Miners, managers and the state: A socio-political history of the Ombilin coal-mines, West Sumatra, 1892-1996
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Entering the World of Miners

"You will be shocked if you remain with us, because we are all men, we are vulgar, and apt to lose our tempers quickly". This was the first thing that I heard when I set foot in the Ombilin coal-mines for the first time in April 1995. The next few days I had a chance to visit various mine locations, both mines, which were still in operation and those, which had been closed down. The first mine I visited was the Sawah Rasau underground mine, located about 5 km from the town of Sawahlunto. This mine was no longer in use, but it harbours an interesting story. On top of the entrance gate to the mine, the visitor's eye is still caught by a short inscription in German: "Glück Auf". This was intended to be a greeting and blessing to all those who went into the mine. Inside the mine it is dark and hot. According to former miners, once they were inside nobody knew who was their friend or who their foe, and people were used to hear screaming emanating from inside. Sometimes at night people still hear these voices. They are ghostly echoes of the injuries, accidents, fights, and killings, which were once rife among the miners. From time to time, people outside would come across hands or feet or other parts of the mutilated bodies of victims, which were being transported on the lorries along with coal.

This story refers to the world of the miners in the Ombilin coal-mines at the beginning of the twentieth century. The purpose of this study is to investigate what really went on among the Ombilin coal-miners. What kind of violence occurred here? Might the working and living conditions in the Ombilin coal-mines have been even worse than those on the plantations in East Sumatra? (Breman 1986; 1989; Stoler 1985). If so, what sort of labour regime did the management impose, and what was the miners' reaction to it? Did these conditions never change throughout the whole of the colonial period?

This study focuses on social relations and the social control in the mining society (miners and managers) in the Ombilin coal-mines between 1892 and 1996. The Ombilin coal-mining company is one of the most important mining areas in Indonesia. The coalfield was discovered in 1868, but it was not until 1892, the colonial government decided to exploit it. This decision was emphatically related to the high consumption of coal by the colonial state, and its policy of reducing its dependence on coal imported from abroad. The Dutch navy needed coal in large quantities, as a part of its task at the end of last century was to expand political control of the colonial state to the Outer Islands. Apart from supplying the navy, coal was needed especially by the large state-owned companies such as the steamships of the mercantile fleet and the railways (Furnivall 1948: 235; A Campo 1992). In other words, coal was one of the most important energy resources at that time, and contributed, directly or indirectly, to the formation of the colonial state as well as to its corollary of economic development. In short, the colonial state acted simultaneously as producer and consumer of coal.

The collieries of the Ombilin coal-mines are operating to day. In its long history, this state-owned company has undergone a whole series of changes in its fortunes. Between its first years of exploitation until 1942, production of coal expanded enormously, then contracted, responding to crises in the international coal market in the 1920s and the economic depression in the 1930s. After the destruction of coalfields during the turbulent period 1942-1949, production of the Ombilin coal-mines faced a steady decline until the 1970s. The turn-around came when
the oil crisis of 1973/1974 shocked the New Order government out of its complacent dependence on oil and made it reconsider its energy policy. In the revised energy policy drawn up by the government, coal featured as one of the important alternative energy resources. Efforts to improve coal production led to a gradual increase of its production. As a result of this change of course the Ombilin coal-mines experienced a boom time during the 1980s (Appendix 1).

Many factors can contribute or conspire to push the coal industry into a decline. Among them are lack of capital, failure to keep abreast of technological developments, lack of efficiency of management, and, externally, changes in energy consumption. The inability of the state to supply capital, new mining machinery sometimes in combination with inefficient management and political manoeuvring were important reasons which explain the decline in coal production between the 1950s up and the 1970s. After the energy crisis, the government launched intensive discussions on the problems of diversification of energy consumption and how to increase coal production. But before this could be done the industry needed a huge injection of capital, foreign investors were invited to commit their capital, especially in the coalfields in Kalimantan. Meanwhile, the New Order government has begun to pay attention to an improvement of the infrastructure, capital supplies, mainly since the beginning of 1980s, keeping up with new technology, providing a skilled labour force, and improving labour conditions (Prijono 1985; 1988). All these efforts on the part of the state signal a revival in the production of coal. Although Kalimantan was given priority, the Ombilin coal-mines also benefited from this new government policy. The production of coal from the Ombilin reached far higher figures than before the War, namely 770,715 tons in 1985 (Buletin Bukit Asam 1991:1; Appendix 1)

