

FLEXIBLE LABOUR POLICY AND THE CRISIS OF TRADE UNIONISM:
THE CASE OF TEKEL WORKERS RESISTANCE IN ANKARA

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to examine the practices directed to the flexibilisation of the labor brought together with the means of neoliberal structuring and the trade union crisis appeared as an outcome of these in terms of the Tekel Workers' resistance in Ankara. The theoretical frame of this study is created in the content of the discussions that starting from the Marxist approach on trade unions and the critical view within this approach focus on the reasons of the crisis of the trade unions as a result of the applications of the neoliberal ideological structuring that appeared by the crisis of the accumulated capital during the mid-70's. Over this perspective, the analysis concentrates on the one hand employment models" being multi-layered and insecure and on the other, the fragmentation of the class and therefore the representation crisis of the trade unions that are the outcomes of the commodification of the labor by the deregulation, privatization and flexibilisation policies applied in the process of neoliberal hegemony. In this context, the resistance of the Tekel workers that continued non-stop for 78 days is argued basing on the assumption that the process which forces the more flexible, insecure working conditions without any attachment to the trade unions via the application of the neoliberal political apparatuses becomes the common platform/destiny of all the parts of society constituted by different identity structures.

Key words: Trade unionism, Neoliberalism, Flexible Labor Policies, Trade Union Crisis, Tekel Resistance

ÖZ

ESNEK EMEK POLİTİKASI VE SENDİKACILIĞIN KRİZİ: ANKARA'DAKİ TEKEL İŞÇİLERİ DİRENİŞİ ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, neoliberal ideolojik yapılanma araçlarının beraberinde getirdiği emeğin esnekleştirilmesine yönelik uygulamalar ve bu pratikler sonucunda oluşan sendikal krizi Ankara'daki Tekel İşçilerinin direnişleri bağlamında anlamlandırmaktır. Çalışmanın kuramsal çerçevesi, sendikalara Marksist anlayış ve aynı zamanda bu anlayış içerisindeki eleştirel bakıştan yola çıkılarak, sermaye birikiminin 1970'lerin ortalarında itibaren krize girmesiyle birlikte neoliberal ideolojik yapılanma araçlarının uygulanması sonucunda sendikaların krize girme nedenlerinin tartışılması çerçevesinde oluşturulmaktadır. Bu perspektif üzerinden, neoliberal hegemonya sürecinde uygulanmakta olan, deregülasyon, özelleştirme ve esnekleştirme politikalarıyla emeğin metalaşması, bir yandan istihdam biçimlerinin çok katmanlı ve güvencesiz hale gelmesine diğer yandan da sınıfın parçalanmasına dolayısıyla sendikaların temsiliyet krizine yol açması analiz edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda, Ankara'da 78 gün boyunca kesintisiz olarak devam etmiş olan Tekel işçilerinin direnişi, neoliberal politika aygıtlarının uygulanmasıyla giderek daha fazla esnek, güvencesiz ve sendikasız çalışma koşullarının dayatıldığı sürecin çeşitli kimlik yapılarından oluşan bütün kesimlerin ortak düzlemi/kaderi olduğu önsavı çerçevesinde tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sendikacılık, Neoliberalizm, Esnek Emek Politikaları, Sendikal Kriz, Tekel Direnişi

To Tekel workers who resist in Ankara throughout 78 days...

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Certain economic, political and social transformations in the historical process resulted with some changes in the structure of the trade unions, which are the representations of the working class and their collective interests. The dominating mode of production from the World War II, in which the development process of capitalism increased its speed until the end of the 1970's, the Fordist mode of production, which depends on the homogenous employment and mass-production, gave the opportunity to the working class and trade unions to empower themselves in terms of gaining ground and affectivity as a result of the intensification of the ways of accumulating capital and the stance of the labor against it. The later stagnations happened in the capitalist mode of accumulation led to the search for new self-renewal and self-transformation skills on the basis of new production and employment forms of capitalism and in the space-time dimension.

As a result of Fordism's crisis for its creating an obstacle in front of the accumulation of capital during 1970's, the ideological structuring called neoliberalism appears as a way out from the crisis. Therefore neoliberalism whose main aim is to create new spheres of accumulation for the capital, leads the commodification of both the public services and the labor via the deregulation and privatization policies. In other words, the neoliberal ideology that is placed on the purification of the state from its regulative and controlling duties, by providing the spread of the relation of production to every sphere causes a great commodification on the sphere of social activity and labor force. Consequently, the collective rights and daily rights increasingly enter into the process of commodification and by this way, not only the

social rights but the rights of the labor as well becomes a commodity. In addition, due to the flexibility applications of the neoliberal politics on the structures of production and employment, labor becomes more flexible and more appropriate for the market and functions as commodity. The labor that gains a commodity value, adopts the feature of being sold and bought in the market and tries to find itself a place within the flexible production and employment structure. From this aspect, the flexible employment structure leads the workers to enter into the vicious circle of unemployment and insecurity.

The flexibility applications on the production and employment as the trivet of the neoliberal politics and the fragmentation of the labor market resulted with the extension of the number and content of the employment models and therefore the class took the shape of a fragmented and hierarchical structure. On the other hand, the flexibility policies affecting also the women's employment, provided their entrance to labor market in increasing numbers, so the feminization of the labor by the raising number of the female workers. Therefore, with these policies directed to the alteration of the employment's structure led to the generation of a new, multi-layered, fragmentary and heterogeneous proletarianization wave with women, workers, unemployed. At this context, the fragmentation in the structure of the working class as well as the influence of the fragmentation happened in the structure of the employment, and since the trade unions cannot incorporate or cover the changing and fragmented structure of the working class, entered into an indispensable crisis. The very crisis is interpreted as the crisis of the lack of the response from the trade unions as a result of their traditional models on the ways of thinking and behavior to the changing structure of the working class rather than being a crisis of existence.

As a result of the late entrance to trade unionism of Turkey, unionism followed the developments in the world later than the other countries. Yet, it can be indicated that the mobility of the working class movement and relatively the trade unionism had its golden time and adopted a bureaucratic, strict, central and wage-centered parallel to

the whole world in the period between the end of the World War II and 1980's. The temporary, part-time, unsecured model of employment forced by the neoliberal policies started with the crisis of capital during the 1980's brought together a new wave of proletarianism-laborism for Turkey. The traditional model of trade unionism in Turkey could not comprehend fully this process of proletarianism and therefore entered into a crisis. In this respect, the reasons of the crisis and the ways to cope with in Turkey and in the world meet in a common point.

The privatization rush in Turkey during 1980's that depend on the restriction of the space of the state within the public service area led to the privatization of the public institutions one by one. In this process Tekel (Directorate General of Tobacco Enterprises) was taken under the scope of privatization and from January 2010 it was prescribed that the workers working in this institution would work in another institution under 4/C status which confronts the unsecured, temporary working conditions without a trade union. As an opposition to this situation, the Tekel workers in order to take their jobs and their labor protection made a sort of landing to Ankara in 15 December 2009. The Tekel workers who showed a resistance by staying in Ankara in tents for 78 days, during this process entered into a great solidarity with various non-governmental organizations and other social movements. The resistance called as Tekel resistance was also important since different identities based on ethnicity and gender met together. The unsecured working conditions created by the neoliberal policies on employment and privatization cover all the workers from every segment. Therefore, the unsecured working conditions become the general condition of each employment form.

In this thesis, to the labor, that is commodified with the policies of deregulation, privatization and flexible working conditions in the content of neoliberal ideological structuring and to the trade union crisis that is created by the class structure fragmented by the multi-layered employment as a result of the former structuring, the basic starting point is the Tekel workers' resistance, as a stance against the unsecured employment, gathering the workers coming from different ethnic and gender

identities, the unemployed, the workers from the other forms of employment, the supporter non-governmental organizations in a common ground against the neoliberal politics. During this process, traditional unionism lacks the ability to represent the entire working class that deals with the new proletarianization wave and it cannot direct the class movement. In this context, the movement is a resistance against the precarious, insecure working conditions that are the result of the flexibilization of labor market in accordance with neoliberal policies. Unions have failed to support them during this resistance and therefore it greatly matters that Tekel workers displayed a spontaneous and autonomous class movement. Therefore, the main frame of this study is defined as the examination of the common space of struggle of the Tekel workers, which appeared in the content of insecurity and lacking the trade union support as a result of the policies of flexibility and privatization.

In the second chapter of the research on methodology displays the information about the research question, the method and the research area. In the third chapter, a theoretical framework of the trade unionism is given, in which a summary on the appearance of trade unionism and the ideas of Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, Gramsci and Lenin on the points they attribute a revolutionary mission to trade union and those they develop a critical approach under the title “The Approaches on Trade Union Movement” take place. Later, again in this chapter, by focusing on the processes that lead the crisis and its reason, the impact of the flexibility policies to the process of labor and to the working life and trade unions is discussed.

In the fourth chapter, the development of trade unionism in Turkey is discussed according to the economic, political and social transformations. After that section, the Tekel enterprise’s history from the regie administration until the present time and the process of its privatization is examined.

In the fifth chapter, the Tekel resistance which is thought to display the processes such as the flexible working conditions, insecurity and the trade union crisis and the

dynamics within the resistance examined in the frame of the interviews with the workers in this content and analyzed in several dimensions. The analysis of this chapter is important in terms of the perception of the structural and cyclical dimension.

In the Conclusion chapter which is the sixth and the last chapter explains the data gathered from the whole research in terms of the problematic of the research.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY AND FIELD

2.1 Research Questions

This research focuses on the Tekel Resistance, which started on 15th December 2009 and lasted until 2nd March 2010 in Ankara, and the examination of this resistance movement from the perspective of neoliberal system's flexibility policies and unionist crisis. The problematic in this study is to understand what basis can the Tekel Resistance that shaped and became a massive protest due to precariousness or job insecurity and crisis of trade unionism.

2.2 Research Method

The fieldwork was conducted with 35 workers of the Resistance movement between 18th December 2009 and 2nd March 2010 during the Tekel Resistance; and, it took place in the tents set up on Sakarya Street in Ankara. In-depth interviews were conducted in this ethnographic study that also involved participant observation. During the interviews, it was of major concern to choose interviewees from each region, and with a careful distribution of male and female workers. There are strengths and limitations of undertaking fieldwork during when the Resistance was in the process. Doing fieldwork as the movement proceeded was its strength, because it is the case that a historical event takes place while its soul and feelings about it are being recorded. In other words, what is done there is to make a note in history in order not to miss the moments. On the other hand, it is possible to be trapped in subjectivity, though. It is possible that the researcher gets carried away by the event and the movement itself, becoming a part of the event. In short, the researcher may not be neutral in the acute course of the event. Therefore, the researcher tried to be

sufficiently objective during the fieldwork, no matter how difficult it was from time to time. Routine visits to and observations in the field were carried out almost every day during fieldwork to keep a close eye on what happened. Although it was hard, staying even-handed towards the events was the aim, when things could take a different turn at each moment.

There were a lot of basic criteria to focus on during the study: Whether the resistance was spontaneous; a class analysis of the resistance; cohesion via solidarity between different identity structures; and, women's status in the resistance. Interview questions at a level to test each of these four criteria were prepared and directed to the interviewees. The moods of respondents used to change constantly during the fieldwork, since events continuously developed in unforeseen directions at the field. A bad news would cause interruption of the interview, since the workers wanted to go and have a look at what happened when they heard something bad occurred. Also, it was really difficult for the researcher not to be effected by the workers' situation when they received the bad news of a fellow worker and did not know what to do.

2.3 Tents as a Field

Before starting the fieldwork experience in the Tekel Resistance, which seemed to emerge suddenly, I had already started to do preliminary research on another theme I had in mind. Meanwhile, I used to visit the tents of resistance regularly since the day Tekel Resistance started, in order to follow the news closely and learn what was happening in the area. On the first day I visited the area of resistance, it was impossible not to be influenced by what I saw. During those first days, I only observed, feeling captivated by the field. Sakarya Street was full of nylon tents, and it appeared that each tent represented a single city or the districts of that city, where tobacco enterprises existed. The place, composed of nylon tents, looked like a living, open-air museum of the Resistance. In each tent, there were people with different identities, diverse ideologies and each tent reflected an ambience of specific locale the workers came from. The regular visitors of the Tent-City became acquainted with

the specificities of those tents. For instance, women were in majority in İzmir tent compared to other tents and İzmir tent was known as a clean, spacious and non-smoking tent, while Diyarbakır tent was known as a festive place, and Trabzon tent as the place of talkative people.

Outside the tent, there was an equally colorful and vivacious life. The supporters of the Resistance consisted of those who visited the place after their work hours, students after school time, nongovernmental civil society organizations, social movement organizations, political parties, tradesmen of Sakarya Street and several others; and they almost raced to help the workers in the Resistance more. Workers gathered in the tents of every city each evening to make common decisions; besides, workers in tents exchanged ideas with visitors to tents, too. In the tent-city, afternoons and evenings were times of action and protest. The workers marched and protested with slogans together with supporters at those times. After the protests were done, workers used to gather in tents at night, singing, dancing and talking in order to pass time during long winter nights and tried to cheer up a bit. Kurdish songs from Diyarbakır tent used to mix with voices of *kemençe* and bagpipe from Trabzon tent and the workers' anthem from another tent. Workers who stayed in their hometown's tent placed symbolic artifices that reminded of the culture of their region in their tents. Tents of cities, which were neighbors on the map, were neighbors on the resistance area, too. Tent-City equivalence was formed after a while; as a quite obvious example to this, a worker could say "I am going to fetch some firewood from Muş, there is none left in Hatay", referring to tents with the names of the cities.

