity and existing gender norms of the society.

3.4 Patriarchal Discourse as a Strategy of Legitimation during the Reign of Abdülhamid II (r.1876 – 1909)

The patriarchal discourse of the Ottoman state not only served to reproduce the traditional gender ideology of the Ottoman society. This attitude and rhetoric also helped the Ottoman state officials and bureaucrats to generate legitimacy in the eyes of the governed people in an era in which the empire was facing various social, economic and political challenges. In the first place, this section reviews the tools of legitimacy that has already been used by the Ottoman state during the reign of Abdülhamid II. Subsequently, it illustrates how the state officials utilized the patriarchal discourse as an apparatus of legitimacy and as a mechanism of generating consent.

Until the 1990s, there were two opposing tendencies for the historiography of the Hamidian age. On the one hand, secular and modernist wing of historians demonized Abdülhamid II, as "Red Sultan" for being conservative, brutal, Islamist and backward. On the other hand, historians with more conservative and Islamist tendencies embraced Abdülhamid

II and his policies and called him as "Divine Khan"[131]. As Nadir Özbek emphasizes, these two camps correspond to the political divisions in Turkey, which are mainly around secular and Islamist.[132] Yet, in the last twenty years, scholars have produced more nuanced studies on the Hamidian era. These studies transcend the above mentioned dichotomies and they scrutinize state society relations of the era by focusing on Abdülhamid's reforms, his philanthropic activities and education and welfare policies.[133]

During his reign, Abdülhamid II strengthened his power and reinforced his absolutist regime by taking traditional power groups such as the military, *ulama* and Sublime Port bureaucrats that gained power after Tanzimat Reforms under control. Strict censorship was imposed on the press. The sultan used the press as a way to govern the public opinion and reinforce his power. He created a network of spies in order to have an access to what the people thought and spoke. Needless to say, this attitude of Sultan Abdülhamid II also had to do with his paranoia of assassination. He created a web of domination to reinforce his absolutism and Yıldız Palace, his place of residence, became the center of his monarchic rule.[134]

Despite his endeavors to exert his power on state affairs and everyday life, Abdülhamid II lived in complete isolation from the outside world and spent most of his life behind the walls of Yıldız Palace. As Selim Deringil states:

> "[t]his process of distancing himself from the people created a contradiction at the very core of his conception of state power. On the one hand, the Hamidian regime sought to

[131] Nadir Özbek, "Modernite, Tarih ve İdeoloji: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Tarihçiliği Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 2, no. 1 (2004): 71-90.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Selim Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 2 (1991): 345-359; Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire: 1876-1909.* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 1999); Nadir Özbek, "Imperial Gifts and Sultanic Legitimation during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909," in *Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts*, 203-220 eds. Micheal Bonner, Mine Ener and Amy Singer. (New York: SUNY Press, 2003); Nadir Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and The Hamidian Regime, 1876-1909," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37 (2005): 59-81; Elizabeth B. Frierson, "Unimagined Communities: Women and Education in the Late- Ottoman Empire 1876-1909," *Critical Matrix* 9, no. 2 (1995): 55-90.
[134] François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), 175-186.

> penetrate even further into the daily life of Ottoman society, and the Ottoman system had always stressed the personal visibility of the ruler. On the other hand, the sultan's obsession with his security determined that he was very rarely seen outside the palace walls."[135]

In order to resolve this contradiction, Deringil continues, Abdülhamid II created a system of symbols which "constantly reminded the people of his power and omnipresence".[136] Looking at various symbols such as the language of bureaucracy that praises the majesty of the sultan, gifts, decorations, clock towers established in distant places and ceremonies which affirm the sacrality of sultan's persona, he underlines how the sultan tried to be part of "natural order of things."[137] In another essay, Deringil links this increasing symbolism, recourse to legitimating ideologies and rituals to a decline in real power of the state. He emphasizes that in order to overcome this decline, Islam acted as the practical basis for the sultan's legitimating ideology through his position as the defender of the holy places, the Haram al-Haramayn, in Mecca and Medina.[138] The use of Islam as a unifying force not only targeted the Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire, but also aimed to reach the Muslim world at large by emphasizing the institution of the caliph.[139]

Use of Islam as a unifying force and the system of symbolism based on bureaucratic language, clock towers, and public ceremonies were not the only ways of ensuring legitimacy during the Hamidian regime. Nadir Özbek explores the crucial role of gift relationship in Abdülhamid's rule and in its manifestation and popular legitimation. He specifically focuses on the practice of distributing alms by the Hamidian government on a weekly basis to the poor and the needy. Özbek argues this distribution of weekly alms fostered the emergence of a notion of imperial benevolence. The Ottoman state used this image of imperial benevolence as a means through which certain conception of power was manifested and legitimized. Furthermore,

[135] Deringil, *Well-protected domains*, 18.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Deringil, "Legitimacy structures,".
[139] Ibid., 354.

Özbek points out that personalization of rulership was staged through the monarchial welfare system.[140] The gift giving occasions which became ceremonial, Özbek continues, were intended to cultivate necessary popular support from the subordinate classes. He emphasizes that the Ottoman state attached a family metaphor to these occasions and points out the paternalistic attitude of the sultan which "aimed to demonstrate the existence of the deep attachment subjects felt for their ruler, as well as the sultan's fatherly love for them."[141]

Studies by Deringil and Özbek demonstrate how the "vibrations of power were created without being seen".[142] Nevertheless, neither of the accounts focuse on the relationship between the female subjects of the empire and the state. Although the literature discusses the specific importance given to the female education during the Hamidian age[143], it does not address the interaction between the female workers and the Ottoman state during this period. Similarly, though their accounts illustrate the tools of legitimacy mobilized by the state to ensure the loyalty of the Muslim subjects of the empire and Muslim world in general, they do not examine what kind legitimation strategies were used by Abdülhamid II to arbitrate its relationship with the non-Muslim constituents of the society in an era in which the Ottoman state was experiencing serious challenges with its Armenian constituents in the Eastern provinces of the empire.

The Ottoman state used similar strategies of symbolism and legitimacy discussed by Özbek and Deringil while regulating the state-female workers relationship in order to gain necessary popular support. The present analysis argues that the patriarchal attitude of the state provided the basis of this interaction. When the aforementioned documents on sexual harassment and non-Muslim migrant worker's home and monastery visits are considered, it is possible to

[140] Özbek, "Imperial Gifts,".
[141] Ibid., 213.
[142] Deringil, "Legitimacy structures," 18.
[143] Frierson, "Unimagined Communities,".

propose that the Ottoman state sought to make its presence felt on behalf of the female workers. By taking care of their honor, chastity, and security through their officials (mostly through the gendarmerie in the aforementioned cases); Sultan Abdülhamid II made his omnipresence felt on behalf of the workers and their families. In so doing, he established a link between his subjects and his rule, and attempted to generate consent of the people and legitimacy.