It is not my task here to give a detailed explanation of the economic development of coal. What I want to emphasize are the effects of the economic development of coal on social relations, the social control of the mining society (miners and managers) and the intervention by the state. The opening of the Ombilin coal-mines was followed by the gradual formation of a racially divided society. The composition of this mining society was marked by the presence of Europeans, Indo-Europeans, and various groups of indigenous people. These racial distinctions marked its organizational hierarchy, social status, and power relationships. The Europeans and Indo-Europeans held higher and middle-rank positions, and the indigenous people comprised of the lowest, the working class. They again could be divided into four categories of labourers, namely convict, contract, free, and casual labourers. They came from different social and cultural backgrounds. Generally speaking, they were young, physically strong men, and were not accompanied to Sawahlunto by their families. In 1896 there were 1,234 labourers. In 1921 their number had risen to 11,046 people, and most of them were convict labourers. As time

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1 The programme of energy diversification was promulgated in 1976 through a Presidential instruction. In this instruction the government suggested that large industries use coal as a substitute for oil. See Sigit 1980:5-13;1985:13-8; Sazili 1985:79-85; Batubara Indonesia 1992:26; Batubara dalam Program Diversifikasi Energy 1991:3.

2 Discussing Dutch colonial society, Furnivall referred to three races that had odd institutionalized names under colonial civil law, each with different rights and duties. The formal criterion of the family law in the country of origin classified the citizens in late-colonial Indonesia into Europeans (including Americans, Turks, Thais, and Japanese), Foreign Orientals (Vreemde Oosterlingen, namely Chinese, Arabs, and Tamils), and autochthonous people (inlanders). See on this Furnivall 1948: 446-64; Fasseur 1992; Van der Wal 1966.
passed these categories gradually disappeared, and a working-class community emerged. Social interaction with local people also became much more usual, especially after the turbulent periods under the Japanese occupation and during the Revolution.

Studies on the labour regime in the Ombilin coal-mines in particular and studies on socio-political aspects of the mining sector in Indonesia in general, or even in South East Asian countries, are rare, although various mining operations producing commodities such as gold, diamonds, and tin have existed in these countries for centuries. Socio-political studies of the mining sector in countries in Africa and Latin America are far more developed than its counterpart in Southeast Asia.

Studies on socio-economic and political aspects of the Indonesian mining history have been emerging since the 1980s. From an economic perspective, we should not fail to mention the studies by Lindblad (1985), Van Beurden (1986), Scholte (1989), Baks (1989), and Kagie (1989), whereas the socio-political and cultural perspective has been emphasized in the studies of Robinson (1986), Magenda (1991), Vos (1992), Somers-Heidhues (1992), Prodolliet (1993), and Erman (1995). In the same period, Dutch and Indonesian students such as Suribidari (1994), Zubir (1994), and Van Empel (1994) have paid attention to various aspects of the labour regime in the Ombilin coal-mines for the period of 1892-1930. These studies have not only enriched our understanding of various aspects concerning the mining sector, but have also stimulated a new direction in the development of the Indonesian historiography.

With regard to the socio-economic history of mining in Indonesia and South East Asian countries, there are a number of important topics that need more detailed study. Among such topics are: a) capital, i.e. capital investment, contribution to capital growth, the changing nature and patterns of mining investment and its relation to local economic growth and land ownership; b) labour force, i.e., the methods and modes of labour recruitment, its impact on immigration and population growth, cross-cultural relations; work organization, control and discipline of labour, labour movement, and labour politics; c) technology, i.e. technological changes in the methods of production as well as products being produced, and its impact on social and power relations, and the environment.

This still leaves a wealth of topics that can be developed in order to understand the problems that have emerged in the Indonesian mining sector at the present day. But what is of paramount importance here is that we need not only skill in using special methods and analyses, but we also to adopt a comprehensive approach to elaborate on these subjects. In this respect the use of the historical perspective is very important if we are to avoid a series of static images and if we are to understand, for instance, the dynamic relationship between labour, capital, technology, and state involvement.