After all these observations and quick conversations with the workers in the field, I decided to choose the tent city as the site of my studies. I thought this tent city could be the field for my research since there were corresponding, common points between this site and my previously selected theme of study, which was the possibility of Social Movement Unionism in Turkey. Every time I went to the tents to make interviews, workers in almost every tent would first glance at me curiously, then,

they would excitedly want me to eat or drink something with them. They did not want to start the interview unless I accepted their treats. Therefore, I felt like I was out for some house meeting every time I entered a tent. Meanwhile, my fieldwork experience was not limited to interviews. I stayed for three days in the tents together with the workers in order to make better observations and experience the field. In tents, beds made from woods and cardboards put on bare concrete floor were not really fit for sleeping. Workers could sleep in relief because one of them was on guard each night as they took turns to watch the tents. The fact that there was furniture such as armchairs, tables, television, and stove in some tents indicated that tents were organized like home.

There were difficulties and limitations in the field, too. The resistance area was open to various speculations about the movement, so the workers presumed after some time that ill-intentioned people would come to them, too, and try to drag words about the movement out of them. According to them, there were observers in the tent-city sent by the government and authorities. When I entered one of the tents for interviewing, they wanted to see my ID card first. I did not know what to do in such a situation and just showed them my ID, but I felt discouraged at the same time to carry out an interview. Afterwards, the workers apologized and explained their reason to act in such a way. Another problem in the field was some workers' distrust and suspicion about what these interviews would be used for. Because of this, some of them wanted to see the questions first. That is, being the site of a long and strong resistance, the field was so much open to everyone and everything that it was at the center of all powers' attention. Therefore, it was possible to be put into any kind of unfriendly position in the field site.

Another difficulty in the field was the physical conditions of the tents; as the workers used stoves for heating, the air inside the tents was thick with smoke and smell from cigarettes and stoves. During the interviews, one could sometimes hardly breathe inside. In this sense, the most comfortable place for interviewing was İzmir tent, in

which the majority consisted of women. It was prohibited to smoke inside this tent and there was no smoke or smell.

Events would develop quite unexpectedly in the Resistance that it was possible to witness several different incidences at any moment during the interviews. It was more difficult than ever to be objective when such things happened. While I was interviewing a worker in a tent, the news of the death of another worker's daughter arrived. I had to stop the interview immediately. Towards the end of the resistance, there was a bit of desperation in the air after a long wait, and, this reflected on the interviews I carried out. When the good news of a decision in favor of workers arrived, workers entered a festive mood on the final day of the Resistance, and this time their good mood reflected on my interviews.

The fieldwork reached an end as tents were packed away and everyone returned home where they came from after the Constitutional Court ruled a decision in favor of the Tekel workers.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF TRADE UNIONISM

3.1 The Emergence of Trade Unions

The emergence and development of trade unions has been based upon the industrialization or the process of capitalist development. The reason behind its basis found under industrialization is the increase in the number of the workers with the growth of the fabric system and the difficulty for the relatively powerless worker to represent his interests by the accumulation of the work force. As a result of this situation, the workers established the organization called trade union to transmit collectively their interests. Marx, by relating the establishment of trade unions with the process of industrialization, indicates that the workers reunite in the structure of the trade union by the intersection and union of their collective interests.

But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its power increases and feels that power more. The various interests and life conditions within the ranks of the proletariat are increasingly equalized by the obliteration of the machinery of all distinctions between the labor, and reduction of the wages to the same low level nearly everywhere. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the commercial crises as a result of it, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. (...) the conflicts between individual workmen and individual bourgeois gradually take the character of conflicts between two classes. Subsequently, the workers begin to form combinations (trade unions) against the bourgeois; they come together to defend their labor rates. 1 (Marx and Engels, 1994:115)

¹My translation

The approach defending the establishment and the growth of the trade unions as a reaction towards the capitalist development, relates the subject with the capitalist mode of development's causing a conflict between those who possess the property of the means of production and those who are deprived of that. The trade unions whose emergence depends upon the development of the capitalist relations of production, have been held responsible to create the balance between the class formations resulting from the conflict between the labor and the capital.

Gramsci defines the trade union as the form that the labor takes when it organizes itself with the purpose of controlling the market by the assumption that it depends to a capitalist system as a commodity. This form involves the workers' unification of their force in order to create an adequate balance between the working class and the power of the capital (Gramsci, 1990a:265).

The reasons why the development of the trade unions display a difference in accordance with different countries and, societies and industries is explained from a point of view by the degree of capitalist development, the conflicts within the capitalist system, the changing models of industry and the changing rates of industrialization.

The other approach on the generation of trade unionism defines the process by the formation of the unions' basing upon the logic of competitive capitalism. Marx in his evaluation of the history of trade unionism in the Geneva Congress of the I. International denotes that the trade unions were formed by the workers in order to prevent or at least to control the inevitable conflict between themselves and to solve the problem of daily wage and working hours and that the trade unions are the focal point in the organization of the working class.

The disunion of the workmen is created and perpetuated by their unavoidable competition amongst themselves. Trades' Unions originally sprang up from the spontaneous attempts of workmen at removing or at least checking that competition, in order to conquer such terms of contract as might raise them at least above the condition of mere slaves... On the other hand, unconsciously to themselves, the

Trades' Unions were forming centres of organisation of the working class²(Marx, 2008:152-3).

3.2 The Approaches on Trade Union Movement

3.2.1 The Approach of Revolutionary Function

The approach which attributes the trade unions a revolutionary mission points out that the trade unions have a potential to contribute to the radical societal change and that they, as a general expression of the working class, display the case of an important development (Jackson, 1982:133). In this respect, the trade unions are seen as a revolutionary structuring that provides the workers the acquirement of the class consciousness, the protection of their interests via the use of strike and as a result the creation of the spirit of solidarity. In the Marxist literature, the approach that advocates these positive aspects of trade unions, emphasizes that the trade unions form the first step for the creation of a revolutionary class consciousness (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004: 47). The trade unions perceived as the real organization of the working class, constitute a structuring with a strength that overcomes the obstacles since it enables the class to carry out its daily struggle against the capital and educates itself (Marx and Engels, 2002: 53).

The most vital duty attributed to the trade unions is the improvement of the living conditions of the working class by the increase in wages and the reduction of working hours (Müftüoğlu, 2006:117). Marx draws attention to the importance of the trade unions as centers of resistance and denotes that they should struggle for the alteration of the existing system and the absolute emancipation of the working class that will be brought by the end of the wage system rather than the improvement of it and warns the trade unions about their possibility to move away from their aim if they use their strength unjustifiably against the capital (Marx, 2008:142).

² My Translation

In the superiority race between the labor and the capital, the most important ammunition that the capital can use against the workers is the competition between the workers. Engels, due to existence of the very competition, sees the trade unions as the expression of the lack of unity among workers and attributes the trade unions the primary importance to bring an end to this competition while perceiving them as a danger for the system since they direct their powers towards the existing system:

(...) But what gives unions and strikes arising from them their real importance is this, that they are the first attempt of the workers to abolish competition. They imply the recognition of the fact that the supremacy of the bourgeoisie is based wholly upon the competition of the workers among themselves; i. e. , upon their want of cohesion. And precisely because the unions direct themselves against the vital nerve of the present social order, however one-sidedly, in however narrow a way, they are so dangerous to this social order. The working man cannot attack the bourgeoisie, and with it the whole existing order of society, at any sorer point than this. If competition of the workers among themselves is destroyed, if all determine not to be further exploited by the bourgeoisie, the rule of property is at an end. (Engels, 1987: 228)

Lenin claims that the trade unions should not be independent from the political parties by adopting the social democratic ideology and praxis (Hammond, 1987: 60). In this frame, the trade union organizations, with a struggle developed from the economic problems, can also take the role of a bearer of political agitation and revolutionary organization (Lenin, 2008: 128).

Another view attributing a revolutionary feature is the anarcho-syndicalism (revolutionary syndicalism) ³ supporting the idea that the trade unions as the most important institutional apparatus to eliminate capitalism should take place in a militant struggle (Yetiş,1999). Anarcho-syndicalists defend the idea that the trade union is to be in a revolutionary position both in the struggle of the working class

³ Anarcho-syndicalism was an effective movement during the beginning of the 20th Century, by the leadership of France between 1900-1920 and gathered an important amount of people in some Southern European trade union movements such as in Italy and Spain and additionally in USA in IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) (Hyman, 2001:23). With the outbreak of the war in 1914 it lost its effect under the influence of trade unionism. The critical feature of anarcho-syndicalism is its autonomous structure independent from the political parties (Hyman, 2001:23).

against the employer and both in the reorganization of the social life (Jackson, 1982:77). Anarcho-syndicalism by emphasizing the continuousness of the trade unions, do not see it as a “temporary phenomena which is not limited by the life of the capitalism” (ibid:74).

Lipset argues that the trade unions within the borders of the capitalist society have two functions as “creating a mechanism for the expression of the class conflict” and to unite the workers as a whole by giving “legal means to workers that they aim to achieve” (Lipset, 1965:81,114).

The trade unions that enable the initial means of resistance against the capitalist control mechanism play an active role in defending the interests of the workers, developing the class methods and class consciousness and the self-education of the workers for the revolution (Larson and Nissen, 1987: 24).

3.2.1.1 Deriving Class Consciousness

The class consciousness which is necessary for defending the interests of the labor in a wide aspect against the capital and the development of such consciousness become a part of the mission of trade unions. The trade unions have to attract and unite the working class that, as a primitive approach to the adoption of these interests, understands the importance of the unity against the employer and the government and therefore with the mentioned union they have to aim to achieve the actual goal by being a wide scale organization (Lenin, 2008:12).

Marx discusses that first the labor-market competition therefore the economic circumstances transform ‘the public masses into a workers’ movement’, forces them to be a collective power in front of the capital and against the solidarity of the capital created the interest of the workers and continues: ‘Therefore, this mass is already a class in front of the capital, however, it is not one for itself yet. The only way to unite this mass is the struggle that we have mentioned just a few phases of it and it creates

itself as a class for itself. The interests they defend will be the interests of the class⁴ (Marx, 2007:171-172). Marx, claims that the working class exists “in itself”, therefore objectively and their existence in the subjective sense is possible only by the transition to see themselves as a class and therefore “a class for itself”. The trade unions in the political sense ease the very state of transition and so they do not only provide the perception and the adoption of the daily struggle to decrease the level of exploitation but also the interests on the historical scale (Yetiş,1999). Gramsci, antithetically, claims that, it is achieved with the class consciousness the unity-solidarity of the interests between all the members of a social class yet this unity is still an economic one (Gramsci, 2005:181).

Cleaver, sees Marx’s distinction between the “the class in itself” and “the class for itself” a more paradoxical distinction than the other views and evaluates as:

Marx’s distinction (dialectics) among the class in itself and the class for itself-, The working class in itself consists of those who are forced to sell their labor power to the capital and therefore those who are forced to be the labor power. The working class for itself, exist only when it creates its own unity in the struggle it has against the role attributed to it as labor power, when it proves its own autonomy as a class. Therefore, paradoxically, the working class is a real working class only when it struggles against its own existence as a class⁵ (Cleaver, 2008: 118)

Marx, argues that the collective organization posed in the beginning a means of defending the wages and working conditions, in other words, the economic problems, but after the events following this phase, the struggle contributed the production of class consciousness among the workers by creating a class unity among them and the collective organization turned into a ‘class in itself’ to a ‘class for itself’ (Munck, 1995:12).

⁴ My translation

⁵ My translation

3.2.1.2 Strikes as “School of War”

According to the Marxist hypothesis, the participation of the workers and their friends to the collective struggle due to their opposition to the employers, strengthens their understanding of their general interests. That is why the strikes as a collective struggle becomes an important part of the trade union activity against the system (Hyman, 2001:29). The trade unions representing the working class take their initial power from the capacity of the strikes and the demands of the strikes represent the trade union (Hyman and Ferner, 1994: 128).

Engels sees the trade union as an institution that prepares the workers for a direct attack to the class society, as an important way to increase the class consciousness of the workers and the strikes organized by the trade union as schools of war preparing the workers to the great struggle (Jackson, 1982: 133). He evaluates the strikes as the school of war an obligatory and indispensable weapon for the emancipation of the working class (Losovsky, 1993: 165). “The strikes are the military school of the working men in which they prepare themselves for the great struggle which cannot be avoided; they are the pronunciamientos of single branches of industry that these too have joined the labour movement...And as a school of war, the unions are unexcellent”(Engels, 1987:233).

Consequently, the strikes teach the workers to unite and the strikes show the workers that they can resist the capitalists only when unite, they develop the idea that the whole working class can struggle against the factory owners and the police state. That is why, the strikes are described as `the school of war`, they teach to fight against its enemies for the sake of the labor of the workers and for the freedom of all people exploited from the state and the capital (Lenin, 1889).

Lenin, as well as Engels, by attributing the strikes the quality of being a instructive ‘school of war` indicates that a strike provides the workers to be conscious about the acts of the state and its rules as well as the capitalists. Additionally, the strike teaches the workers the content of the power of the employers and their power and to

consider the employers among the capitalists rather than taking them as unique and to consider the workers within the totality of the working class (Lenin, 1889). From this point of view, the point where the workers acquire the consciousness of the capitalist class and the working class via the use of strikes is the point where Marx's 'the class in itself'.