Abdülhamid's legitimation policies did not only target the Muslim populations of the empire. As the aforementioned archival documents demonstrate, the patriarchal bonds of sultan also included non-Muslim female carpet weavers as well. Investigating this relationship gives important hints about the interaction between non-Muslim constituents of the empire and the state during the Hamidian age. Threatened by the nationalist movements during the 19th century, obviously, the state attempted to establish the loyalty of the non-Muslim subjects through demonstrating its tolerance to their religious rituals. In so doing, the Hamidian regime attempted to communicate with the young female workers of Ottoman-Greek origin, and also with their families and fellow villagers and aimed to get their popular support. It was also an attempt to keep the empire intact which started to feel the pressures of nationalist sentiments among its non-Muslim population during the same age. Thus, through this symbolic act of letting young Ottoman Greek female workers to celebrate Easter with their families and to visit the monastery and providing their security on their way to their village of origin, the Hamidian state made the presence of the sultan felt through the "vibrations of power without being seen" at the local level, expecting loyalty and respect in return.

However, this patriarchal policy of the Hamidian state was not without its contradictions and it was not an all-inclusive attitude. In case female carpet weavers demonstrated a behavior which was not appreciated by the state, they were left out of this discourse. A series of documents about female carpet weavers of Karahisar, Sivas confirm this point. In June 1904, the governor of Sivas, Reşid Arif Paşa, sent a telegraph to the Ministry of Interior, providing

information on the discontent of Armenian female carpet weavers in Karahisar. Accordingly, a group of Armenian women and children were complaining about the increase in yarn and cotton prices which in turn left their looms empty and negatively affected their livelihoods. These women went to the office of lieutenant governor in Karahisar in order to lodge their complaints and to find a reasonable solution to their problem. Reşid Arif Paşa claimed that these women and children were not *ehil* (capable) and they were provoked by their husbands or fathers. Accordingly, he proposed that the discontent was a manifestation of Armenians' will to break the law which banned them to migrate to the coastal cities of the empire.[144]

Like mischievous girls who rebelled against the will of their father, Armenian female carpet weavers and their children were not lucky enough to benefit from the benevolence of their sultan. Contrary to the state's patriarchal attitude in the aforementioned cases, they were not able to take the advantage of sultan's protectionism towards female workers. The Ottoman state considered female carpet weavers' struggle to improve their life conditions as a threat to the rule of the sultan. This perception of the Ottoman state can be a clue to analyze in what ways being a non-Muslim or Armenian interacts with the class experiences of female carpet weavers. In this example, this intersection prevented their voice to be heard by the state officials that in turn affected their livelihoods.

Despite the Ottoman state's lack of protectionist attitude toward Armenian carpet weavers, it is still possible to hear the patriarchal voice of these documents. By considering these women and children as incapable and as ignited by their husbands or fathers (who are the patriarchs of

[144] BOA., DH-TMİK. 174/32 (31 Mayıs 1320 / 13 June 1904). In his article, David Gutman writes that the imperial decree which banned the immigration of Armenian population in the Eastern Anatolia to the North America which was promulgated in the late 1880s. Gutman underlines that this prohibition had to do with the Ottoman state's firm belief in the existence of a close relationship between migration to North America and the budding transnational Armenian revolutionary movement. The ban remained in place until 1908. See David Gutman, "Agents of Mobility: Migrant Smuggling Networks, Transhemispheric Migration, and Time-Space Compression in Anatolia, 1888–1908," *InterDisciplines* 1 (2012): 43-79.

the household), the Ottoman officers ignored the agency of women. Hence, these documents give hints about the perception of the female workers in the eyes of the state and this perception is in line with the perception of the afore-mentioned documents. That is to say, female workers were not considered as subjects on their own behalf, but objects who were under the influence of somebody else and in need of protection by a patriarch -if not the state, their fathers or husbands.

The same attitude which ignored the agency of female workers was also present in the case of Uşak. As will be analyzed in more detail in chapter four, in March 1908, a crowd of a few thousand, which consisted of mostly women and children attacked three yarn spinning factories in Uşak and demolished the spinning machines.[145] This incident was a consequence of series of social and economic developments which were unearthed by the forces of economic integration and increasing export oriented production. This riot spurred a reaction on behalf of the Ottoman state and it immediately sent investigation committees to the region. In a report, the Council of the State emphasized that the incident in Uşak occurred as a result of the provocation of the "uneducated people" by the local merchants and commissioners who were jealous of the increasing profits of the factory owners and their contribution to the progress of the industry. The Ministry of Finance also reiterated that the riot was an issue of jealousy and the people who participated in these demonstrations were ignited by some local merchants.[146] In this example, by presenting the conflict as a matter of envy among local notables, the state does not give any agency to the rioters who were left unemployed by the establishment of the yarn factories. In addition, though most of the rioters were women, none of the reports refers to those women except claiming that most of the people who participated in these demonstrations were Muslim and non-Muslim women. In so doing, they not only ignored the agency of women who played

[145] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[146] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 April 1908).

a prominent role in the incident, but also underestimated the hardships they had been going through in the past years. This approach is also in line with the patriarchal stance of the Ottoman state elites which mostly consider the participation of female workers into the labor movement as a matter of being deceived.

3.5 Conclusion:

This chapter inquires the interplay between gender, class and religion through focusing on the patriarchal discourse of the Hamidian era. It underlines the usefulness of the discourse analysis for labor history. Accordingly, it claims that the study of discourses reveals in what ways different axes of differences interact with each other and it is an important analytical tool to reach the everyday experiences of the workers. That is why the patriarchal discourse of the Hamidian age is the focus of analysis of the chapter. The analysis here argues that the patriarchal discourse which was dominant during the reign of Abdülhamid II served two main purposes. First, through emphasizing the vulnerability of female carpet weavers and their need for protection, the gender hierarchies and inequalities were reinforced. Athough women became more visible in the public space, the Ottoman state attempted to define the terms and conditions of such visibility. Second, during an era in which there was a decline in state power, the patriarchal discourse enabled the state to derive consent from the society and generated legitimacy on the eyes of the people. Although, non-Muslim female carpet weavers were included into this discourse, there were also points of exclusion. Analyzing these exclusions was also significant in terms of scrutinizing how religion and ethnicity interacted with gender and class.

4. TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE CARPET INDUSTRY IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY AND SOCIAL REACTION: THE CASES OF UŞAK AND KAYSERI

This chapter scrutinizes the transformations in the carpet industry in the Ottoman Empire during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, by taking the cases of Uşak and Kayseri as micro examples. It shows that reorientation of production towards export dismantled existing methods and relations of productions in Uşak's and Kayseri's carpet industries. Burgeoning demand of the Western costumers for the so-called oriental carpets transformed the way raw materials were acquired, dyed and used during this era. In order to meet the increasing demand, new models and techniques were introduced to the weaving industry. Needless to say, these transformations also modified the way production relations were established since then. As a result, both cities witnessed social reactions to these changes, although in different forms. The present analysis investigates these reactions and responses of the state and society to these changes, and offers a comparison of the two cases.