This study focuses on the socio-political history of the Ombilin coal-mines from the perspective of its labour regime, in particular how the labourers were recruited, organized and controlled in a system of production, the effects of technological changes on labour organizations, and labour control. The world of the labour regime will be related to the mine as a unit of production and to the surrounding socio-political world. The world of

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3 This is one of the reasons why a group of social scientists in Australia tried to form a centre for mining studies for Asia-Pacific Region in Canberra. In November 1995, this group held a workshop and focused on themes like mining, miners, and mineral resources. See in Conference Proceedings: Mining and Mineral Resource Policy Issues in Asia-Pacific Prospects for the 21st century, 1995.
labour regime refers to the mine world, while the social and political world indicates a wider world; in other words that is the integration of the mining society into the wider society of the town or local society. In this context, this study will try to see how linkages or alliances are created and what are their influences on forms of social relations within the mining society.

Discussing the mine as a unit of production, I shall focus on technological aspects, labour recruitment, work organization, and living conditions. Looking at socio-political aspects, this study will explore social relations and social control between and within different categories of workers; formal politics of institutions (trade unions, political parties, and associations), both of the management and of the various levels of labour, informal patterns of organization, representation, domination, and the relationship between formal institutions and informal arrangements.

2. Theoretical Framework

There are various approaches that have inspired this research project. Six case studies, namely Nash (1979), Robinson (1986), Breman (1986; 1989), Stoler (1985), Chakrabarti (1989), and Simeon (1995) deserve to be mentioned here because of the influence they have had on my study. Nash focused on ideology in the actions taken by Bolivian tin-miners. Robinson wrote on the nature of class consciousness in relation to the world economy in the Soroako nickel-mine in Sulawesi, Breman on control of labour and state intervention, Stoler on protests and confrontations by the labourers on the plantations of East Sumatra, Chakrabarti on class and class consciousness from the perspective of the subaltern group, and Simeon on labour and nationalist movements in Chota Nagpur, India. This study will combine aspects of these approaches and emphasize the process of change in social relations and social control within the miners and between miners, manager, and the state in a wider context.

The regime of terror imposed by the colonial state as an instrument of control and politics of confrontations aroused among the labourers on the East Sumatran plantations as shown by the excellent studies of Breman and Stoler have really inspired me to test their ideas and apply them to the case of the Ombilin coal-miners. Possibly this exercise will reveal similarities and differences between the kinds of control imposed by the state and the forms of labourers’ actions taken by the Ombilin coal-miners. Nash’s study shows that the actions of tin-miners in Bolivia, whether in the form of protest or accommodation, were dependent on socio-economic and cultural factors in the mine and mining community. Nash has given a wider definition to the ideology in action. He believes that ideology in action is concerned with a way of perceiving and interpreting experiences. Hence, the ideology refers not only to political orientation and action, but also to social, economic, and cultural spheres (Nash 1979:8). The key question is how the workers put together the orientations they acquire in the family, in their work, in the union, and federated workers’ movement, the church, and political parties. Nash’s study is useful to extrapolate the coal-miners’ actions, especially after the mining society had been formed and political parties, trade unions, and socio-cultural associations had been established.

Dipesh Chakrabarti shows us the importance of pre-capitalist culture in understanding social relations between workers and managers. His major concern seems to make a dichotomy between the pre-capitalist culture of the working class and the capitalist culture of managers.
Interpreting culture in terms of fixed categories is problematical, because a framework, which homogenizes culture in terms of certain determinant categories does not allow space for practice in the production and reproduction. Therefore, this study does not concentrate on elements of pre-capitalist culture only, but also emphasizes the cultural transformation of the working class as is indicated clearly in the studies of Nash and Robinson. Robinson showed that a cultural transformation of the working class in the nickel-mining industry at Soroako, Sulawesi, has given rise to new forms of social relations. These social relations were coloured by ethnic conflict between local people as a working class and Javanese and Sundanese as higher and middle-level staffs. Ethnicity was mixed with class consciousness.

In this study I use the terms mining society and mining community. Historically a mining society consisted of various ethnic groups, which were organized according to a strict hierarchy in which each component was related to each other. Therefore, the categorization of ethnic groups as defined by Furnivall (1948) in his study on plural society would be misleading if it were applied to understanding the systems of relationship in a mining society. Within the European section, for instance, there were differences between the _totok_ Europeans and the _ïûfo-Europeans_ or the Eurasians. The presence of the Indo-Europeans with their mixed culture was one of the important elements which defined social relationships within the mining society. A simple distinction according to a model based on class relations will not fully explain the dynamics of the mining society either. The miners may have comprised the working class, but they were divided up into different categories and groups created by the company (convict, contract, free, and casual labourers) and by their own cultural and ethnic background.