Luxemburg as well as agreeing on the idea that the strikes are the schools of war for the working class adds more mission to the strikes by arguing that an economic mass strike can easily be political and can be evolved into a revolutionary state while at the same time a political strike can involve economic demands, therefore the economy and politics that cannot be thought in a mass strike separated from each other can be together in a mass strike (Luxemburg, 1999).

3.2.1.3 Class Solidarity

To begin with, it becomes extremely important for the understanding of the function of solidarity for trade unions and for the society to review in general the two types of solidarity determined by Durkheim. Durkheim takes the solidarity as the "mechanical solidarity" which depends on the idea that it is an object used by society at will without being the property of the individual and the "organic solidarity" which based on the idea that it is an outcome of the division of labor and possessed only by the individual. While the mechanical solidarity is created since the individuals shares some common features, the organic solidarity, to the contrary, requires the individuals to be different from each other (Durkheim, 2006: 163). Durkheim states that pre-industrial societies base on the mechanical solidarity whereas the industrial societies base on the organic solidarity. Therefore, if it is accepted that the trade unions is an outcome of industrialization, it can be considered that the trade unions adopts the organic solidarity type, which is based on the creation of the possibility of acting in terms of its class.

The strikes as the most important means to acquire the class consciousness creates the motivation for the working class to act together and to struggle together and so supports the solidarity among them and enables its development. Within this process, the trade unions support the solidarity dynamics within the class movement by assisting the workers for the embodiment of their individual and collective interests and therefore their own class definition (Hyman, 2001:170).

Marx emphasizes that the efforts of acting together among the workers always generalized by solidarity. Competition divides the interests of masses intensified by the great industry, only via solidarity the protection of the wages, the common interests that the workers have against the bosses can unite in the idea of struggle. As a result solidarity serves a binary purpose both to end the competition among the workers and both to protection of the general competition against the capitalists (Marx, 2007:171). Due to the binary purpose of solidarity, capitalism, as it was before, demands the workers to continue to be the workers without solidarity and politics, since “entering into solidarity is dealing with politics” (ibid: 170).

3.2.2 Critical Approach

Contrary to the affirmative-supportive approach that attributes the trade unions a revolutionary mission and giving them great importance since they offer important means for the acquirement of the workers the class consciousness and revolutionary change, there is also the critical approach that finds the trade unions ineffective in terms of taking results even though it is believed within this approach that the trade unions are absolutely necessary for the class struggle. The main criticisms towards trade unions directed by the mentioned approach is that the trade unions imprisoned in bureaucratic administration that serve as the space of organization for the worker aristocracy which is not able to deal further issues than that of the employment problems such as the working conditions, wage and employment (Yetiş,1999).

Marx who made affirmative and positive evaluations on the trade unions, indicates that the trade unions should not operate only as economic institutions and they should pay more effort directed to the political questioning on the basic principles of the capitalist system (Hyman, 2001:18). Marx in the Geneva Congress of the I. International in 1866 in the decision taken on 'The past, present and future of the professional organizations', criticizes the trade unions on their lack of adequate comprehension of their combatant/contentious powers against the existing wage system and the contemporary form of production and on their distance to the political movements (Marx, 2008:153).

Luxemburg claiming that the most important function of the trade unions is taking charge of the organization of the capitalist system, explains this function as the determination of the cost of the labor force according to the market price of the period and so rendering the existing conjuncture of the market useful for its own sake (Luxemburg, 1993:58). Accordingly, contrary to Marx, she suggests that the trade unions cannot sustain politics of economic attack since these are limited with the organized defense of the labor power against the attack of the capital, a defense against the oppressive propensity of capitalism towards the working class. As a reason she gives that the trade unions initially interrupted by the process of proletarianization and secondly in spite of their aim to improve the living conditions of the working class the mentioned conditions suppressed continuously due to the rise in the labor production and therefore during these two economic processes the trade union struggle has transformed into 'a futile attempt resulting from the objective developments in the capitalist society' (ibid: 89).

Luxemburg, also argued that the advanced dimensions of the industrialization would obstruct the trade union struggle and firstly the condition of the market with less labor force demand and more labor force supply would deteriorate and secondly more politics of attack to the worker's share of production would be adopted in order to compensate the loss of the capital in the market (ibid: 60). Therefore, against the obligation brought by Marx for the trade unions to abolish the wage legislation and

exploitation what would happen is to bring the exploitation to a 'normal' condition (ibid:58-59). Consequently, Luxemburg states that within such circumstances, naturally, the trade union struggle cannot be evolved into a revolutionary action (Hyman, 1971:43).

Lenin on the other hand, criticized the trade unions on their emphasis on the economic problems more than the political ones and therefore on their neglect on the political problems that deprives the working class of the political consciousness opposing the system (Hyman, 1971:12). At this point Luxemburg, in contradiction with Lenin, claims that within the appropriate circumstances the struggles settled by the economic problems can wake the political consciousness opposing the system and generalize them (Hyman, 2001:23). Contrary to Marx, she concluded that the trade unions aim to adjust themselves to the capitalist system by display a natural tendency for integration in order to achieve their goals (Hyman, 1971:14).

Gramsci as well by developing a critical stance to the trade unions, accuses them of spending all their energy on the problems of the working class resulting from the working conditions and consequently while the living conditions of the working class are getting improved due to the strikes and movements, all the achievements of the trade unions occurred within the capitalist mode of production and within the exploitative system. As a result Gramsci accuses trade unions of not obstructing the existence of the capitalist mode of production and the system of exploitation and their development by taking new shapes. He finds the power of transforming the capitalist social structure and emancipating the working class in the existence of the trade unions outside of their own sphere and their shifting the methods they use (Gramsci, 1990a:104-105).

Based on his critique on the trade unions Gramsci analyzed the worker councils in Italian factories and presented their relation with trade union movement. The idea of a council system depends on the organization of the worker class around their workplace and units of production (ibid: 112). The councils are important since they

abolish the bureaucratic tendencies within the trade unions, their self-achieved revolutionism and their more radical aims (Hyman, 2001:24). The other source of Gramsci's critique on the trade unions is the 'industrial legitimacy' that gives workers certain rights within the capitalist system. Primarily, Gramsci takes the 'industrial legitimacy' as a great victory for the working class even though it is not the absolute and the conclusive one, yet, he included that in terms of the improvement of the working class such a victory is still a negotiation and nothing else (Gramsci, 1990a: 265). 'The industrial legitimacy, when the power balance between the classes is appropriate can make an improvement in the living conditions of the workers' (Yetiş,1999).

Gramsci by determining the differences between the factory councils and the trade unions, displayed the weaker aspects of the trade unions in comparison with the councils. While the council, by its rejection of the industrial legitimacy trying to make the working class the 'source of industrial power', the trade union represents the legitimacy, acts according to the laws and being forceful in order to respect the law (Gramsci, 1990a: 266).

Another reason for the severe criticism towards the trade unions is the bureaucratic-hierarchical structuring in their body. Such a model leads to the subjective alienation within the trade union structure confronted by many trade unions (Hyman and Ferner, 1994:123). The very reason gives rise to an instrumental approach developed by the workers for their trade unions and make them be seen as a service organization and means for economic profit.

Michels stresses that in the trade union movement the authoritarian characteristics of the leaders and their tendency to direct the democratic organizations in an authoritarian mood is more than those in the political organizations (Michels, 2001: 91).

Bureaucracy, inevitably creates an elite group whose force becomes visible when they displace the organizational aims, this principle is known as Michel's famous 'iron law of oligarchy' (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004: 30). The main thesis developed by Michels is the tendency of the labor movement towards 'the iron law of oligarchy' in spite of his democratic and antiauthoritarian roots and goals (Hyman, 1971: 15). Michel's work on the existence of bureaucratic-oligarchical tendencies within trade unions accepted by some people criticizing the trade unions, whereas some Marxist writers on the other hand criticized Michels on his evaluation of the trade unions within a capitalist society (Jackson, 1982: 57). Another view on this direction is the existence of stabilizing powers within the trade unions as well as the existence of oligarchical tendencies (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004:47).

3.3 The Causes of Crisis in Trade Unionism

3.3.1 A Look for the Formation Dynamics of Crisis

Trade union movement developed as a result of the formation of an organization that materialized by history, tradition and viewpoints of the majority of proletarian masses, and, the increasing growth of that formation (Gramsci, 1990:164). However, it is argued that the trade union movement that rose as a result of modern industrial society and developing capitalist relations of production is, as commonly stated, in a crisis due to innate contradictions, intensifying in time, inside the capitalist system. The formation of this crisis can be analyzed better when it is not limited to structural cause-and-effect relationship about trade unions, or, to an abstract fiction. Instead, when it is perceived as a concrete historical period of working class struggle, and, its historical figuration in political, economic and ideological senses as well as the resulting problems of this figuration are examined in the context of historical "working class-trade union-political centers-state relations", there can be better evaluations regarding its formation (Uygur, 1993:78).

Hyman indicates that the crisis trade union movement faces is not one that is due to its own nature; it is rather a crisis of the orientation and conventional style of this movement. (Hyman, 1992, 162) The crisis of the conventional style in trade unions can be detected not only by certain indicators of their loss of power and activity; it is also identified by observations of the weary conventional discourse as well as unions' insufficiency to respond to new ideological debates (Hyman, 2001:173). In other words, the crisis of trade unions, which are the organizations of working class, does not simply originate from the proportional decrease in the number of workers; it does stem from the ideologies and structures that already direct and determine their functionality (Moody, 1997:195). Likewise, based on the changes in the capitalist development process, Gramsci states that using conventional methods will lead trade unions to failure with respect to their goal of transformation of capitalist society and leadership in the emancipation of working class.

By the spontaneous and uncontrollable movements which spread throughout their ranks and by relative shifts in the position of strata due to changes in intellectual outlook, the masses indicate the precise direction of historical development, reveal changes in attitudes and forms, and proclaim the decomposition and imminent collapse of the capitalist organization of society. (Gramsci, 1990:173)

As a result, the crisis of trade unions is not caused by its existing identity; instead, the crisis is due to the weakening political representativeness in industrial relationships and organizational representativeness for a changing labor force potential of a model, which institutionalized in a certain quality after the World War II, and the future of this model; in the end, it can be determined as a dual "crisis of representation" (Özüğurlu, 2008:352). The "golden age" of the capitalist system from the World War II until the late 1970s has also been the "golden age" of a certain model of trade union because of the system and the capital's own inclusions as well as the attitude of working class towards that. During this period, "rigid, centralist and bureaucratic" structure of capitalist order has changed and it has taken on a more "flexible and decentralized" structure; working class that did not remain unresponsive to this change has shifted gradually from its traditional, "production-

oriented male-intensive” organization towards showing up with complicated and fluid identities such as citizenship, gender, ethnicity or consumerism; while unions did not grasp this changing, fragmentary structure of labor force well enough and has entered this sort of “identity crisis” by including less of this labor force(Munck, 2002:190-191).

3.3.2 Effect of Fordism on Labour Process

It is indicated that the development of trade unions during the transition from occupational guilds, which is the initial trade unionism experience, to industrial unionism is associated with industrialization models in different countries, contradictions within the capitalist system, and the transition from small-scale and labor-intensive production to mass production of commodities through twentieth century Fordist methods (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004:41). The historical processes of this transformation within the capitalist system of production started with the emergence of factory, proceeded in four stages respectively as Taylorism (the birth of scientific management), Fordism and Post-Fordism, and each of these stages witnessed employers’ interventions for profitability and control over labor as well as workers’ resistance against this control (ibid:11,19).

Taylorism that started after the World War I was based on the fragmentation between design and production through simplification of labor process at workplace under the name of scientific management; that is to say, it consisted of the separation of labor process as planning and execution, or put simply, the differentiation of “mental and manual” labor (Munck,1995:118). Afterwards, fordism, which based upon maximizing labor productivity, outdid Taylorism by applying two complementary principles of mounting of different items by labor process and choosing suitable workers for positions set up by the assembly line. (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004:15). So, fordism incorporated the system of assembly line in the

structure of production, while Taylorism was based on the separation of worker's labor as they operate at the machinery.

Taylorist-Fordist model of labor organization merged class interests and world-views of workers, and framed the solidarity via similarities and affinities “by the mechanical integration of individual interests”(Catalano, 1999:36). Fordist system of production, which dominated until the last quarter of twentieth century, contributed to the development as well as the proliferation of trade unions and collective bargaining system by setting institutional proposals that suit itself after it emphasized mass production and consumption (Yıldırım, 2000). Fordism caused, on the negative side, intensification of work and self-alienation of labor; on the other hand, it paved the way for workers' organization by enabling the mass of workers who work and live in similar conditions to be present and working in the same place and by promoting union of interest and solidarity among themselves; thus, economic and social rights have been improved by these organizations under the roof of trade unions(Müftüoğlu, 2006:123). At the same time, the system of mass production that is the foundation of Fordist system has enabled workers to stop production chain easily and to use forces of production against capital as much as they actively use tools of union organization and struggle(ibid:123). As a result, the growth of industrialization along with the birth of factory made workers' resistance easier, while Fordism concentrated the labor force of factory into a single place and made a new workers' resistance known as “industrial unionism” possible(Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004:15).