There are several reasons for choosing Uşak and Kayseri as case studies. As outlined in the second chapter, Uşak and its larger environs were the traditional carpet production centers of the Ottoman Empire. Uşak's carpet industry was the first spot in which the forces of export-oriented production were severely felt. As mentioned in the second chapter, in the 1870s, the carpet production in Uşak accounted for approximately three quarters of total carpet production in Anatolia and its exports constituted the seventy seven percent of total carpet export from İzmir.[147] Although the dominance of Uşak in carpet production and export was challenged in the following decades, this city still stood as an important production center. The main reason behind Kayseri's selection as a second case for this analysis is Kayseri's place in the empire's carpet production and its increasing significance in carpet making during the late 19th century.

[147] Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing*, 137.

Although carpet weaving was a traditional economic activity in Kayseri before the advance of economic integration and export oriented production, its growing significance was due to local and foreign merchants' effort to carry production outside of Uşak and its environs. Thus, taking Kayseri as a case study provides a fertile ground for observing the transformations that took place in the carpet industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

This chapter demonstrates the significance of carpet industry within Ottoman manufacturing and examines the changes taking place in the industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a result of the world economic integration. While investigating these transformations, this study illustrates the examples of Uşak and Kayseri and presents a comparison between these two cases.

4.1 Economic Integration of Uşak's Carpet Industry to the World Economy during the late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Prior to the second half of the 19th century, local producers in Uşak were using traditional methods to weave carpets. The main tasks of the carpet production were cleansing and combing the wool, spinning the wool to make it yarn, dyeing the yarn and then weaving the carpet. For dyeing, traditional carpet producers were employing natural dyestuff such as madder root, yellow berries and safroon.[148] In most of the cases, men washed the wool, women combed and spun the wool, men dyed it and women wove the finished product. Yet, Quataert claims that there was an interchangeable division of labor for these tasks and men and women exchanged functions when necessary. For instance, although women and young girls were the primary weavers in Uşak, both men and women knotted in Kula and Gördes. Similarly, men started to dominate the spinning function in Uşak by the late 19th century, just before the establishment of yarn factories around Uşak.[149]

[148] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 475.
[149] Ibid.

Increasing integration to the world economy that mainly manifested itself in the form of export oriented production in Uşak's case transformed existing production methods of the carpet weaving industry. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, foreign merchants assumed more roles in the sector, and they introduced new models and illustrations to the producers and had more control in the dyeing and the spinning processes. Regarding the dyeing process, foreign merchants introduced the local producers with artificial dyes, such as aniline, alizarin and indigo. They also brought skilled dyers from Europe to Uşak, Kula and Demirci. The aniline dyes were making it possible to produce carpets that were more suitable to the Western and American taste. Though the aniline dyes were much cheaper and thus created an opportunity to increase the profit margin, the local producers were inexperienced and inept in using these dyes. In the same period, İzmir-based merchants started to control many dye houses, and they also utilized synthetic dyes instead of natural ones. Yet, despite the proliferation of the artificial dyes, some local producers continued to use of vegetable dyes at least until the 1890s. In some cases, alizarin and aniline dyes were mixed with the natural dyes. The introduction of synthetic dyes not only created a confusion among the local producers but also created a dichotomy between the high quality carpets which were produced with the natural dyes and those lower quality carpets which were woven with the aniline and other types of artificial dyes.[150]

Similar to the changes in the dyeing techniques, there were also some transformations in the wool spinning. Increasing carpet production augmented the need for the spun yarn. As a solution, foreign and some local merchants attempted to mechanize wool production and spinning. In this way, they were able to produce yarn within a shorter period of time and at lower prices. The establishment of three yarn spinning factories in Uşak by Tiridzade Mehmet Paşa in 1898, Bıçakzade Ali and his partners in 1900 and Yılancızade Osman Efendi in 1903 was part of these transformations. As these factories began to operate, many local people who

[150] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 476; Quataert, "The Age of Reforms," 913-920.

were spinning the yarn manually lost their jobs. Majority of these spinners were male workers.[151]

In addition to these changes in the dyeing and spinning processes, the establishment of Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company in 1908 and its operations in Western Anatolia further accelerated the transformations in the carpet making industry of the Western Anatolia. They established fourteen carpet workshops across Central and Western Anatolia and employed Armenian and Greek women as the primary weavers. In these workshops, the company provided the yarn that was spun and dyed at its own factories, located in Bandırma and İzmir. In Western Anatolia, the company had agents and they were responsible for managing the carpet trade in Western and Central Anatolian towns, through putting-out networks. The company policy dictated that loom operators who were making carpets for these agents should use only dyed yarn that had been produced in company's factories. The company not only took away spinning and dyeing jobs in Uşak but also increased the number of competing looms working outside the town.[152]

The transformations that took place in the carpet weaving industry affected the living conditions of the carpet workers. Against factory-spun yarns and synthetic dyes, the traditional production methods of the carpet workers remained very expensive. Merchants preferred cheaper carpets that were produced with factory spun yarns and artificial dyes despite the lesser quality of these carpets.[153] Altogether, this set of changes caused considerable discontent among local producers in Uşak and finally in the spring of 1908 a major riot broke out in Uşak.

On March 13, 1908, around five o'clock in the morning, a few thousand men and women attacked the three yarn spinning factories in Uşak. The crowd mostly consisted of women and

[151] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,".
[152] Quataert, "Machine Breaking," 482.
[153]Yıldırım, *Osmanlı'da İşçiler*, 192-193.

children, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. They entered into these factories, broke and demolished the yarn-spinning machines and halted the production. They broke the immovable machines of the factories with their axes, expropriated the movable ones, and damaged existing raw materials in the factories.[154]

The Ottoman authorities interfered with the events immediately and sent the governor and the police superintendent of Kütahya to the region. Fourteen of the protestors were arrested. The rioters demanded the immediate release of their friends. Two days after the initial protests a group of five-six hundreds workers, mostly women, clashed with the soldiers who were responsible for preventing a possible attack to the factories.[155] As the authorities realized that the conflict might escalate further in the town, they fulfilled the demand of the rioters and released the arrested protestors. Their release indicates that a negotiation took place between the protestors and the local authorities and the workers confidently communicated their demands to the state.[156]

The events of March in Uşak did not emerge all of a sudden and the story was much more complex than the Ottoman authorities had envisaged. As summarized above, it was a consequence of enduring processes which affected the livelihoods of people and which demolished existing social relations. In contrast to the position of some high-ranking Ottoman officials, some local authorities were well aware of the dislocations brought by world-economic integration, increasing presence of the foreign merchants and mechanization of the production. For instance, approximately a month before the incident, on February 12, 1908, Ruzbezade

[154] BOA., BEO. 3269/245156 (14 Teşrin-i Evvel 1325 / 27 Ekim 1909). After the crowd attacked the factories and halted the production, the factory owners requested the immediate reopening of their factories and compensation of their financial loss. In a petition co-authored by the factory owners, it was claimed that the total loss was 823.483 piasters. The Ottoman authorities find this estimation as exaggerated. Though the factory owners requested the compensation of their financial loss by the attackers themselves, the Ottoman state refused this proposal. They think that such a solution may further increase the tension in the city. See BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908).