When I discuss the making of a mining society, in the first instance I am referring to the making of an enclave society 4 which was separate, or even hostile, to the town society. As the years passed, such a mining society underwent changes, because there was a measure of integration of the different elements within the mine itself and between the mine and the town society. In the second instance, a mining community refers to a sense of common identity, which emerged, mainly after the 1920s, through the formation of various groups and associations. Moreover, integration between elements of the mine and elements of the town created several communities each of which united groups from town and mine.

All this leads to the formulation of a number of questions, which will be explored. How were the miners recruited, organized, and controlled by managers and the state into a system of capitalist production? How were social relations and social control practised within the miners and between the miners and managers? How were the formal and informal political actions of the miners, individual and collective, carried out? Formal and informal political actions will be seen in the context of socio-economic and political structures at the local and national level. Tracing the background of the managers is important in this context, as they were not independent agents. They depended on their superiors. During the colonial period (1892-1942), the managers were appointed by the central government, initially under the Director of the Department of Education, Religion and Industry, and later on under the Director of the Department of State Companies. During the Old Order regime, both the periods of Liberal Democracy (1945-1959) and the Guided Democracy (1959-1965), their background and the

4 For a discussion about the emergence of an enclave society, see Thee Kian Wie (1977), Rothermund (1978), Lindblad (1986). For a detailed discussion about interdependency between the mine and local economic resources, between mining society and local people in the case of mining industry in Peru, see De Wind (1987).
appointment system underwent changes. Before 1960 the managers were Minangkabau and members of the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) and the Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims (Masyumi), and they were appointed on the basis of recommendations from the mining society itself and from the local government. After 1960 the managers were non-Minangkabau (mostly Javanese), military people who were appointed by the central government. The system of appointment of manager was continued under the New Order regime (1965-1996). This study will explore the changes in the background of the managers, which influenced social control and social relations among the miners, and even the degree of integration of the mining society into the town society.

The study will also try to locate the mine and the mining society in the local and national economic and socio-political structures. To what extent did the integration of the mine into social and political life of the town society create continuities and changes? In relation to the economic context, my point of reference is the studies of Kaijage (1983) and Bradbury (1984). They argue that the development of international and national economies will affect price fluctuations, the scale of capital investment, technology, and also the working and living conditions of the miners. Taking matters a step forward, Thompson (1982:126) also emphasized that ‘the forms of control could alter in relation to economic change and the degree of pressure on firms’. What effects are found to have caused mutations in the case of the Ombilin coal-mines?

Social relations and social control should be understood in the context described above. The attitudes and actions of the miners towards the manager will be defined not only by the background, motives, and aims of the miners themselves, but also by socio-economic and political pressures of the management and the state. Departing from this assumption, the study will use both micro and macro approaches (Mohapatra 1997:3-4). I try to trace open and hidden social relations and the mechanism of social control at work among the miners themselves and their relationship with the managers, both inside and outside of the world of production. What I am trying to do is, to understand the voice of the miners within their own socio-cultural worlds. The approach developed by subaltern historians is useful in this context. Chakrabarti’s study, for instance, is an example, which emphasizes how labourers with a pre-capitalist culture had perceptions different from those of their managers. Ideas of pre-capitalist culture prevalent among the working class in Bengal about hierarchy, in-egalitarian relations, and oppression can be found in aspects like solidarity, organizations, and consciousness (Chakrabarti 1989:5). Hence, forms of social relations and social control between labourers and managers are defined by the different conceptions of pre-capitalist and capitalist cultures embraced by the two poles of society.

A cultural approach is important to grasp an understanding of the inner perspective of labourers’ actions as has been shown by Thompson’s work on the English working class, Nash on the Bolivian tin-miners, and Robinson on the Soroako nickel-miners (Thompson 1963; Nash 1979; Robinson 1986). Looking at the history of the Ombilin coal-miners some differences emerge from these earlier studies. The Ombilin coal-miners did not have either a caste system like in India or a long tradition in the mining world like the Bolivian tin-miners. What made the Ombilin coal-miners different from labourers in the plantations of East Sumatra or in the tin-mines of Bangka and Belitung, and the gold-mines in Bengkulu is the presence of a majority of convict labourers until the 1920s. To what extent did the presence of convict labourers, most of whom had a criminal background, influence social relations among the labourers and with the managers? The presence of these criminals may well have reinforced the regime of terror, which
was set up by the management and the state.