Taylorist-Fordist production, as a critical stage of capitalist accumulation and transformation process, fell into a crisis at the end of the 1970s because of the changes that happened during this process. The evolution from Fordist to Post-Fordist production, consumption and organizational structure has been quite easy, given that capitalism, by its nature, has the ability to reproduce itself by renewing production and consumption patterns after crises. Fordism brought about the concept of mass consumption along with mass production; in other words, it brought about

commodification in every sphere of life, and this integrated system as well as “the way of life” have gone through a crisis. At this stage, Post-Fordism, which is consumption-oriented rather than production-oriented, seems to be the case, while the form of production is based on fragmented niche markets instead of mass production (Munck, 1999: 10).

3.3.3 The Reflections of Neoliberal Policy Implementations on Employment and Trade Unions

3.3.3.1 Particular Transformations in the Neoliberal Process

In the period between post-WW2, which is known as the “golden age” of capitalism, and the early 1970s, welfare state existed thanks to Keynesian policies; meanwhile for working class and trade unions, this period made union organizations that developed to hold down any opposition against capitalist domination to be relatively at ease (Akalm, 2009:16). After the World War II, Keynesian welfare state policies replaced the gradual reform process at work in the first half of twentieth century; and this mentality faced a generalized capitalist crisis coming up in the early 1970s that was due to post-war restructuration; therefore, an ideological structuration known as neoliberalism emerged as a reaction to this crisis (Clarke, 2008:104). The reasons of this crisis were the falling profit rates particularly obvious in the 1970, reduced growth rates due to the “structural crisis” of the world economy afterwards, expanding wave of unemployment, and, the increasing inflation (Dumenil and Levy, 2008:25). It was foreseen that Fordism lost its potential for stable capital accumulation after this crisis (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:58), and that a class-based social polarization and class conflict-based organization has now come to an end after Fordism; while a new economic structuring based on negotiations between social interest groups would come into effect (ibid: 61). This economic structuring pointed to neoliberal policy implementations; in the neoliberal period, both the Fordist labor process in the factory and the “welfare and security” state of

the Fordist regime of accumulation outside the factory was to be abandoned; therefore, the efforts to restructure the state in capitalism were emerging (ibid: 59).

It is crucial, even though not easy, to conceptualize neoliberalism, which developed in order to overcome the capitalist accumulation crisis easily and involved multiple effects in the economic, social and political senses. From another point of view, it may be difficult to make sense of neoliberalism's nature and historical importance as a result of the fact that it has become widespread and effective within less than a generation, and it has intertwined with critical aspects of life (Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2008: 13). Dumenil and Levy approach neoliberalism as a way to increase capitalist class' profits and strengthen its power, as they view neoliberalism as the last stage of capitalism (Dumenil and Levy, 2009: 51).

While neoliberalism has differences in its application and historical assimilation in each country, it basically implies the systematic use of state power in the country in order to enforce market's dominance there (Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2008:17). As a mode of organization which aims for protecting capital and subduing labor, that is to say, as a peculiar organization to capitalism, neoliberalism is realized via both external pressures and transformations that internal forces deliver in the social, economic and political arenas (ibid:17).

Following the adoption of a relatively longer period of welfare state, neoliberalism offers solutions in favor of finances to the capitalist accumulation problems. It chooses reductionist financial-monetary policies and large-scale interventions to erode social rights, claiming these are measures to prevent inflation and improve production; whereas it interferes with every sphere of social life extensively and aggressively, although suggesting non-interference ideologically (ibid:19). In other words, neoliberalism demands that state is given the minimum and market is given the maximum role in the organization of economic life; while at present it has the quality of an ideological and political program that will expand the societal transformation that is towards a market-dominated economic life (MacEwan, 2008:

285). Put differently, market's dominating role and market rule are the most significant attributes of neoliberalism in practice; while neoliberalism proposes the removal of state intervention, which is seen as the cause for market's failures in resource-allocation and providing economic activity (Akalin, 2009: 18). Policies of removal of state's regulating mechanisms ease the growth of capitalism in a sense; they bring out new regulating forms that involve market-oriented new rules and policies, and they unfold the fact that "state itself is being marketized while society is transformed in the image of market"(Munck, 2008:112). In this context, Harvey indicates that it is the precondition that state intervention in markets must be at a minimum, and state's role is to provide a suitable institutional frame in the implementation of neoliberal policies and to maintain this structure (Harvey, 2005:2):

Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets(once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit. (ibid:2)

The removal of state's regulative roles occurs via reductions in social services and activity areas such as education, health, etc. or its narrowing activity range by means of privatizations. In other words, the expansion of "market relations" in the country means that education, health, employment and housing rights and the like enter the process of commodification. That is to say, it is not only the case that market becomes fetishized as the sole coordinator of production, but the commodification process also spreads onto everyday practices at every point (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:91). Commodification process coincides with the change of meaning in interpersonal relations, which could not be transformed to a currency at a certain point of capitalist age, as they now transfer to the economic sphere in a different time period and under the pressure of constantly developing capitalist system (ibid: 201). In another way of expression, commodification process includes the abstraction and

reification of commodified relations from their position in social relations network, and their subjection to be traded in the market(ibid: 201-202). Therefore, services such as education and health, which were conceived under the social state framework before, become evaluated within the scope of market relations and they become purchasable only from the market, in order to enter commodification process. In this context, privatization of schools and commodification of education(MacEwan, 2007:287), turning the right to health into a commodified rather than collective right (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:206) show the market's influence on social practices. In this regard, Wallerstein emphasized that capitalism involved partial commodification in the end; therefore, it was inevitable to see the commodification of everything, especially of everyday life.

Capitalism involves commodification, but as we have emphasized, only partial commodification. Further commodification, however, has in fact been a regular mechanism for getting out of the cyclical stagnations of the world-economy. The result can be summed up as follows: Despite themselves, and against their own long-term interests, accumulators constantly push to the commodification of everything, and in particular of everyday life. (Wallerstein, 1991: 111)

Based on this framework, neoliberalism both represents a series of institutional principles and includes a set of socio-political applications; thus, it causes capitalist market relations to infect and spread to the most domains of social life(Colas, 2008:123).

According to the neoliberal moral codes, market is defined as a “natural selection” tool, in which individual is considered valuable according to his or her contribution to surplus value production and capital accumulation, instead of his or her contribution to society(Clarke, 2008:100). In other words, this code corresponds to the commodification process that is based on the determination of human life's value according to the needs of market relations. That is to say, this process can be understood as the buying and selling of commodities as well as non-commodities of everyday life, as the latter non-marketable aspects of life become subject to trading in the market day by day and people can sell their labor force potentials (Yücesan-

Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:201). Thus, in a society where commodity production has become the general rule, the exchange of commodities is not limited to the products of labor, but it includes the labor force itself as a commodity, as well (Clarke, 2008:95).

The fundamental characteristic of capitalist production relations is based on the condition that working class accepts the commercialization of its labor force similar to that of commodities as a reality (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:102). Based on this, labor takes the form of a commodity; then, worker becomes the person who is ready and compelled to sell his or her right to use own labor force to the capitalist in a servitude relationship; in this context, labor's transformation into a commodity includes labor markets besides labor processes in the domains of class struggle, too (ibid: 103).

The fact that capitalism aims for greater capital accumulation increases its ambition to own surplus labor of workers. Therefore, profits of capitalists go up as much as they can appropriate surplus labor; and the increasing exploitation of masses becomes the inevitable consequence of general commodity production (Clarke, 2008:96). Following this point, Wallerstein writes that the historical process of capitalism goes hand in hand with the commodification process; and capitalists commodify not only social processes, but production processes as well, as a result of their attempt to commodify each sphere of economic life for the sake of greater capital accumulation:

Historical capitalism involved therefore the widespread commodification of processes –not merely exchange processes, but production processes, distribution processes, and investment processes – that had previously been conducted other than via a “market”. And in the course of seeking to accumulate more and more capital, capitalists have sought to commodify more and more of these social processes in all spheres of economic life. Since capitalism is a self-regarding process, it follows that no social transaction has been intrinsically exempt from possible inclusion. That is why we may say the historical development of capitalism has involved the thrust towards the commodification of everything. Nor has it been enough to commodify the social processes. Production processes were linked to one another in complex commodity chains. (Wallerstein, 2003, 15-16)

State's entrepreneurial and regulative role in production prior to the transformation has been inhibited since the neo-liberal ideology that is behind the shift is based on a state exempt from all of these roles and passive in economy. Neo-liberal transformation of state's economic role leads to changes in employment and labor structure; this produces some uncertainties in the way working class defines itself and therefore causes trade unions, which are the organizations of working class, to be affected by these transformations and to lose focus because of these uncertainties (Müftüoğlu, 2005:381). In this context, neoliberalism empowers capital and saves it from any social and public restrictions; whereas it cancels any kind of social protection on labor's rights (Munck, 2002:26).

3.3.3.2 The Influence of Flexibility Policies on the General Employment Structure

Whereas fordism led to a fragmented division of labor by creating various detailed jobs, and, this fragmentation in occupational life constituted the basic characteristic of fordist system of production; post-fordism has implemented flexible production to have different commodities for different sectors and flexible labor to produce these; thus, created large divisions of labor and flexibility of labor due to the fragmentation of markets. In other words, production process, which required rigid specialization in one single place in fordism, has provided that various stages of production can be executed in small workshops outside the workplace when needed, following flexible organization of production in post-fordism (Müftüoğlu, 2006:132). Thus, "small teams of multi-tasking" workers are present according to low-cost production demand, instead of old, rigid assembly line of fordism (Bidet and Kouvelakis, 2008:361).

Flexible labor is generally identified by either quantitative (external) or functional (internal) flexibility, even though it takes four different forms, namely quantitative-external flexibility, functional-internal flexibility, wage flexibility and work-hour flexibility. Quantitative flexibility is businesses' ability to set number and qualities of

workers they will employ according to demand in market, in other words, it is employment according to demand (Müftüoğlu, 2006:136). This type of flexibility that depends on flexibilization of the forms of employment is based on temporary, seasonal, contracted or part-time employment of workers, that is to say, it leads to workers without job-security (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2004:16). This, in a sense, paves the way for hiring workers on temporal status and temporary contracts in times of increasing production, and firing workers in times of declining production, while these insecure, peripheral workers are consisted of discriminated groups such as women or migrants (ibid:16). Functional flexibility is based on regulating intended tasks and responsibilities according to employer's needs. This type of flexibility means that workers can do several different tasks, so higher qualities are expected of workers or the amount of work/tasks to be done increases (ibid: 16). Wage flexibility, then, proposes that wages are set according to employees' performances and fluctuate according to market conditions (Mütevelliöğlu and Işık, 2009:183). Work-hour flexibility, while directly related to quantitative flexibility, refers to determination of the number of employed workers and wages by the employer. All these mentioned types of flexibility include measures taken by capital in order to keep labor dependent on itself, while trade unions as conventional labor organizations become increasingly marginalized as labor performance becomes flexible during this process (Munck, 1999:6). Through these mentioned methods of flexibility, labor force is divided into core labor force, which is a high-skilled and relatively high-wage and secure category, and peripheral labor force, which has insecure working conditions, low-wages and multi-leveled within itself (Çelik, 2007:123).

Under the hegemony of the neoliberal politics, the rates of economic growth are decreasing, unemployment and underemployment are becoming widespread and the neoliberal system shapes the economic, political and social changes by suppressing the resistance in front of its reproduction, creating the economic basis that enables its own continuity (Saad-Filho and Johnston, 2008:21). From this point, it is claimed that if the markets as the most appropriate and self-regulating social structures, are

permitted to operate without any restriction, they would lead the effective use of the economic resources and realize the full employment by offering anyone who wants to work job opportunities (Shaikh, 2008:77). In order to realize the full employment the imposition of flexibility applications widely are presupposed. Yet, the neoliberal understanding on the access to employment via the flexible employment is proved inappropriate when the temporary working relations are taken under consideration (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008: 117). From this point of view, Bourdieu defines neoliberalism as “a pure and perfect order that suppresses and punishes via the policies of decreasing the cost of labor, reduces the public expenses and making the employment flexible⁶” (Bourdieu, 2009: 23).

The starting point of the flexibility arguments is developed around the working models and the rigidity of the labor. In other words, it is emphasized that one of the important reasons of the search for flexibility is the rigidity in the labor market that obstructs the effective use of the labor (Walby, 1992:136). In this respect, the governments take into consideration to hire and sell the multi-qualified and talented workforce that is created via the flexible employment in order to decrease the rigidity of the labor market and in addition to create the flexibility organization (Wood, 1992:1).

The flexible accumulation that is determined by its open conflict with Fordism’s rigidity, leads the flexibility of the labor processes, labor market, the products and consumption models as well (Harvey, 2006:170). Therefore, the flexibility in production, labor market and consumption becomes the result of the search for financial solutions for the tendencies of capitalism for crisis (Harvey, 2006:222). Consequently, via the flexibility applications, the mobilization of the capital is made easy and the labor gets a more flexible shape appropriate for the market (Munck, 2008:109). As a result of this situation, the labor is seen and perceived as a commodity by the effect of the discourse on flexibility.

⁶ My translation

The multi-layered, various, uneven working models in the employment structure created by the flexibility applications suit to the inner dynamics of capitalism in terms of the need for a “reserved army of labor”. Marx and Engels in their views on the reserved army of labor, state that the capitalism needs a reserved army of labor that is unemployed and works irregularly and that this reserved army becomes highly functional for capitalism since they are forced to work more due to their fear of losing the job and whose power of resistance decreased by their being controlled (Strangleman and Warren, 2008:251).