[155] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908).

[156] Kadir Yıldırım argues that the protestors attacked the police station and kidnapped their arrested friends. See Yıldırım, *Osmanlı'da İşçiler*, 193.

Osman Efendi, the village headman of the Hacı Hasan Mahallesi in Uşak, penned a document to the local municipality on behalf of the twelve village headmen in Uşak. In this petition, Ruzbezade Osman warned the Ottoman authorities about the deterioration of the living conditions of the local people. This was mostly due to the establishment of the yarn spinning factories around Uşak. These factories, took the jobs of many people, Ruzbezade Osman argued, and this situation caused the emigration of more than one hundred and fifty households outside of the city.[157]

Similarly, a few days before the incident, a group of people went to the government house to express their discomfort with the operations of the yarn spinning factories and to demand the closure of these factories. Accordingly, these people stated that the operations of the yarn spinning factories were against their "private interest" (*menfaat-i şahsiye*), since they were taking their jobs out of their hands.[158] The main complaint of the protestors was their unemployment after the establishment of yarn spinning factories around Uşak. As aforementioned, the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers contributed to the escalations of the tension in the city. According to the report of the Ministry of Interior on the incident, the protestors claimed that although the company affiliated agents bought the manually spun yarns from the local people during the initial years of the factory's establishment, they started to use factory-spun and synthetically dyed yarns eventually.[159]

In addition to deteriorating living conditions, local people and their supporters, such as some local merchants, the village headmen and the mayor, also proposed the decreasing quality of the carpets as a concern. According to their claims, synthetic dyes, and lower quality wool became more commonplace after the operations of the yarn factories and the Oriental Carpet

[157] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908).
[158] Ibid.
[159] BOA., BEO. 3659/274355 (14 Teşrin-i Evvel 1325 / 27 Ekim 1909); Quataert, "Machine Breaking,"; İnalcık et al. "Social and Economic History,".

Manufacturers Company. The protestors claimed that this situation resulted in a declining demand for Uşak's carpets.[160] Although the protestors' concern regarding the declining quality of Uşak's carpet might be partly correct, it seems that they resorted to the "quality" argument in order to legitimize their demands and struggle while delegitimizing the operations of the yarn factories and the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers on the eyes of the Ottoman state.

In response to protestors' claims about unemployment, a report prepared by Ministry of Commerce on August 1909 noted that the existence of these factories increased the number of carpet looms in the city. Against the arguments that the establishment of factories caused unemployment, the Ministry's report underlined that there was indeed some improvements in the wages. Yet, the Ministry of Commerce was also concerned with the quality of Uşak's carpets. The report emphasized that that the licenses of the three factory owners in Uşak, Yılancızade, Tiridzade and Bıçakzade Efendis, did not allow them to produce yarns for the carpet weaving. The ministry argued that these factories were allowed to produce hodden, linen and cotton yarns which were not used in the carpet weaving. According to the ministry, even if it was not possible to prohibit the production of carpet yarns in the factories, the carpets which were woven with the factory yarns could be stamped. Thus, it would be possible to differentiate those carpets that were prepared with handmade yarns from those which were woven with factory yarns.[161] It seems that there was a confusion on the side of the Ottoman state officials regarding whether the licenses of these factories were allowed to produce yarns for the carpet production or not; or the authorities were simply overlooking the factory owners' yarn production for carpet weaving. It also seems that although the Ministry of Commerce was pleased with the increasing demand for Uşak's carpets, it was also concerned with the declining quality in carpet production as a consequence of the operations of the yarn factories.

[160] BOA., BEO. 3659/274355 (14 Teşrin-i Evvel 1325 / 27 Ekim 1909).
[161] BOA., BEO. 3659/274355 (14 Teşrin-i Evvel 1325 / 27 Ekim 1909).

The developments in Uşak also unearthed the conflicts between different segments of the state and society. According to a report of the Council of State dated on June 1909, Yılancızade, Bıçakzade and Tiridzade Efendis thought that the protestors were agitated by some local merchants and village headmen who also cooperated with the sub-governor, Tevik Efendi, and the Mayor of Uşak, Kırkyaranlı Mehmed Efendi.[162] There was a common belief among the factory owners, some local merchants and some state officials that Tevfik Efendi, was the primary agitator of the protests. Accordingly, Tevfik Efendi organized the protests by provoking the workers and the mayor of the town. The factory owners also claimed that, before the protests broke out, the Mayor of Uşak, Kırkyaranlı Mehmed Efendi was inviting the village headmen to his office at the municipality and secretly organizing the events. Accordingly, public-criers (*münadi)* were assigned to certain districts. Together with the village headmen, some local loom-owners and carpet merchants, these public criers were gathering local people around during nights and indoctrinating them on the unfavorable conditions created by the operations of the yarn factories. The gathering places were different. In some cases they came together at a *medrese,* in other instances they were assembled in households or carpet shops. Since the protestors mainly consisted of women, it can be assumed that women also participated in these gatherings, especially in those ones which took place in the households. After these secret meetings, the factory owners claimed, these "uneducated" people were encouraged to attack the yarn factories. According to the factory owners and some state officials, those people who attacked the factories and broke the machines were in fact the employees of these merchants, not the employees of the yarn factories, and the protests had nothing to do with the wages and the working conditions.[163]

[162] The names stated in the documents are: Helvacızade Ömer Efendi, Kaşıkçızade İbrahim Ağa, Akarcalızade İsmail Efendi, Ciğerzade Hacı Mehmed Efendi, Hacı Badizade Hacı Ali Ağa, Köylüzade Sadık Efendi, Buğdaylızade Mehmed Tahir Efendi and Nakibül Eşraf Ahmed Efendi, the former Mayor Kırkyaranlızade Mehmed Efendi and the Head of Village headmen Commision Ruzbezade Hacı Osman Efendi

[163] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908). Since the protestors mainly consisted of women, it can be assumed that women also participated in these gatherings, especially in those ones which took place in the

The documents summarized above reflect the attitude of the some state officials and the factory owners. According to this perspective, the workers had no agency and were incapable of acting for their own interest. On the contrary, it seems that some government officials considered them as naïve people who were provoked by some sinister local officials or merchants. The state and the factory owners considered the competition among merchants as the main reason behind the protests and they left deteriorating living conditions of the weaver families out of the picture.