An ethnographic approach carried out by Nash (1979) and Warren (1986), for instance, is also used here in order to understand the daily life of the labourers, their material and non-material conditions, the daily social contacts between labourers and their family, neighbourhoods, and the local people. By using an ethnographic approach Nash was able to show multiple reasons for the miners either to resist or to accommodate to the management as they saw fit, while Warren shows that the internal tension among rickshaw coolies in Singapore was caused by their efforts to obtain scarce resources. An ethnographic approach will also be useful as an attempt to see how the labourers survived. I shall use it to elaborate on the impact of economic developments on the material conditions of the labourers and their strategies for survival.

Another approach to understanding the voice of the miners concerns the disparate concepts of work rhythm and work discipline in pre-capitalist and capitalist cultures (Thompson 1963; Cooper 1993). Thompson says that the work rhythm imposed by modern capitalist management has resulted in clock time discipline and task orientation. This is different from the pre-capitalist culture in which work rhythm and concomitantly work discipline were irregular, hours and tasks had to fluctuate according to the weather and the seasons (Thompson 1963:71). Thompson argues that the attitude towards time and work discipline was not a natural characteristic of a particular culture, but it gradually took shape through the effects of specific historical developments. He shows that changes in the attitude of the working class towards work rhythm and work discipline from pre-capitalist to capitalist society occurred as a linear process.

Cooper, who studied labour in colonial Mombasa, East Africa, points out that the concept of time and work discipline in terms of modern capitalist management did not actually occur in a linear process because the change-over was complicated by the emergence of conflict between modern and traditional values. Since concepts of time were integrated into the social and cultural life of a society, problems of work rhythm and work discipline needed to undergo a process of adaptation and internalization. In what ways were the processes of adaptation and internalization created? What kind of work discipline was practised in the mining society?

In order to understand the forms of social relations between miners and managers, the role of foremen and overseers is indispensable. The foremen had an important role in transmitting work discipline based on a capitalist culture to the miners who were still more familiar with a pre-capitalist culture. How did they transmit the new concept of work discipline to the miners? What were the miners' reactions towards such work discipline, and to this culture? Or could they find a way out in the form of everyday resistance as shown by Scott (1976; 1985)? Of course, the cultural background of the foremen and their involvement in formal and informal organizations should be taken account of too. If the overseers were European in the early years, then in the later years they were replaced by Indo-European and after Independence by Minangkabau. Logically changes in the socio-cultural and political backgrounds of foremen, and shifts in the socio-economic and political pressures in the state itself would eventually change the ways it behaved toward the miners.

The main analysis of the research emphasizes the actors, miners and managers, in relation to state intervention. These actors are central to this research. Whatever forms of social relations; whether they were worked through accommodation, conflict, competition, resistance, or everyday forms of protest, organized or not, these are inseparable from the background and motives of the actors. But as human subjects, actors are not autonomous. Actions of the actors
are ineluctably part and parcel of their own ideology, and their cultural, economic, and political environments.

Labourers are not a homogeneous working class as Gramsci argued (Hall 1996b: 436). They were divided into various alliances and each of them contributes to their formation of political consciousness. What Gramsci and Simeon found is that race, class, and nationalism overlap each other in forming the political consciousness of labourers. These elements can be found in Indonesian labour history as well, which is indicated by Ingleson in his study on the labour movement in Java during the 1920s (Ingleson 1981; 1986). Ingleson shows how elements such as race, class, nationalism, and trade unions played an important role in shaping political consciousness among the labourers. Can those elements also be found in the case of the Ombilin coal-mines and, if so, how did they operate?

After Independence the mining society changed, racial divisions in the organizational hierarchy in the mine i.e. (between European and Indonesian) disappeared, and were replaced by ethnic and political divisions (between Javanese and Minangkabau, and members of the PSI, the Masyumi, and the Indonesian Communist Party or the PKI). My question here then is what kinds of group solidarity were used by political party leaders to effectuate mass mobilization among the Ombilin coal-miners? If Liddle (1971, 1972) found ethnicity to be one of main factors, which formed group solidarity in East Sumatra, then what happened at the Ombilin coal-mines? When the new nation-state gave more room to Indonesian people to become involved in formal politics (1950-1965), what happened in the mining society? Was ethnicity important for group solidarity? If so, under what circumstances did it operate? How were alliances created and put into practice by the miners and managers, and what was their impact on the control of labour relations? To what extent did the rise of the strong state under the New Order regime change these relationships?