The social security offers people the opportunity to live without selling their own labor power to the market and therefore changes the commodity feature of the labor power and in other words expels the labor power from being a commodity up to a certain extent (Arın, 2004, 69). On the other hand, the flexible employment models by restricting the social security rights of the workers in the formal sector, leaves an important part of the labor out of the content of security (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:172). Therefore, labor is expelled from being the constructive feature of the society and in general the labor/worker category is replaced by the epithets based on the organization of the production such as qualified/unqualified worker and via the loss of the concept of “the collective rights of labor” its own meaning by turning into individual rights, the labor and the commodification of the labor and the social security of the labor appears (ibid: 179).

The intensification of the work, the extension of the working hours and the discharge of the salaried workers by the flexibility applications becomes an authentic feature of the capitalist accumulation and this process leads the working class’ destitute of the labor security in front of the ever changing demands of the capital and the insecurity’s becoming widespread (Clarke, 2008:99). Bourdieu states that the reserved army of labor that is tamed by the threat of unemployment and the chaotic organizations that creates insecurity is subjected to the imperilment of unemployment, unsecured employment and the lack of work opportunities defined

by these (Bourdieu, 2009:27). The most important feature of this mass of workers is their structure that goes between being employed and unemployed due to the flexible production and flexible working conditions and from that aspect, the unemployment becomes the most structural feature of this mass (Sertlek, 2001:7).

The flexible employment order as a product of the neoliberal capitalist mode of production and the unsecured working conditions as an outcome of it effects deeply the achievements and rights of the workers and their organization around trade unions. Harvey indicates that the flexible specialization and accumulation results with the low wages and increasing working insecurity as well as the rights and organization skills of labor's and the reserved labor force's being subjected to the most severe damage:

Flexible specialization can be seized on by capital as a handy way to procure more flexible means of accumulation. The two terms—flexible specialization and flexible accumulation—have quite different connotations. The general outcome is lower wages, increasing job insecurity, and in many instances loss of benefits and of job protections. Such trends are readily discernible in all states that have taken the neoliberal road. Given the violent assault on all forms of labour organization and labour rights and heavy reliance upon massive but largely disorganized labour reserves (Harvey, 2005:74)

In other words, the flexible specialization that comes along with neoliberalism, brought the fragmentation of the labor movement together. So to say, the neoliberal policies built on the labor market for the purification of the labor market from the regulations, aims the weakening of the trade unions and the creation of a labor market without employment security in general and to support these developments defends that the policies to protect the employment are not necessary (Palley 2008:49).

Neoliberalism by their “flexibility and deregulation applications” re-structures the labor market and this structuring leads the weakening of the trade unions by increasing subcontractor activities, different employment models and the markets gaining an informal feature (Yücesan-Özdemir and Özdemir, 2008:141). As a result,

the organized mass that acquired the class consciousness among the working class becomes a minority and applications on ending the trade union movement by the insecurity, unemployment, subcontractor activities lead the loss of power for the trade union organizations (Sertlek, 2001:7). According to Harvey, the general attack on the labor takes a double-edged shape as the obstruction of the power of trade unions and other workers' associations from a certain state power or their being emptied in order to create the labor market (Harvey, 2005:168).

As a result of flexibilization policies in production and employment, an expansion in scope and number of types of labor causes fragmentation and a hierarchical structure within class as well as competition among workers; this reflects in trade union organizations and leads them to be "narrow interest organization", which defends the interests of only a certain group within class (Çelik, 2007:128). Thus, on the one hand, potential grassroots for trade union organization expand; on the other, their number of members and rates decline; therefore, trade unions become organizations that act on defending the interests of their current members (ibid: 128).

Labor-market separation that is brought about by the implementation of flexibility in labor market has created small and scattered workplaces, caused significant changes in employment structure, and replaced standard forms of work in Fordist system with temporal, part-time and other non-standard forms of work in Post-Fordist system (Hyman, 1992:153). These changes in employment structure have gone further in that they have formed core labor force with "the minority of organized workers that have security, relatively higher wages and rights" on the one hand, and they have promoted a major peripheral labor force, which is "unorganized, insecure, working for extremely low wages and missing almost every social right", on the other hand (Müftüoğlu, 2006:134). Thus, the massive, homogeneous working class of the Fordist age is replaced by a core labor force that emerged as a result of flexible implementations on time and skill (Munck, 1999:11). Incorrect policies of trade unions accompanied by this restructuring and fragmentation in labor force resulted in

working class' gradual loss of power in the institutional sphere (Müftüoğlu, 2006:134) .

3.3.3.3 The Influence of Flexibility Policies on Women's Employment

Flexibility is both an economical and a political concept, and its effect on women's labor and employment can be assessed at several dimensions. Implementations of flexibilization in production and employment have caused dichotomies in labor market and fragmentation in class structure; and, they have imposed responsible autonomy or multi-skills for core labor force, and, insecure and harder working conditions for women, who are known to make up a major part in peripheral labor force (Munck, 2002:121). Following this, flexibilization cannot overcome already existing gender discrimination at work; on the contrary, it suggests that "gender discrimination in labor force determines how flexibilization will take place and be understood" in both formal and informal sectors (ibid:145).

Gender dimension of work in capitalist society shows the reflections of hierarchical, unequal relationship between women and men; and the traditional source of this inequality is to expect women to stay at home while men work to maintain the family, or as "breadwinner" (Moody, 1997:167). In this context, we can state that "the entire socialization process in capitalist society is based on the internalization of roles by women and men as indicated in division of labor" (Toksöz, 1998:183). In other words, both women's and men's work situation and demands within labor market are determined by both economic policies and traditional social roles that dictate on women's responsibilities at home (Ruberyand and Fagan, 1994:152). The equilibrium between social roles has started to change with flexibilization process and women has become part of labor force in order to support their families; however, this has resulted in a "double shift" system for women as it was paid labor at workplace and unpaid labor at home (Moody, 1997:167). Women's labor is perceived not only as flexible and disposable labor; it is at the same time a cheap source of labor, too (Ruberyand and Fagan, 1994:160).

Due to the implementations of flexibility, female labor force has increasingly entered occupational life, yet in quite unfavorable working conditions. Women's labor is seen not only as flexible and disposable; it is at the same time a cheap source of labor (Rubery and Fagan, 1994:160). A woman who is excluded from labor market in such a way lives by subsistence production, homeworking and similar jobs, and voluntary work, so she works in informal sector which is part of both in manufacturing sector and in service sector, while this informal employment makes her labor invisible (Toksöz, 1998:183). For women, informal work means temporality and insecurity; in other words, flexible working means less job security, decline in wages and changes in work shifts for women; therefore, women are among the last ones to hire in labor market in times of economic growth and the first ones to fire in times of economic decline. (Munck, 2002:148-149).

Another dimension of flexibility with regard to female labor is discussions over "feminization of labor". In terms of flexibilization policies, businesses have increasingly tended to hire part-time and temporary workers in order to lower the labor costs; traditionally, women's flexible presence in labor market has caused their employment in such forms; and as a result, the number of female employees has increased such that the process has been called the "feminization of labor" (Özar and Ercan, 2002:201). Feminization also refers to increased female employment in a general sense, due to the growth in insecure and informal work forms created by flexibilization and deregulation in labor markets in globalization process (Toksöz, 2009:206). In this case, part-time and temporary employment forms are crucial for an easier understanding of the scope of relationship between feminization and flexibility (Rubery and Fagan, 1994:152). At this very point, Munck, warning against the confusion between flexibilization and feminization, states that it is wrong to see the two as one thing and women's greater participation in labor processes will create equality in labor force yet it does not transform into better working conditions for women (Munck, 2002:146). In this case, we are able to infer briefly that feminization

or the growth in women's employment only produces unfavorable working conditions for women.

Since trade unions failed or ignored to comprehend flexibility and feminization processes thoroughly, they have not been able to embrace worker masses whose employment forms are the product of these processes. The reason behind this is the fact that trade unions assume occupational life as a male domain and perceive women workers as part of the "reserve army of labor", which is called upon when needed (Munck, 2003:109). Besides, flexible working areas, e. g. home-working production that employs women and mixes with women's labor at home, have increasingly differentiated from working areas in which trade unions are much organized and experienced; and conventional organizing techniques of trade unions have become impossible to function (Sayılan, 2008: 272). In a similar discourse, women have not been able to access trade unions because their participation rate in labor force and waged employment is low; women's employment concentrates in service sector, where unionization is unlikely; while unionization is also difficult in atypical employment forms such as temporal work, home-working, work-on-demand and freelancing that become common in global competition conditions that depend on lowering labor force costs (Toksöz and Erdoğan, 1998: 44-45).

3.3.4 A General Evaluation of the Trade Union Crisis

The crisis of trade unions is usually explained by globalization and accompanying flexibility in production and employment; however, proposals and solutions merely based on these explanations are not sufficient despite the significance of these processes; internal factors that originate from trade union structure should also be taken into account besides external, objective factors such as globalization, flexibility and feminization in the search for a way out of the trade union crisis (Çelik, 2006:18-19). The primary internal factor that originates from trade union structure is the bureaucratic and hierarchic quality of union policies and decision-making, which are arranged by those within central administrative mechanisms and without workers.

Union bureaucracy causes alienation and distrust among workers, and workers are not drawn to an institution they do not trust; therefore, unions lose power and fall into crisis.

In order to overcome its crisis, capitalist system needs to reform by changing both the mode of production and the employment structure of labor force, putting the class power of working class off, and thus deactivating unions. It tries to achieve this need of reformation by flexibilization policies on production and employment, while the reflections of this process on unions are quite unfavorable. Unions, which are organized according to the Fordist system of production and programmed to respond to the needs of this system, have a difficult time in adapting to new production and employment structure that resulted from flexibilization policies; besides that, they cannot leave out their wage unionism perspective, so they ignore the problems of unorganized, non-unionized workers in this process (Müftüoğlu, 2006:133-134). In this context, it has been inevitable that trade unions enter a crisis of political representation as they fail to represent potential and existing union members, and as their amount of member declines (Yorgun, 2007:73). Trade unions have to decide about the three-dimensional question of “who they represent, what ends and interests they will struggle for as they represent a defined mass, and what methods and strategies they are going to employ to achieve these ends” in order to be able to come out of this representation crisis (ibid: 75).

Flexibilization policies during the transformation from Fordist system of production to Post-Fordist system of production have brought with themselves the expansion of atypical employment processes such as the fragmentation of working class as central and peripheral, the increase in informal employment, feminization, temporary work, freelancing or work-on-demand. As a result of these processes, the proportion of white-collar service sector employee, women and youth in labor force increases substantially, however, trade unions cannot shift their focus to interests of those other segments since trade union structuring has depended on industrial, blue-collar, male

labor force; while the most obvious example of this is women's unionization levels and positions within trade unions (Müftüoğlu, 2007: 95).

Consequentially, trade union movement has to take into account the course of events that emerged as a result of globalization strategy and involve low-cost production, outsourcing, increasing number of temporary employees and feminization of labor force; and, in order to form a labor movement in real terms, it has to determine a course of action according to the fact that it has an extremely fragmented working class at hand (Moody, 1997:143). Hyman argues that this course of events is also a warning or an opportunity for trade unions to overcome this crisis; he asserts that growing importance of female labor, temporary, part-time and other atypical working forms as well as non-industrial occupations can be a powerful impetus for trade union renewal, for finding new methods of organization and action as much as for constituting new forms of intra-union democracy (Hyman, 1992:164).

CHAPTER 4

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN TURKEY AND THE TEKEL ENTERPRISES

4.1 The Place of the History of Trade Unionism in Turkey in Different Historical and Economic Transformations

The trade unions in a general historical frame occurred with the industrialization process and they were developed parallel with the progress of modern capitalism. When Turkey's industrialization past is considered it is seen that the trade union structuring in Turkey does not fit with such a historical course of development. Therefore, as a result of the slow progress of the industrialization in Turkey in the beginning of 20th century, which led to the slow development of capitalism; the trade union movement was weak for a long time (Yorgun, 2007:109).

With the entering in the force of the Ottoman Basic Law (Kanun-i Esasi) on 24 July 1908, the freedom of assembly and founding associations became legal, which led to the organization of different strikes during this process (Sülker, 2004:29). From this respect, the year 1908, in spite of the lack of a trade union movement and the disorganized participation of the workers, became an era in which the workers' movement showed an increase with the rising waves of strike and practices apart from strikes, which supported the workers' to realize the necessity for a trade union organization (Akkaya, 2004:140). The rulers of the time, in order to intervene this situation announced the "Tatil-i Eşgal Kanun-u Muvakkati", namely the temporary law on strike on 25 September 1908. The law on strike announced as temporary on 1908 converted into permanent law on 27 July 1909. This law on the regulation of strikes and organizations includes the prohibition of the organization of trade unions

in the places where foreigners and the public are engaged in activity and in the institutions (ibid: 140). The workers in spite of the prohibition of the organization of trade unions were still getting organized according to the “Law on Associations” dated 1909 under the name of “association” but in the form of organization with trade union content, yet, since the organization of the workers in this period was in the shape of union-association-craft guild and as a result of the dominant features were coming from the side of craft guild, the associations could not take the form of the trade unions to create a workers’ class culture and conscience (Akkaya, 2004:140). As a result the trade unionism has been understood until the year of the establishment of the republic as “sandıkçılık” (dealing with funds), in other words establishing provident funds (Sülker, 2004: 13). As a result, “the heritage remained from this period to the Republic of Turkey in terms of the experience and accumulation of organization is notably limited” (Akkaya, 2004:140-141).