Nevertheless, the reports summarized above still provide important clues regarding the broader social coalitions behind the protests and give significant information on how the protests were organized. As mentioned in the previous chapters, some recent studies in the past two decades such as Chalcraft's (2001) and Nacar's (2014) emphasized the necessity of locating workers' grievances into broader socio-economic and political frameworks and investigating the role of other actors than workers in these grievances.[164] In the 1908 riot in Uşak, the socio-economic changes which created social divisions in the town was influential in the outburst of the protests. The profits of the growing carpet weaving industry in Uşak were not equally distributed among the local merchants, and this situation made them important actors in the organization of the protests. Thus, behind the riots of 1908 in Uşak, there were more actors than previous studies had put forward and the workers established larger political and social coalitions than these studies had assumed.[165]

Though Ottoman government immediately sent an investigation committee to Uşak following the protests, it failed to reach a coherent account on the causes of events and how to handle it. Different segments of the Ottoman bureaucracy such as the Council of the State,

households, though there is no information available on the participation of women in the meetings in the aforementioned archival materials.

[164] Chalcraft, "The Coal Heavers,"; Can Nacar, "Labor Activism,".

[165] Quataert, "Machine Breaking,"; Karakışla, "Arşivden Bir Belge,"; Yıldırım, *Osmanlı'da İşçiler*.

Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Commerce presented different opinions on the background of the events and proposed quite different solutions for the existing conflict in the city. The divergent views of the state's different segments displays that the Ottoman state was not a uniform entity. Ministry of Interior, for instance, underlined that the factory owners' "freedom of work"[166] should be respected. According to the Ministry of Commerce's report on August 1909, the incident in Uşak occurred as a result of the provocation of the "uneducated people" by the local merchants and commissioners who were jealous of the increasing profits of the factory owners and their contribution to the progress of the industry.[167]

The Council of the State's position was mainly shaped by the investigation report of Daniş Bey dated on May 1908, who was the head of the Court of Appeals of the Council of the State *(Şura-yı Devlet İstinaf Mahkemesi Reisi)* Following the riot in March 1908, the Council of State sent Daniş Bey to Uşak and he prepared an extensive report on the incident. Daniş Bey's report had four main conclusions. First, like the Ministry of Interior, Daniş Bey underlined the responsibility of some local merchants and commissioners in the escalation of the conflict in the town. He emphasized the necessity of covering the financial losses of the factory owners by the responsible people, in accordance with the degree of their responsibility. Second, given the contribution of the mayor of Uşak and the twelve village headmen to the incidents and their malpractice, Daniş Bey proposed that Mayor and the aforesaid village headmen should be dismissed from their duties. Third, Daniş Bey highlighted there were already existing conflicts among the local people in the town, and this was making the administration of the city even more difficult. Accordingly, in the past ten years, more than twenty governors and deputy governors were appointed to Uşak. As a solution, Daniş Bey proposed to changed the administrative status of Uşak to a *liva* (sub-province) and disconnecting Uşak from

[166] Serbest-i say ve amel.
[167] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908).

Hüdavendigar province and connecting it to the province of Aydın. Lastly, Daniş Bey referred to the significance of the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company for the progress of industry in the Ottoman Empire. Yet, he also emphasizes the necessity of authorizing and supervising all the foreign companies' activities within the Ottoman Empire.[168]

Though the Council of the State rejected the first and the third proposals of Daniş Bey, his report provided the main insights for the Council of the State. Thus, the Council of the State rejected the protestors' claim that the quality of carpets were declining in Uşak. Instead, the Council members argued that the carpets of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Company, produced with the synthetic dyes and factory yarns still, attracted the interest of the European buyers. According to their conclusion, the progress of Ottoman carpet industry not only required producing the best quality of carpets, but also necessitated the production of variety of carpets which responded to the demands and tastes of the customers from various social classes. In other words, they presented an attitude in favor of the idea of free trade and highlighted that carpets of various qualities could find its buyers in any case.[169]

Needless to say, the market-sided attitude of Daniş Bey and the Council of the State ignored the deteriorating living conditions of the carpet workers in the past decades. Daniş Bey and other Council members refused that the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers created a monopoly in the industry and left local people unemployed. Contrary to these claims, they proposed that the wages of the workers increased, and the number of looms increased from four-five hundreds to approximately two thousands in the town after the new production methods were employed. According to the Council members, those people whose livelihoods were negatively influenced by the operations of the yarn factories and the Oriental Carpet

[168] BOA., BEO. 3338/250325 (13 Nisan 1324 / 26 May 1908).
[169] Ibid.

Manufacturers Company could benefit from abovementioned opportunities and they could work for the company.[170]

The March riot of 1908 in Uşak lays the impact of world economic on carpet weaving industry bare. After the carpet industry of Uşak became more export-oriented, the composition of work force, division of labor and relations of production that existed around the old methods of production were transformed. These processes not only affected the livelihoods of the carpet workers and their families, they also created conflicts among different segments of the state and the society. As aforementioned, the riot in Uşak illustrates that workers strategically formed alliances with the local authorities and some merchants against the factory owners. While examining their grievance, these conflicts and cooperations should also be taken into account since they were important components of the organization of the riot and its mobilization.

Before concluding this part, the tactics that were chosen by the workers to demonstrate their grievance should also be noted. The demands of the machine breakers in Uşak were similar to those of Luddist counterparts in the 19th century Britain. The machine breaking incident was basically a reaction to the "machines" which left the workers unemployed, and which worked against their advantage.[171] The demonstrations in Uşak is also a good case point in terms of demonstrating female workers' activism and their participation in the working class activism, though the documents unfortunately do not provide a detailed account regarding their participation. Machine breaking in Uşak confirms that male and female workers alike were not passive agents of the changes that the carpet industry was going through. On the contrary, they

[170] Ibid.

[171] According to Karakışla's account, the first instances of such machine breakings in the Ottoman Empire occurred in 1839, in Slevne, at the factory of Dobrijokeslov by female workers, in 1851 in Samakof by the female textile workers, and in 1861 in Bursa by the female textile weavers. Similar luddist movement occurred in the Ottoman Empire, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries as well. In 1871, railway workers demolished a part of the Haydarpaşa-İzmir railway, after a worker was fired. Similarly, in 1907, a group of Muslim men demolished three tram wagons after a tram accident in which a-12 years old boy was get injured. See Karakışla, "Arşivden Bir Belge,".

reacted to those changes and created opportunities for them to negotiate the terms of economic integration.

