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Working Group: Feminist Labour History

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***Family and gender labour relationships in the Greek mines, 1860-1940***

The paper examines the influence of family and gender in the organization of labour and the labour relationships in the Greek mines, 19th-20th centuries. As elsewhere in Europe, the organisation of work in Greek mines was based chiefly on the sub-contracting system. Since mining enterprises were of small size and they didn’t work regularly but they depended strongly on the demands of foreign markets, the employers didn’t invest in new technologies. On the contrary, they based on sub-contracting systems and gender division of labour in order to reduce the cost of labour and the total cost of production. This organisation of labour by the sub-contractor system in the Greek mines seems to a large extent to have been based on systems of kinship and on the family and gender division of labour.

To what degree did the wage which was paid to the members of the sub-contracting team constitute a part of the family wage? How and to what degree did the contractor, in sharing out duties at work in the contracting group, shape the gender division of labour in the extraction process and influence daily output? These are some of the questions that the paper will try to answer. The sources that are used are various: the Greek Miners’ Fund, Business Archives of the mining enterprises, the consular reports on mining industry, the local press.