4.1.1 The Conditions of the Trade Unions in the Process of Etatism between 1923-1960

Between 1923 and 1931, resulted by the failure in the progress of the development of a domestic industry, the state increased the control on the other sides of the economic life in order to create its own industry and with the influence of the economic depression between 1929- 1939 the transition to etatism became obligatory (Boratav, 2006:142-143). Due to the success of the etatist and closed economic policy, the influences of the depression remained outside and the attempts for the industry gave successful results which resulted with the Public Economic Enterprises (ibid: 161). By this means, the period started by the protectionist policies was placed by the etatist policies on 1932 (ibid: 144). Boratav limits the etatism in Turkey between 1932 and 1939 and interprets the policies of the period, along with the other economic policies, as attempts of national industrialization (ibid: 162). In other words, beginning from the 1930’s the realization of the economic development in Turkey by the state was adopted and as a result of the etatist regulations the state achieved the condition of the greatest employer (Müftüoğlu, 1998: 498). Briefly, it is

possible to name those years as the first period of national industrialization in terms of its goals and consequences (Boratav, 2004: 59). Therefore with the limitation of the workers' rights in this period, within the context of etatist industrialization, under that period's conditions a production chance with very low cost occurred which increases the accumulation of the capital from the side of public (Kepenek and Yentürk, 2000:69). The applications of the etatist policies during the 1930's as well as the control over the labor market by the state brought together the creation of an important portio of employment by the state and played a decisive role in the relations between the trade union and state and between the members and directors (Uygur, 1993:151). On the other hand, the five-year development plans which are considered as the absolute beginning the etatist applications were creating at the same time new areas for industry and employment. Therefore, the government building the industry by the five-year development plans, which have the feature of the programs for the industrial investments, confronted the worker problem (Sülker, 2004:48).

The trade union movement under the prohibition according to the "Tatil-i Eşgal Kanun-u Muvakkati" dated 1909, prohibited the second time with the Law on Societies came into force on 1938. With the Law on Societies brought the prohibition for establishing society-association "on the basis of class principal" and so the establishment of the trade unions and the prohibition continued until 1946 (Özveri, 2007:80). Consequently, through this period "neither the trade unions could be established nor mentioned the social class" (ibid: 51). The workers, as on 1909, despite the prohibition of establishing trade unions continued their organization under the frame of trade guild yet these attempts as in the previous times complicated their attainment of class consciousness on the one hand and on the other made their close contact with the state necessary in order for them to continue their union existence (Akkaya, 2004:142).

The years between 1946-50 in Turkey confronts a period in which the features of economic politics were abrogated rather than being a period in which the fact of

“etatism” is refused or the attempts for state owned business enterprise are restricted (Boratav, 2006: 353-354). The year 1946 and following years have a significant place in terms of the institutionalization of the trade unions in real terms. On 1946 a limited law on labor unions was enacted by removing the prohibition of establishing “a society on the basis of class principal” yet since the removal of the principal revived the trade union movement, the trade unions established were closed six months later⁷ and on 1947 by the Law on Trade Unions introduced, the right on strike prohibited, so the conditions for workers turned out to be “having trade unions but not having their right on strike” (Özveri, 2006:80).

By this Law on Trade Unions dated 1946 the institutions that operate as workers’ fund or trade unions for companies were supported by the state and the potential of independent organization and struggle are tried to be suppressed (Uygur, 1993:151). Sülker claims that this law was accepted in order to obstruct the attraction of workers to the political movements and keep them under the control of the state (Sülker, 2004:80). Another interesting condition was the prohibition of the opposition of trade unions to the internal and external politics of the government and having attempts to ruin the unity of the state by the sentence “The trade unions are national associations. They cannot act against nationalism and national interests” (ibid: 83-84). The actual aim of the state which attempted to take the trade unionism into its body was “keeping the trade unions out of any political current and influences and turn them into structures matching with the nationalist characteristics of the regime and acting together with the state” (Akkaya, 2004:142). Accordingly, the political power was trying to control the working class by getting trade unions established in their own direction and the Türk-iş established on 1952 was signifying the result of these development (Özveri, 2007: 81). The Türk-iş aiming to collect all of the trade unions

⁷ The trade union movement gained legalization with the law enacted in 5 July 1946 and during the following months since the establishment of the trade unions realized under the leadership of parties adopting socialism such as The Socialist Party of Turkey, The Socialist Laborers’ Party of Turkey and The Peasants’ Party, the trade unions were closed six months after their establishment in 17 December 1946 as a result of the probability of having an “ideological dimension” from the beginning (Kalaycıoğlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik)

adopting the labor and wage trade unionism under the same supra-organization became the first worker confederation on Turkey until 1967 (Yorgun, 2007:128). The organization of Türk-iş especially around the public employees led to the creation of “good relations” with the governments, adoption of the politics of reconciliation rather than struggle to protect the rights of the workers, which all brought together the “supra-party politics” (Akkaya, 2004:146). At the same time, through these politics the member workers of Türk-iş could take raises in their wages due to the proximity of the Türk-iş with the government and its “good relations” and that led the problems in their development of class consciousness (Koç, 2003:92).

4.1.2 The Trade Unions in the Process of Import Substitution Accumulation between 1960-1980

The accumulated capital gathered by the etatist policies of the 1930’s transformed into the import substitution industrialization during this period. The legal arrangements during this period such as the adoption of import substitution industrialization policies as well as the attempts to strengthen the domestic market and the legalization of the bargaining rights supported the trade unions in terms of spread and affectivity. This process which resulted with the development of the trade unions continued by on the one hand the permission for the workers working in the public service and on the other hand by “transferring resources via the creation of the market for the industrial capital with high wages” in accordance with the import substitution industrialization policies of the period, which requires the revitalization of the market, the increase in the demand and relatively the increase in the wages (Akkaya, 2004:146).

Another important development of the period was the acceptance of the 1961 Constitution and the attempts to bring libertarian and democratic insight to the system. With this constitution the right to strike became legalized and the right to bargain collectively and to strike for trade unions was organized by the laws. The democratic environment created by this law led the strengthening of the trade unions

which were prohibited continuously until the year of 1961 in a real sense and resulted for the trade unions to be seen as in their “golden age” between 1963-1980, in which the trade unions “by empowering their social legitimacy gained fast important achievements first in the public service then in the private sector” (Özveri, 2006:81). Therefore, between 1961 and 1980 the trade union movement in Turkey gained important ground in terms of organization and ideological structuring.

The “supra-party trade unionism” approach, so the new “declassification” ideology of Türk-iş established on 1952 became during those years the new principal of Türk-iş and the function of this trade union movement that was developed around legalism, etatism and supra-party trade unionism is determined in the direction of collective bargaining and increasing the number of the workers (Uygur, 1993:153). Another such function is to create in a sentence “a part in the attempts to take a share in the economic growth without entering into struggle with the government” (Koç, 2003:160). Another feature of Türk-iş is its appearance as the institutionalized form of the “bureaucratic trade unionism” type which is supported by the sentence “it (Türk-iş) supports the state in the overcoming of the social and economic problems by participating the protection of the independence of Turkey and realization of her development in force” (Uygur, 1993:151-152). Some trade unions under the frame of Türk-iş, which do not agree with well determined characteristics such as the supra-party trade unionism, bureaucratic trade unionism and trade unionism based on increasing the wages, separating from Türk-iş established the Revolutionary Workers’ Confederation (Disk) on 1967. As a result, Türk-iş lost its feature of being the only workers’ confederation on Turkey by the establishment of Disk on 1967. At the same time, an important change occurred in the trade union thought and contrary to the “supra-party” trade unionism discourse of Türk-iş, the “class and mass” unionism of Disk became center stage emphasizing the importance of political struggle (Akkaya, 2004:147). As an indicator of such a unionist approach, Disk kept close relations with the Worker’s Party of Turkey established on 1963 and since the confrontation of the workers with the socialist way of thinking was realized, a militant worker mass appeared and during this period the demonstrations and strikes

took a severe form increasing in number (ibid:147). The government disturbed and concerned about these mobilizations getting intense between 1968-70 would affect negatively the realization of the industrialization and the economic growth; in order to put Disk and the trade unions under its frame out of action and place Türk-iş as the only workers' confederation in Turkey once again went to the change in law and the workers opposing this regulation showed a great reaction by organizing the protests also known as the "The Protests of 15-16 June (1970)" (Akkaya, 2004:148-149). During this process also not only remove Disk from its place but also to "break down the class established the organizations based on nation and religion such as The Confederation of the Nationalist Worker Trade Unions (MİSK) on 1970 and The Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (Hak-iş) on 1976 that adopts the religious approach (ibid:148)". The Protests of 15-16 June played an important role in the trade union movement by being the first protest in which various workers from different sectors and provinces for the rights other than the wage problem are united (Koç, 2003:187). Uygur indicates that the workers showed a great resistance in terms of becoming widespread in masses and radicalism, yet after the Disk that attempted to organize the resistance announced from the radio when the resistance reached a point of struggling with the system that "they do not approve these destructive events", left the workers alone by taking sides with the state (Uygur, 1993:163). As a result, The Protests of 15-16 June failed in gaining the result of their demands and the law changed as the state wanted (Koç, 2003:188).

Towards the end of the period, the years 1973-80 became the era in which the organization of the trade unions developed politically and in comparison with the years 1963-1971 this period witnessed more mobilization in terms of both strikes and other actions (Akkaya, 1998:271). Still, in this period, in the second half of the 1970's, the economic struggle of the working class transcended the extent to be accepted by the rulers and managed to threaten the traditional economic equilibrium (Boratav, 2004:139). If the economic side of the period is revisited, it is seen that during the period of 1970-76 in which the import substitution industrialization strategy experienced in the most intense sense, the state by playing both a financier

and producer role increased the accumulation of capital (Yeldan, 2004:38). In spite of this situation, during the developments in the domestic market in 1977-79, the neglected increases in the wage reached a level that caused an economic crisis due to the “rapid increases in the prices, production bottlenecks and difficulties international payments (Akkaya, 1998:271) In other words, the import substitution accumulation model that continued towards the mid 70’s through which the state interfered the labor market drift into crisis between 1977-80 and resulted by the interruption to the democracy along with the crisis, the restrictions either in the constitution or in Laws on Labor and Organization declined all the achievements of the labor (Yeldan, 2004: 38-39).

4.1.3 The Neoliberal Politics During and After 1980 and Stagnation in Trade Unions

The second half of the 1970’s showed the features of an era when the trade union organization gained a political content, the working class came out on top in terms of social opposition and reached a certain resistance and experience against the capital and at the same time when the import-substitution accumulation process directed to domestic market came to an end with the crisis between 1977-79. Along with the crisis, the 1980 came as a period when the import-substitution economic policies did not confront the type of accumulation of the capital and as a result new economic quests appeared. The quests were answered by the neoliberal ideology that was gaining power worldwide and became the ruling ideology during 1980 and Turkey on 1980, in the process that started with the Decisions of 24 January and became easier with the Military Coup of 12 September, a fundamental neoliberal transformation occurred in the economy (Mütevelliöğlu and Işık, 2009:159).

For the neoliberal economic policies to be introduced on 1980’s there should be some economic and political regulations, in which the first task was to solve the problem of politicized working class. The Military Coup of 12 September solved this problem for the capital and therefore “The economic intervention of 24 January were

completed with the intervention to the political sphere by the Military Coup of 12 September” (Akkaya, 2004: 151). In order to the enforcement of the neoliberal politics, the democratic rights and freedoms suspended and for a long time the trade union actions were stopped by the closure case for the Disk (Sazak, 2007:12). The suspension of trade union action happened with the closure of Disk, the prohibition of strike and High Board of Arbitration’s regulating the order of labor agreements (Boratav, 2004:150). So, the trade union rights with collective bargaining and right on strike that were given in 1963 were abolished once again with the 1980 Constitution. Therefore the military coup kept the labor market under control by military and legal means, realizing the political economic period of transformation started with the Decision of 24 January in accordance with the outcomes of crisis between 1977-79 and the demands of the capital (ibid:150). Consequently, the entrance to the era of 1980 can be imagined as a transition to a period in which the country dragged into a severe political crisis rather than only having an economic crisis.

The increasing power of the neoliberal economic policies on the world after the crisis of the capitalist mode of production during the mid-1970’s created the scene for the globalization of capitalism in the whole world. The basic feature of globalization, in other words the internalization of capitalism, is “spreading (of capitalism) externally in terms of geography” and spreading internally by covering initially the public sector and other sectors under its domination and therefore the privatization (Erdođdu, 2006:39). The reflection of this process to Turkey is the increase of the private sector dominancy via the precautions for stability supported by the Decision of the 24 January, IMF and the World Bank that aim to minimize the role of the state and therefore to make the integration of the economy to the world market with the process of reconstruction (Ercan, 2002:166). As a result, the way found to get over the crisis was to remove the obstacles in front of the mobilization of capital and goods and service trade and so the sphere of public economy to be downsized and the neoliberal approach started to govern the economic policies (Erdođdu, 2006:40). The extent of these neoliberal policies was created by the minimizing the state, the labor

market's becoming more flexible and as a result decreasing the labor force costs (Mütevelliöđlu and Işık, 2009:160). The flexibility of the labor market creates the basis for the neoliberal employment policies and leads to the loosening of the rules regulating the employment of the workers and the increasing force of the employers on acting according to their own demands towards the labor force (ibid: 182).