4.2 Transformations in the Carpet Industry of Kayseri during the late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

As mentioned above, the growing significance of carpet making in Kayseri and other cities of Central and Western Anatolia was an attempt to respond the increasing external demand for Ottoman carpets and break the monopoly of traditional carpet making centers. Since the 1850s, foreign merchants based in İzmir and İstanbul encouraged the emergence of new carpet weaving centers outside of Uşak, Kula, Demirci and Gördes. In this way, they were able to find cheaper labor and more submissive work force. In regions such as Kütahya and Kayseri, merchants started to employ more and more Greek Orthodox and Armenian women for carpet weaving. With the operations of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers in 1908, fourteen new carpet workshops were opened in Western and Central Anatolia.[172]

Among these new production centers, Kayseri occupied an important position. Though carpet weaving was a significant economic activity during the 17th and 18th centuries in Kayseri, the scale of production increased after the increasing interaction with the Western markets in the early 20th century. As in the case of Uşak, this increasing interaction with the European merchants and expansion of carpet production through Anatolia also brought significant transformations in the craft of carpet weaving in Kayseri. Similar to Uşak, in addition to the operations of the foreign merchants, some local merchants started to assume important roles in the transformation of carpet production in Kayseri, and this created a division among carpet merchants. In addition to this social division, significant changes took place in the production methods of Kayseri's carpets. As in Uşak, this created a social reaction by those merchants who

[172] İnalcık et all.,"Social and Economic History," 919-920.

retained the traditional methods of production. In this case, these merchants also utilized "declining quality of carpets" argument as a ground for legitimacy for their battle against the challenges to traditional methods of carpet making.

As in the case of Uşak, the increasing presence of the British and the European merchants caused changes in the ways carpet yarns were dyed and spun. Especially, use of rotten silk obtained from French and Italian merchants caused significant problems and debates. The course of events started with a letter written by the governor of Diyarbakır to the Ministry of Interior in January 1904. In this letter, the governor stated that upon a careful investigation, they realized that carpets coming from Kayseri were made of rotten silk (*çürük ipek*). The governor emphasized that carpet weaving was a significant economic activity in the Ottoman Empire and many people were earning their livelihood from this craft. Hence, there was no room for cheating in this craft.[173]

Two months later, the Ministry of Interior wrote a letter to the governors of Ankara and Kayseri. In this letter, the ministry restated the significance of carpet weaving as an industrial activity in the Ottoman Empire and reminded that a few years ago, masters from Hereke were sent to Kayseri to train local people on carpet weaving and dyeing techniques. As discussed in the second chapter, this exchange of journeymen between Hereke and Kayseri was proposed as a solution to the decreasing demand for the carpets of Kayseri and to deteriorating conditions of the carpet weaving industry. The demand for Kayseri's carpet was recovered thanks to such efforts. Hence, the letter claimed that utilizing rotten silk and other kinds of improper raw materials would damage the restored demand. The Ministry of Interior ordered that the use of such raw materials should be immediately prohibited.[174] In his response to this letter, the governor of Ankara stated his discomfort regarding this event. According to him, since the use

[173] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (13 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1319 / 26 January 1904).
[174] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (28 Şubat 1319 / 12 March 1904).

of rotten silk in carpet weaving was strictly prohibited in Kayseri, the carpet that was sent to Diyarbakır might be the product of the one of the sixty looms that merchant İmamzade Asır Efendi established around Sivas.[175]

Following various discussions and investigations, the government officials took measures to solve the problems in the carpet industry of Kayseri. The Ministry of Interior proposed that dye houses should be taken under strict supervision and the carpets that were produced with such rotten materials should be seized and burnt.[176] Moreover, the Ministry of Interior requested the Ministry of Commerce and governors of Konya and Sivas that the owners of the looms who produced these low-quality carpets should get a financial penalty.[177]

In addition to these measures, the local merchants also took initiative to protect the craft against the aforementioned challenges and established a carpet commission in the first years of the 20th century.[178] The document that summarizes the mission and responsibilities of this commission is dated on March 1904 and it is like a manifesto. In this manifesto, the carpet commission started with explaining the reasons which led to the establishment of such an organization. Accordingly, the document stated that the primary aim of the organization was protecting the fame, beauty and excellence of the Kayseri's carpets (*muhafaza-ı nefaset ve zerafet*). To achive this goal, the commission was planning to strictly control the carpet looms. The commission members were gathering once a week to discuss how the progress of the craft could be ensured and how the cheaters (*hilekar)* could be dealt with. Moreover, the commission prepared instructions on dyeing and weaving to be strictly followed by the workers. Regarding the production process, the commission emphasized that use of broken wool, broken silk and

[175] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (7 Nisan 1320 / 20 April 1904).
[176] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (28 Şubat 1321 / 13 March 1906).
[177] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (24 Teşrin-i Sâni 1321 / 7 December 1905).
[178] Although the document which declares the establishment of the carpet commission in Kayseri is dated on March 1904, correspondances between governor of Ankara and Diyarbakır reveals that the commission was already operating in January 1904. Thus, we can assume that the commission was established in the first years of the 20th century.

low quality European silk was strictly prohibited. The dye houses would be under the supervision of the commission. The commissioners decided that the commission would appoint the masters of these dye houses. The masters would be subject to an exam (*imthihan*) preceding their employment. The loom owners who were the members of this commission would not be allowed to employ any other dyer who was not qualified by the commission.[179] The members also decided to organize regular inspection tours to the carpet weaving looms to follow whether the producers followed these instructions. Thus, the main mission of the organization was creating a standard for carpet production in Kayseri and penalizing those merchants who did not follow the agreed principles to protect the quality.

Ottoman authorities were closely following these developments in the town. It seems that, though the carpet commission was a local initiative, the government officials had an influence on the appointment of the president of the commission. Once it appeared that the carpets that were sent to Diyarbakır from Kayseri were produced with rotten silk, the governor of Diyarbakır, for instance proposed that the former president of the carpet commission, İmamzade Asır Efendi, should be reappointed to this position to solve the existing problems in the industry. Governor of Ankara did not agree with this opinion and claimed that that Asır Efendi engaged in serious corruption acts during his presidency and Ibrahim Efendi became the new president after such incidents. As mentioned above, the governor of Ankara believed that Asır Efendi was operating sixty looms around Sivas, which were producing low quality carpets. Ministry of Interior sided with the governor of Diyarbakır and emphasized that İmamzade Asır Efendi should be brought back to his office to prevent further deterioration of the craft.[180] As in the case of Uşak, different segments of Ottoman bureaucracy had opposing opinions on the same issue and this reveals the conflict among these segments.

[179] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (8 Mart 1320 / 21 March 1904).
[180] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (28 Şubat 1321 / 13 March 1906).