3. Central Question

This study focuses on the mine: 1) as an organization of production, 2) as a social world of its own, and 3) its relation to state intervention. With particular reference to the labour regime, the question that will be examined here is: how did the socio-political experience of the mining society (miners and managers) change over time in response to shifts in the wider political and economic environment?

4. Outline of the book

The period 1892-1996 covers just over a century. A long term perspective will show to what extent economic and cultural changes such as price fluctuations, and changes in energy consumption and choice of fuels, have influenced the policy of the colonial and post-colonial state and the management as well as attitudes and actions of the miners. Secondly, changes in labour relations should be related to changes in labour control by management and the state and changes in the mining society. I divide this study into six periods based on dramatic changes in labour relations and labour control, and in the politics of the miners.

The book consists of nine chapters. After the Introduction, Chapter II will explain the background of the opening of the Indonesian coal industry and the Ombilin coal-mines, and its
incorporation into the world market, a process greatly speeded up all over the world by the emergence of the age of steam-engine in the eighteenth century. Then, I shall focus on debates about whether this mine should be exploited by the state or privately. Having settled the outcome of the debates my description will jump to the present situation in the mining town, Sawahlunto. This jump is intended to introduce the readers to the present conditions in the town which have been shaped and created by the past. The section introduces hidden stories which have been obtained from the collective memory of the people in town, especially those recalled by some of its historical buildings.

Chapter III (1892-1920) explores the problem of land compensation for the mines, the making of a mining society, the working and living conditions of the labourers, and the physical violence of flogging with a cane imposed by the colonial state as an instrument of control. In the control of labour by physical violence, the colonial state was not a single agency. In this chapter discussions about labour control by physical violence applied by various state agencies are explored. This period is described as a 'prison period', because the miners, as it were, entered a closed box, to a large extent isolated from social contacts with the local people.

Chapter IV (1920-1942) focuses on changes in state control and in the politics of resistance which was often the response of the miners to it. The explanation of these changes will be placed in the context of changes in the social composition of the mining society, the fluctuating economic fortunes of coal, the Depression, and political developments at the national level. Changes in the politics of resistance of the miners deal with the shift from resorting to running away, avoiding work, and unorganized, individual resistance to a politics of strikes, organized protest, and accommodation. This is a period in which the company entered the professional world, which focussed on the efficiency of management and the skilled-miners.

Chapter V explores how the control of labour was stepped up under Japanese military rule (1942-1945). Again, the miners had become convict labourers, and their labour force was used not only for coal exploitation, but also to fulfill the needs of the Japanese war machine. Nevertheless, under the Japanese occupation, the mining society began to edge out of the cage of production, tentatively making more intensive social contacts with local people. This went hand in hand with the appearance of indigenous skilled workers. Suffering mutual privations under poor economic conditions, the Javanese contract labourers and local people worked together in a struggle for survival. These more intensive social relations between the mining society and local people would be continued during the Revolution (1945-1949), when the mining society began to throw itself into the struggle.

Chapter VI focuses on the involvement of the mining society in various formal political organizations and associations under the threat of the gloomy predictions about the economic development of coal (1950-1960). In this chapter, the basic tools used for mass mobilization (ethnicity, class, religion, patron-client ties, etc), and linkages or alliances created with local and national political leaders are explored. The political alliances cut across social hierarchy and simultaneously strengthened the position of the miners towards their managers. This chapter also probes the overlapping of labour control and politics, which is shown by the involvement of the miners in various political organizations and associations. Under the weak control exercised by the nation-state, the politics of miners became more open and daring which is shown by a series of strikes in 1953. Changes in local political developments, chief among them especially the PRRI rebellion, contributed to shifts in social relations and social control of the mining society.

Chapter VII covers the period 1960-1965. The chapter explores the new political
competition, new alliances, and new forms of labour control under military managers facing the threat of a rising national economic crisis. The new political competition was manifested in the formation of various trade unions and the conflicts between the communist and non-communist trade unions. At the micro level, this chapter also explores the motives and aims of the miners that led them to become involved in various trade unions and relates what happened to them in the wake of the political shifts which took place in the centre.

Chapter VIII covers the period of 1965-1996 and investigates economic developments of coal under the New Order. What changes took place in the living conditions of the labourers before and after the energy crises in the mid-1970s? How were social relations and social control re-framed under the strict control of the New Order Regime? Chapter IX will attempt to summarize some of the central themes that have been introduced here.