The politics of privatization required by the stabilization program brought together a series of regulation on work life, trade unions and trade union rights. The frame of privatization policies in Turkey resulted with the applications of making the labor market more flexible, the weakening of the regulating role of the state in the labor market, the shift of employment from permanent to temporary, the increase in the informal employment, the weakening of the collective bargaining feature of the trade unions and the bans on the trade union organization (ibid: 182).

Another discourse used by privatization was that the public services were unproductive since they employ more workers than it is required resulted mostly with the firing the workers and with the decrease in the level of employment and the level of trade unionism since a lot of worker members of the trade unions were out of employment (Müftüođlu, 1998:498). The industrialization by the state as the necessity of the etatist politics of 1930's led to the state's moderate approach to the trade unions and so the trade unions' finding a large sphere for organization in the public sector. Yet, with privatization, with the private sector's becoming affective in the previous areas of public sector that were appropriate grounds for the organization of trade unions, the employers by suppressing the workers, by giving the works to subcontractors and bringing a part of the work outside to the working environment such as contract manufacturing and working at home, attempted to deactivate the role of the trade unions organized in the workplace (ibid: 498-99).

The sae, on 1983, introduced new laws on the regulation of the working life as a signifier of their attempt to control the working class movements, transformed the organization of the trade unions into a structure of sector which could be controlled

easily and by restricting the ground of action of the trade unions disabled their posing any obstacle in front of the accumulation of the capital (Akkaya, 2004:151). In other words, with these laws the rights and freedoms before the 1980 restricted to a great extent and the anti-democratic system of 12 September attempted to be made continuous by getting institutionalized (Sazak, 2007:12).

As a requirement of the neoliberal economy policies of the period the real wages aimed to be abraded. As a result, a continuous decrease in the real wages occurred until 1987 and the trade union base started to be disturbed (Akkaya, 1998:272). These discontents expressed by the spontaneous actions on 1989 of the working class that was tried to be suppressed by the regulations and means of oppression by the 12 September. The actions known as the “Spring Actions” on March-April-May of 1989 had features left mark on the history of Turkish trade union movement and working class movement since with the “Spring Actions” the working movement by transcending the extent of trade unions went out to the “street” and attempted to express the problems by protests (Akkaya, 2004:154). When the mobilization of the working class was still alive after the “Spring Actions”, the strike of the mineworkers from Zonguldak on 1990 occurred, also known as the “Zonguldak March”. Sazak, claims that the Spring Actions and the actions of the mineworkers of Zonguldak and the others were empowered by the strict suppression of the working class and trade union movement during 1980’s and by the bottom out of the wages and social rights (Sazak, 2007:12).

The 1990’s witnessed some developments in terms of the unification of the trade union and social struggles. Turkish trade union movement became the scene for two platforms known as The Platform of Democracy – The Common Voice of the Workers and The Labor Platform, which cannot be overestimated in terms of their history. The Platform of Democracy – The Common Voice of the Workers represent an unofficial supra organization created by most of the trade unions along with the on-governmental organizations for the first time (Koç, 2000:265). The Labor Platform organized in 4 July 1999 is important in terms of uniting the workers’ and

government officers' union confederations, labor organizations and non-governmental organizations (Koç, 2000:370).

The 1990`s became the years of the dominant globalization and neoliberal politics. In this respect, the discourse of “privatization for activity” of the earlier periods replaced by the discourses “privatizations to close the deficits of the public sector” (Boratav, 2004:177). The privatization policies' becoming widespread and their intensification gave great damage to the trade unions. Boratav claims that the economic depressions following the financial crises⁸ and spreading privatization attempts brought the final impact on the trade unions in a similar fashion (Boratav, 2004:176). Sazak, on the other hand, sees the late 1990's and the 2000 as a process of “a step forward two steps back” and states that during the period towards the end of the second half of 1990's the trade union movement shattered and declined due to the intense privatization of neoliberalism and the second wave that includes the liberalization of labor market (Sazak, 2007:13).

4.2 The Story of Tekel Enterprises

4.2.1 From Regie to the State Monopoly

The journey of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire started with prohibitions in the first phase. Yet, later the Ottoman Empire understanding that they could not cope with the prohibitions, decided to remove them. According to Hür, beneath this decision there lies the belief that since tobacco is a pleasure inducing substance the consumers would not give up no matter how high the prices were and since during the reforms in the army structure the expenditure of the army increased and it was required to compensate the war expenditures the first idea was applying the tobacco taxes (Ayşe Hür, 2010). In this sense, the tobacco taxes started to be seen as a means of creating resources in any case of economic need and in order to guarantee the safety of these

⁸ “The severe financial crises on 1994 and on 2001 and the light financial crises on 98 and 99”(Boratav, 2004, 180)

resources it should be taken under control by some services. As a result the control of the tobacco taxes became a very important issue to handle. For this purpose, Ottoman Empire established the “Tütün İnhisarları” (Tobacco Monopoly) so as to control the tobacco income rather than functioning as an institution in the real sense (Doğruel, 2000:43).

The wars and the requisite for the economic resources resulted from the wars compensated by the income gathered from tobacco, salt and so forth starting before 1881 and the income from tobacco started to be used as assurance against the debts. (ibid: 61). Hence on 1881 the “Düyun-u Umumiye” (Public Debt Administration) was established in order to collect duty and make the debts and interests be paid (ibid: 63). Therefore, the management and control of the tobacco income was taken from the direct contact of Ottoman Empire. Yet, the representatives of the Düyun-u Umumiye demanded the management of the tobacco income from a separate firm since they were concerned about the difficulties in the control of the tobacco income as well as the difficulty of coping with the spreading tobacco smuggling (ibid: 70). The Regie Administration established due to these concerns and “the tobacco producer and the future of tobacco were given up to the profit expectations of the regie firm” (ibid: 71).

In other words, the tobacco and cigarette trade has been taken under the control of a small foreign firm (the Regie Administration) closely related to the administration of Düyun-u Umumiye, which operated as a small state within the Ottoman state (Boratav, 2006:117). The mentioned regie firm was composed of three partners as Austria-Germany-Ottoman Bank and named as “Memalik-i Osmaniyye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi” (the Regie of Common Interest of Tobacco of the Ottoman Empire) and in French as “la Régie Co-intéressée des Tabacs de l'Empire Ottoman” (the Regie of Common Interest of Tobacco of the Ottoman Empire) (Doğruel, 2000:65). The regie firm established as a profit oriented institution to pay the debts of the Ottoman Empire, applied force on tobacco producers from several aspects. Boratav also claim that the tobacco regime is “a heavy, painful and

moreover a bloody heritage” (Boratav, 2004:47). From this point of view, the period of the Regie administration in terms of both political and social aspects became the target of criticisms and other means in the management of the tobacco income started to be found by creating discussions in the political field. In the frame of these searches also the administration of the production by “state regie or monopoly” except the administration by the regie firm or “tax label”⁹(Doğruel, 2000:61).

4.2.2 From the “State Monopoly” to Tekel

When the 20th century started, the political and social discontent from the regie administration increased and relatively the issue of the management of the tobacco income continued to be discussed. The problem of the management of the tobacco income became one of the issues discussed in the first years of the Republic as well as in the Ottoman Empire, yet the previous discussions in the Ottoman era was mostly on the excise the activities on tobacco and create resources for the state; the discussions on 1920’s and 1930’s were evolved to the economic structure of the tobacco and the issue was considered also with its production as well as its institutional structure (Doğruel, 2000:136).

In the frame of these discussions, with the elimination of the regie administration in the republican era, on which kind of management should the tobacco be subjected to, two alternatives were brought forward which are the “state monopoly” that is formed on the idea that the state should have a direct role in the production and collection of the revenue of the tobacco and “tax label” that supports the idea that the state should not be directly involved in the tobacco business and the tobacco trade should be liberalized (ibid: 136).

⁹ The liberalization of the “tax label” system and ... state’s not directly involving to the tobacco business means the total liberalization of the tobacco trade (ibid: 136).

The initial aim of the rulers in the republican era is to create resources by the monopoly applications in order to revive the economy in spite of the burden of the external debt remained from the Ottoman era and to enforce the political structure (ibid: 150). Hence, in this period as a result of the adoption of etatism, which has the features of national industrialization and state entrepreneurship, the decision became on the tobaccos administration by the state monopoly.

As an outcome of the decision for the tobacco administration by the state monopoly, the termination of the regie administration was brought to the agenda. It was determined that the firm would be purchased¹⁰ on 1925 and until 1930 the business on the purchase of the tobacco, its entrepreneurship, the tobacco-cigarette manufacture and its trade would be directly owned by the state, in other words by the temporary administration of the era (Boratav, 2006:118). The management of the state monopoly applications by the temporary administration resulted from the restrictions brought by the Treaty of Lausanne and the continuity of the search on the economic system that was being debated in that period (Doğruel, 2000: 149). The great economic depression started in the beginning of 1930's was reflected on Turkey as the decrease in the state income and relatively, the state took action to find new sources of income (ibid: 132). As a result, on 1930 the "Tütün İhisarı Kanunu"¹¹ (Law on Tobacco Monopoly) was introduced in which the purchase of tobacco for commercial purposes, its treating process, its package, the export of treated tobacco and cigarette paper and their release to the domestic market were taken under the state monopoly (Boratav, 2006:118). Later with the law introduced on 1932 the "ihisarlar idaresi" (the monopoly administration) which can be

¹⁰ The Republican rule that on the one hand aimed to eliminate the regie and on the other hand to fill the future administrative gap introduced the law no: 558 "Tütün İdare-i Muvakkatesi ve Sigara Kağıdı İhisarı Hakkında kanun" (The Temporary Administration of Tobacco and the Cigarette Paper Monopoly) dated 26 February 1925 and took the control of tobacco and the activities on tobacco under the state monopoly (ibid:133).

¹¹ The "Tütün İhisarı Kanunu" (Law on Tobacco Monopoly) no: 1701 dated 9 June 1930 accepted and this law regulated the agriculture of the tobacco, its trade, the relations between the producer and the merchant, the merchant and the state and the state and the producer, and the punishment of the actions that do not obey the rules and the prohibitions set by this law (ibid:140).

considered as the first step for the establishment of the Directorate General of Monopoly and the separate monopoly administrations established before were given under the administration of this institution.¹² While during the period of 1923-1932, that is the beginning of the state monopoly application, it was envisioned that different commodities and commodity groups should be governed by different monopoly administrations, the period after the year 1932 supported the unification of all the administrations as a whole. In other words, the monopolies of tobacco, salt and alcoholic beverages that were administrated separate from each other were came under the frame of one directorate general (Doğruel, 2000:130). On 1938, by moderating some decisions of the Law on Tobacco Monopoly dated 1930, the establishment of the cigarette factories by the private enterprise for exportation subjected to some provisions and the leaf tobacco trade decided to be enfranchised under the control of Tekel Administration, so, this law was evaluated as “a small signifier of the tendencies for flexibility of etatism on 1939” (Boratav, 2006:279). The Monopoly Administration on 1941 had the “Teşkilat Yasası”¹³ (Law on Organization) and later with the alteration in the law on organization on 20 May 1946 the institution started to be known as its name until 1984 “Tekel Directorate General” (Doğruel, 2000:166-167).

The enterprise known as “TEKEL” shortly in our names after the names it took with the introduction of different laws from the years of establishment of the Republic, as well as being the most important institution for transferring resources to the state during 1930’s and 1940’s, had also important contributions to the social life. In spite of the use of the tobacco income for paying the debts and for the other expenses in the Ottoman era; its use in the republican era was on the development of the railways (ibid: 181). During 1930’s Tekel which was one of the leading institutions in terms of creating resources, with the beginning of the etatist politics had a great importance

¹² İnhisarlardan günümüze Tekel Teftiş Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2008, 18

¹³ The “İNHİSARLAR UMUM MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ TEŞKİLAT VE VAZİFELERİ HAKKINDA KANUN” (Law on the organization and duties of the general directorate of monopoly) no: 4036 dated 21 May 1941 (Osmanlıdan günümüze tek el, Doğruel, 156).

since the governments entered in searching resources to use in the industry and the investments on infrastructure (ibid:1 81). On the other hand, the investments of Tekel mostly became the first economic activity except agriculture in the region it was established and revitalized the economy by creating new employment possibilities (ibid: 181-182).

4.2.3 Privatization, the “Ill Fate” of Tekel

The attempts of privatization of the Directorate General of Tobacco, Tobacco Products, Salt and Alcohol Enterprises, with its common name Tekel, became a subject to be discussed first time during 1950’s. In the beginning of the era supported the ideas on state’s leaving its monopoly status on cigarette and alcoholic beverages to the private sector and that the state monopoly obstruct the free trade and it should not enter into competition with the merchant (Doğruel, 2000:157). During 1970’s, similar attempts to change the status of Tekel intensified and even though some of them resulted with draft laws, these attempts did not achieve any conclusion (Doğruel, 2000:175). The neoliberal economic system adopted by Turkey towards the end of 1980’s led to an extensive change in the structure of Tekel and the conditions of international competition affected the Tekel negatively (ibid: 175). With the law enacted on 1984 Tekel gained the status of Public Economic Organization (Kamu İktisadi kuruluşu/K. İ. K) and with the decision introduces on 1987 the previous title “Directorate General of Tekel Enterprises” transformed into Directorate General of Tobacco and Alcohol Administration, shortly TEKEL.¹⁴

The neoliberal thought defended that the condition of the state was one of the basic factors of the crisis during 1970’s and that is why the public administrations should be privatized (Müftüoğlu, 2006:139). After the economic crisis between 1977-1979, Turkey by abandoning the import-substitution economic policies found the way of coping with the crisis by relying on the neoliberal economic policies that were

¹⁴ İhisarlardan günümüze Tekel Teftiş Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2008, 18-19

increasingly spreading in the conjuncture of the period. As a result, the 1980's in Turkey became the period in which the market condition in the economy became dominant and the import-substitution policies abandoned and Tekel which posed a stagnate position in its institutional structure became subjected to a structural change and passed to the status of K. İ. K (Doğruel, 2000:194-195). While the very change points to the structural use of flexibility, this condition was reflected on the product policies and Tekel had to compete with the exported cigarettes (ibid: 194-195).