Despite the efforts of the carpet commission and the Ottoman officials, the problems pertaining to carpet production persisted. As the correspondences between the governor of Ankara and the Ministry of Interior reveals, although use of cheap foreign origin raw materials (*mevadd-ı ecnebiye)* and synthetic dyes were prevented through the employment of watchmen (*kolcu*) in Kayseri, the production of improper carpets continued in Kayseri's environs, namely Sivas, Konya, Ürgüb, Niğde and Nevşehir. The governor of Ankara claimed that carpets that were produced in these centers were sold as if they were Kayseri's products. For the governor of Ankara, necessary measures (*tedabir-i lazıme*) should also include these cities so that the value of pure silk carpets would not decrease and the improvements in the carpet making industry that were attained so far would not be lost. He underlined that the carpet commission should employ watchmen who would be responsible for making quality controls in Kayseri's environs as well. As a further measure, the governor proposed to put a sign of lead to the carpets of Kayseri that were produced of pure silk and natural dyes. In this way, it would be possible to differentiate real Kayseri carpets from the fake ones. As a result, keeping foreign and domestic demand for the carpets of Kayseri alive would be possible; and it could be ensured that the exported carpets are Kayseri's own products.[181]

Despite these above-mentioned efforts, in 1910, there were still some reports from Kayseri which stated that some carpets which were woven with raw dye (*ham boya*) were found. In this case, there was a confusion among the different segments of the Ottoman bureaucracy. As in the previous instances, Ministry of Commerce suggested to cut and burn these fraudulent

[181] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (18 Teşrin-i Evvel 1321 / 31 October 1905). It seems that increasing control on the production process in Kayseri encouraged merchants to carry carpet production (with cheaper raw materials) outside of Kayseri. For instance, in 1904, a merchant called Saryan established looms in the districts of Ürgüb and Bünyan-ı Hamid and produced carpets in these looms. Saryan used low quality European silk and produced prayer rugs and carpets. Yet, due to the higher prices of Kayseri's carpets, Kayseri's merchants became incapable of competing with the carpets that were produced in Saryan's workshops. This was because of the strict measures taken in Kayseri regarding the production processes. Since the use of low quality raw materials in Kayseri were prohibited, the products of Kayseri became incapable of competing with the products of Ürgüb, and the products of Kayseri's merchants remained unsold. To prevent this unfair competition, the governor of Ankara demands the governors of Sivas and Konya to take action against the use of such materials. See BOA., DH. MKT. 923/67 (11 Kânûn-ı Sanî 1320 / 24 January 1905).

carpets. Ministry of Interior did not agree and proposed to start an investigation in the region. They rephrased their previous solution, which was putting a lead sign behind those carpets that were produced in proper methods. Ministry of Interior again offered to bring a financial penalty and preventing the transition of those carpets from the custom.[182]

Similar to its response in Uşak, the Council of the State argued that the carpet industry owed its progress to free trade and prohibiting the use of lower quality raw materials would be against the functioning of free trade's logic. The Council of the State emphasized that since carpets that were woven with lower quality raw material would be sold at a cheaper price, they could not be considered as fraudulent. As the Council of the State also emphasized in the case of Uşak, they reiterated that since there would be different kinds of customers for these cheaper and more expensive carpets, any action which destroy this balance would be detrimental, not beneficious.[183] It is indeed quite striking to observe that the Council of the State presented a very coherent attitude to two different cases in the early 20th century.

To sum up, as in Uşak, the Ottoman Empire's integration to the world economy caused some transformations in Kayseri's carpet weaving industry. These processes created new opportunities for foreign and some local merchants to assume more role in the carpet weaving industry's restructuring. These restructuring included how the raw materials were acquired, dyed and woven. Cheaper quality of raw materials were increasing the profit margin for the merchants, and those merchants who retained the traditional methods were labeling these new comers as cheaters. Though the merchants who stuck to traditional methods of carpet production were proposing "quality" as a matter of concern, their decreasing income as a result of the increasing competition with these new comers was also an issue. Hence, similar to the

[182] BOA., DH. MKT. 829/24 (28 Şubat 1321 / 13 March 1906).
[183] BOA., Dahiliye Muhaberat-ı Umumiye İdaresi Evrakı (hereafter DH. MUİ.) 44-1/20 (7 Şubat 1325 / 20 February 1910).

case of Uşak, merchants utilized the discourse of quality as a ground for legitimacy for their struggle against their rivals.

4.3 Conclusion:

This chapter examines the influence of the Ottoman Empire's integration to the world economy and export oriented production on the carpet industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, by taking the developments in Uşak and Kayseri into consideration. It argues that increasing interaction with the Western economy and export oriented production altered existing methods and relations of productions in both cities' carpet weaving industries. These transformations elicited social reactions that took different forms in two towns.

The developments in the carpet industries of Uşak and Kayseri were two sides of the same coin. In both cities, the influx of cheaper and lower quality raw materials, and increasing presence of the foreign merchants caused changes in the production processes. The changes that occurred in the dyeing and spinning processes, emergence of new production centers and mechanization of production were the main transformations. Moreover, some local merchants strategically benefited from the opportunities brought by the free trade. As their foreign counterparts, they found ways to produce the carpets at a cheaper price. This not only reduced the quality of carpets in both cities, it also created conflicts among local merchants who retained the traditional production methods and others who opt for producing carpets with lower quality raw materials.

As a consequence of the abovementioned developments, declining quality of the carpets became a significant concern in both towns. Though there was a genuine distress among the workers and the merchants regarding the quality, they used this issue as a point of justification for their own grievances. By proposing their doubts on the authenticity of the carpets above

anything else, the carpet workers and merchants in Uşak and Kayseri tried to legitimize their position in the eyes of the state vis-à-vis those "cheater" or indifferent merchants.

Economic integration and export oriented production in Uşak and Kayseri not only transformed existing production methods, but also altered existing social relations. The increasing presence of the foreign merchants and free trade logic transformed the work force and created new opportunities for some local merchants in both towns. Non-muslim women, for instance, started to be employed at the factories of the Oriental Carpet Manufacturers around Uşak and Orthodox Greek and Armenian women were employed at the workshops around Kayseri.[184] On the side of the workers, the transformations in the carpet production meant the replacement of some of the present workers with a cheaper a more submissive workforce. Similarly, new commissioners and merchants were integrated to networks of these foreign merchants. These new comers to the carpet industry, benefited more from the rising profits of the carpet industry's integration to the world economy. Yet, this unequal share from the benefits created a competition and conflict among different segments of the society. These conflicts also accompanied the struggles over the production methods such as dyeing techniques and which raw material to use.

Although the cases of Uşak and Kayseri show many similarities, there are also important differences among two cases. Though both cities reacted to the changes in the production methods and relations of production, the way they responded was quite different. In Kayseri, merchants who were in favor of retaining the traditional methods in carpet weaving took initiative and established a carpet commission. This carpet commission created a pressure on the Ottoman state and on those "cheater" merchants when necessary. They did their best to control the phases of carpet production, by taking the dye houses under their supervision and

[184] İnalcık, "Social and Economic History,"; Karakışla, "Arşivden Bir Belge,".

training their own masters. In Uşak, the main response to the forces of economic integration and the changes in the carpet industry came from the carpet workers although the mayor and some local notables were also involved.

5. CONCLUSION

This study has focused on the carpet industry of Asia Minor between 1843 and 1914. It has examined the transformations that took place in the carpet production beginning in the second half of the 19th century and the societal reactions to these changes. It has also sought to shed some light on the daily and work experiences and the struggles of the laborers in this industry.

The decision to study carpet industry in Asia Minor has two main reasons. First, despite the existence of vibrant carpet production in Anatolia especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, limited scholarly attention was paid to this economic activity. Except a few studies, it was usually the art historians who paid attention to carpet production. They neglected the social dimensions of carpet production such as the composition of the work force, division of labor, and relations of production and devoted more time for illustrating the special features of the carpets such as the sizes, shapes and the colors. Second, although art historians were also concerned with the changes that took place in the carpet industry starting with the second half of the 19th century, which also altered the shapes, sizes and raw material of the carpets, they again ignored the societal reactions to these changes and the methods of adaptations and resistances employed by the local producers against these transformations. The present study attempted to fill these gaps by examining both the social dimensions of carpet production and the social reactions to the transformations that took place in the carpet industry in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The present study sought to bring several contributions to the Ottoman historiography. In the first place, by demonstrating the vibrant carpet production activities that took place in Anatolia during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this research aims to contribute to the literature which has strongly challenged the decline paradigm in the field of Ottoman manufacturing history. In chapter two, it demonstrates that, contrary to the assumptions of the decline paradigm which presumed the disappearance of handicraft based production as a result

of the interactions with Western economy, different scale of productions, namely household, workshop and factory based production coexisted in Ottoman Empire's carpet industry. Whereas putting-out networks sustaining household based production were pretty common in Central and Western Anatolia, weaving workshops operated by local and foreign merchants were also pretty widespread. In addition to these individual initiatives, the state established the Hereke Imperial Factory in 1843 which was famous for its silk carpets. The present study also reveals that, different carpet production centers in the empire, namely Uşak and its environs, Isparta, Konya, Niğde, Kayseri, Nevşehir, Sivas and Hereke did not work in isolation with each other. On the contrary, there was a constant interaction between these centers and they frequently exchanged workers, masters and ideas. This interaction contributed to the advancement of the craft of carpet weaving in Asia Minor, and the Ottoman state also facilitated this communication.

Second, inspired by the studies of Ottoman labor historians in the past two decades, this study attempts to employ a bottom up perspective and provide some insights on the experiences of the carpet workers, especially those of the female ones. The third chapter examines how other axes of differences such as gender, ethnicity and religion interacted with class and in what ways this interaction was influential in shaping the daily and work experiences of female carpet workers. It also scrutinizes the relationship between the Hamidian state and the female carpet workers by analyzing the patriarchal discourse of the Ottoman state during this era. It argues that women's employment outside of their households created a concern on behalf of the Ottoman state and society. In order to address this concern, the Hamidian government sought to protect the honor and chastity of the female carpet workers in various cases. In so doing, this study has claimed, the Hamidian government established a father-daughter kind of a relationship between itself and the female workers. This relationship which was established between the state and the female workers served two main purposes: On the one hand, it

reinforced existing gender hierarchies in the Ottoman society, by emphasizing female carpet workers' vulnerability and their need for protection. On the other hand, the fatherly attitude of the Hamidian state was an attempt to secure the loyalty of the female workers, their families and fellow villagers, in an era in which the Ottoman state was facing various political, economic and social challenges. Unfortunately, the analysis here remained incapable of examining how female workers responded and reacted to the patriarchal attitude of the Ottoman state. Yet, the discontent of Armenian female carpet weavers in Sivas in 1904 and the machine breaking incident led by mostly women in Uşak in 1908 were quite significant in terms of demonstrating the moments in which female workers challenged the gender roles and the socially approved notions of femininity.

Third, in the last chapter, the present study reveals the methods of resistances as well as adaptations of the local producers against the forces of export oriented production. It investigates the transformations that took place in the carpet industry in Asia Minor in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and attempts to reveal reactions to these changes through investigating the cases of Uşak and Kayseri. It shows that though the carpet making was an important activity prior to the 19th century, carpet production activities in Asia Minor thrived beginning in the 1850s, as a result of the free trade treaties that the Porte had signed with Britain and other European countries during the 19th century. These developments influenced the carpet production industry in Asia Minor in several ways. To begin with, in line with the increasing purchasing power of the European and American middle classes, the demand to the so-called Oriental carpets had expanded. In order to meet the increasing demand, some foreign and local merchants taking advantage of free trade treaties started to assume more roles in the industry. In order to increase their profit margin, these merchants brought cheaper and lower quality raw materials, encouraged the emergence of new carpet production centers outside of the traditional production centers, namely Uşak, Kula, Demirci and Gördes, where they were able to find

cheaper and more submissive work force. The restructuring of the carpet production industry caused changes in the production methods, as well as the alterations in the production relations. The use of cheaper and lower quality raw materials not only caused a decline in the quality of carpets, but also, in some cases, resulted in unemployment among local producers. For instance, ready-made yarns that became widely available in Uşak at the turn of the 20th century left many spinners unemployed. Similarly, the widespread use of synthetic dyes across the Asia Minor not only created confusion among the dyers who were used to traditional dyeing methods, but also left some of these people unemployed.

Furthermore, as this study has indicated, the transformations in the production methods and changing production relations caused a social reaction in Uşak and Kayseri, although in different forms. In the case of Kayseri, in order to address the forces of export oriented production, some local merchants and state officials cooperated in and established a carpet commission in the early 20th century. In order to respond similar challenges, the carpet workers in Uşak cooperated with various other local actors such as the village headmen, the town's mayor, some merchants and the district governor. As a whole, these actors were dissatisfied with the changes in the carpet industry and their coming together resulted in the riot of 1908. Based on the case of Uşak, the analysis here underlined the significance of employing a holistic approach to labor activism by including the alliances that the workers established with other social and political actors into the narrative.

The last contribution this study sought to make is demonstrating that the Ottoman state was not a uniform actor. Through various cases, the present analysis shows that the different segments of Ottoman bureaucracy had contrasting point of views on the same issue and this created a conflict among different state organs. It argues that these disagreements among the Ottoman bureaucracy was also influential in shaping the experiences of the laborers in carpet industry and had an impact on the way they framed their grievances.

The present study invites researchers to bring more insights on carpet industry of Asia Minor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although one of its major goals was to take the experiences of the laborers into its foci of analysis, in some cases it remained short of making the voices of the carpet workers heard and of providing detailed information on labor processes. Benefiting from the alternative historical sources other than the Prime Ministry of Ottoman Archives such as the local archives, newspapers and memoirs may partly solve this problem. These sources can bring new perspectives to the struggles and daily and work experiences of the carpet workers in this industry. The critical assessment of these alternative sources may also open up a space for making the work experiences and the struggles of the female workers visible.

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