When Turkey reached 2000, the Tekel with the decision of the Privatization Committee dated 2001, taken onto the content and program of privatization (Tekel Teftiş Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2008:19). After this process the tobacco production decreased and after the law enacted on 2002 that projected to the support to tobacco to be discontinued and the transition to contractual production to be started, the production decreased more (Akdemir, 2008:328). In the direction of the decision of Administration of Privatization dated 22. 12. 2004, the Alcoholic Beverages Industry and Trade Inc. discharged from Tekel by being privatized and on 2006 Leaf Tobacco enterprises and Trade Inc. incorporated to the Directorate General of TEKEL and its legal personality ended (Tekel Teftiş Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2008:19). In 22 February 2008 the rest of Tekel was sold to the British American Tobacco (BAT) by the decision of the High Commission of Privatization and as a result of this contract, the logo of "TEKEL" changed with the logo of the firm "ITA". Therefore, with the purchase of Tekel by BAT on 2008, all the enterprises transferred to the foreign firms. As an outcome of this privatization, for the 12.000 workers working in Tekel the decision became their employment with the 4-C status, therefore the unsecured employment, whose working time as a signifier of flexible employment is shown between at least 4 at most 10 months and which refers to temporary employment. The proposed 4-C status includes the employment of workers deprived of the job security, social and trade union rights and with low wages.

CHAPTER 5

THE SOCIAL CLASS IN RESISTANCE: THE CASE OF “TEKEL WORKERS”

5.1 The Initiation of Tekel Workers’ Resistance

“Geceler beyazdı, gündüzler serin,
Sözleri dövdüler dan dan da din din,
Örsünde sıcacık yüreklerinin
Ölüm bu sözlerden güçlü değildi.”¹⁵

As a result of the privatization policies Turkey exercised in the context of neo-liberal transformation after 1980, Tekel shared a common fate with other state enterprises that were privatized one after another since the ‘80s. Tekel was considered for privatization in accordance with the law no 4733 adopted in 2002; it entered a reformation period according to this law and was divided into three separate enterprises of alcohol, cigarette and tobacco ¹⁶ This way, it was expected that privatization would happen more easily, and later on, alcohol division was privatized in February 2004, cigarette division was privatized in November 2006 and finally tobacco division was privatized in February 2008, while about 12000 workers were disemployed by the time tobacco enterprise was sold out. The government ruled that those workers should be employed elsewhere in the public sector and under the status 4/C¹⁷, which is known as insecure, non-unionized and temporal work. Tekel workers

¹⁵ Nights were white, days were fresh / They hammered the words *dan dan da din din* / At the stake of their warmest hearts / Death was no close to the strength of their words. (Nazım Hikmet, 2006, 98)

¹⁶ http://www.tta.gov.tr/default.asp?islem=sir_yon_ozellestirme, 05. 02. 2011

¹⁷ 4/C stands for item C of the fourth article of the civil servant'

could not accept the deterioration of life-standards they have worked for their entire life as much as they refused these insecure employment conditions, so they, coming from twenty cities around Turkey and forty-three factories or workplaces that make up to forty-seven branches in total, travelled to Ankara in order to struggle for and “take back their acquired rights” on 15th December 2009. Let us turn to workers’ own statements of the reasons why they are in Ankara:

Amacımız şu bizim buradaki özelleştirme sürecinden sonra bizden alınan özlük haklarımızı, kazanılmış haklarımızı bizden alan mevcut hükümetten geri istiyoruz. Bize sunmuş olduğu 4c gibi mezarda emeklilik diyim belki emekliliği de yok bu işin de yani iş güvencesi olmayan bir 4c statüsüne soktu biz de bu 4c’yi araştırdık ki bizim açımızdan ziyade toplum açısından da acı bir olay bu yüzden 4c kapsamına da biz karşı çıktık... Bizim amacımız şurada özlük haklarımızla aynı haklarımızla başka bir kuruma geçmek. (Amasya çadırı, Erkek, 42)

We want to take back our acquired rights and benefits that the current government ripped of us after the privatization process. What they offer to us is retirement in grave, which is called 4C, so perhaps retirement is not even possible. So, it gives us 4C status with no job security, and we learned about 4C just to discover that it is a bitter experience more for society than it is for us, so we rejected its scope. . . What we want is to continue in another institution with our same acquired benefits. (Amasya tent, Male, 42)

Neither Tekel workers nor others could foresee that the workers were going to stay longer than they thought and their resistance would become massive in Ankara, where they came to demonstrate and voice their demands in the first place. The severe government intervention via police force during the first days of their protest in Ankara caused them to have more willpower to resist. In this process, they relied on their trade union, Türk-İş and forced it to decide and take action despite its unwilling position. Türk-İş held a referendum among workers on whether to continue or to stop the action and decided by workers that the resistance should be continued. Thus, the workers resumed their action and lasted for 78 days in the coldest days of winter, slept on the sidewalk at first and then moved to nylon tents they built to protect from the cold:

İşte ilk buraya geldiğimiz zaman sadece bir eylem olacağını, biz aslında çok uzun süre kalacağımızı düşünmedik, yani olayın bu kadar ciddi olacağını bilmiyorduk, yani ben kol çantamla geldim, yani yanımda hiçbir şey getirmedim. Oraya gideceğiz,

eylemimizi yapacağız, isteğimiz olacak ve döneceğiz, ama baktık ki olay böyle değil. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

So, when we first came here we thought it would be simply a protest and we wouldn't stay for long, I mean, we did not know this event would take such a serious turn, I mean I came here just with my handbag, bringing nothing else with me. We would go there, do our demonstration, obtain what we demand and return home, but we saw this was not the case. (İzmir tent, Female, 37)

A worker in Batman tent states that they faced police violence on the first day they were in Ankara, and tells the process of slowly making the street their home and shelter after the decision of resistance was taken:

Sıkıntıları az buçuk biliyorsunuz. Akp'nin önünde yaşananlar, Abdi İpekçi'de yaşadıklarımız, saatlerce yürütüldük, daha sonra geldik sokaklarda kaldık. Önce hiçbir şey yoktu. Variller soba oldu, muşambalar çadır oldu, duvar oldu bizlere. Biz evimizi kurduk ve halkın çok büyük müthiş desteği var. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

You know the troubles more or less. What we lived in front of AKP building, in Abdi İpekçi... We walked for hours and then we were left on the streets. At first, we had nothing here. We made stoves out of barrels, tents and walls out of rubber cloths. We made a home here and people's support in this is incredible. (Batman tent, Female, 42)

Tekel workers from İstanbul and Trabzon try to express the difficulties they faced in the first days of resistance in their bare truth. In regard to this, a worker in İstanbul tent tells how heating and sheltering problems were solved step by step, while a worker from Trabzon tells how he was subjected to violence of police intervention for the first time in his life:

İlk gerdiğimizde çok zordu, hayat daha zordu, ilk önce yerde ateş yaktık, 2-3 gün sonra tenekede, 2-3 gün sonra varillerde, ondan sonra sobaya geçtik evet sonra kafamızı örttük çadırlar kurduk, 1 hafta boyunca kaldırımlarda altımızda battaniye, üstümüzde battaniye öyle yaşadık 1 hafta. (İstanbul çadırı, Kadın, 37)

When we first came, it was very difficult, life was harder. First we made fire on the ground, then in a tin can after 2 or 3 days, then in barrels 2 or 3 days later, after that we had a stove, yes we covered our heads, made up the tents, lived for a week on the sidewalk, having blankets over and under ourselves. (İstanbul tent, Female, 37)

Neler yaşamadık ki, copun tadını burda hissettik, gazı burda yuttuk, eksi 20 derecede havuza girmeyi burda öğrendik, e daha neyi öğrenebiliriz yani. Taşın üstünde yattık, ayakkabıyı yastık yaptık kafamızın altına. (Trabzon çadırı, Erkek, 47)

What's left to experience? We tasted the truncheon here, we smelled tear gas here, we learned to get into the pool at minus 20 degrees, so what is left to learn? We slept on stone, made cushions out of shoes. (Trabzon tent, Male, 47)

As a result, in the midst of Ankara, Tekel workers demonstrated a resistance / strike for 78 days by setting up nylon tents around the union center they took shelter in; echoing in big way around Turkey and receiving great support.

5.2 The Significance of Working as a Tekel Worker: What Privatization Swept Away

Tekel enterprise had a significant role during the post-foundation period of the Republic for it provided funding for the state. However, Tekel also had a function of supporting the producer since it purchased tobacco directly from the producer and not from mediators with the exception of source transference, and its function was legalized in 1947 and 1961. In addition to this, Tekel's support for the producers is not limited to tobacco farmers; alcoholic beverage production requires that Tekel should be in transaction with grape vine and anise producers (Doğruel, 2000:197). In this context, Tekel has considerable bonds with agriculture sector, indicated by the fact that it processes several agricultural products in great amounts and turns them into end products. However, Tekel has been withdrawn from support purchases in tobacco by the 'Tobacco Bill' adopted by the Parliament in 2002 when privatization started, and therefore withdrew also from the "lives of Tekel farmers"(Aysu, 2010:189). Besides this, Tekel enterprises have had a significant role for both industrial level and agricultural production at places in the less developed regions of Turkey. In the resistance area, a Tekel worker from Bitlis Tent summarizes this situation together with the country's economic transformation:

Bu 23 yıl boyunca Bitlis'te çalıştım e tabi Bitlis'te bir tek fabrika vardı cumhuriyet tarihinde o da sigara fabrikası 1927 yılında kurulmuştu dolayısıyla sigara büyük bir sektördü. Bitlis'in 4 tane ilçesinde tütün ekiliyordu, bu köylerin büyük bölümü tütüncülükle geçimini sağlıyordu. İşte 1990 sürecinden sonra başlatılan bu serbest piyasa ekonomisiyle birlikte yabancı sigaraların ülkeye girişi serbest bırakıldıktan sonra ve daha sonra çıkarılan tütün yasasıyla birlikte ekicilere büyük bir darbe

vuruldu dolayısıyla bu Türkiye'deki sigara sanayine de büyük zarar verdi... Dolayısıyla Bitlis'teki sigara fabrikası büyük bir istihdamdı Bitlis için ve Bitlis'te tek geçim kaynağı olan hem çalışanlar işçi açısından hem de köylü açısından geçim kaynağı. (Bitlis Çadırı, Erkek, 45)

I worked for 23 years in Bitlis. Of course, there was only one factory in Bitlis in the history of Republic. It was the cigarette factory which had been built in 1927. Cigarette had been a big sector. There were tobacco plantations in four districts of Bitlis and tobacco was the main income in most of these villages. With the free market economy after 1990 period, cigarette imports started and when the tobacco bill passed, it worsened the conditions of farmers, so those developments were greatly harmful to cigarette industry in Turkey. . . The cigarette factory in Bitlis was a great source of employment for the people of Bitlis and it had been the sole income source for both employees and villagers. (Bitlis tent, Male, 45)

Before the privatization, Tekel had been essential as a source of both production and employment, since it was an enterprise with units almost everywhere that no other industrial enterprise in Turkey could have. This is not ignored by a Tekel worker from Istanbul tent, either:

Türkiye'nin her yerinde 81 ilinde de tekelin birimi vardır, dünyanın hiçbir yerinde bütün illerinde kurumu olan bir şey bulamazsınız. Sadece illerde değil, ilçelerde, köylerde nahiyelerde dahi tekelin birimi vardır. Zaman içerisinde gerek ekonomik gerekse siyasi sebeplerle bunu bir şekilde küçülttüler, daralttılar alanları. (İstanbul Çadırı, Erkek, 43)

In every part of Turkey, there is a unit of TEKEL. You cannot find any institution like this in the entire world; it has a unit in every province. Not only in provinces. TEKEL has units in districts, in towns, in villages. In time, they minimalized this due to economic and political reasons. (Istanbul tent, Male, 43)

Based on the interviews, we understand that most Tekel workers in Tekel units were hired through oral or written tests for the job. Another finding in the interviews is that many workers have also an emotional bonding with Tekel, since it was their first place of employment. Workers have harder and heftier working conditions in tobacco factories as several units are reduced, passivized and closed down in privatization process, and even then, they complete every task they are asked to do without any rejection. Tekel worker presents more explanatory data of the changing form of tasks corresponding to the reductions in the enterprise:

Her işi yaptık esas işe elektrikçi olarak girdik, tek el kibrit fabrikasında başladık, 11 yıl tek el kibrit fabrikasında çalıştım. Kibrit üretimini bitirdi, tek el yaprak tütünlerine geçtik, yine elektrik işlerine devam ettik ama pasif bir durumda devam ettik. Elimizde çalışan bir kazan dairesi kalmıştı, belli bir süre sonra yaprak tütün depolarının küçülmesi gündeme geldi, işte biz o arada Bursa'ya gönderildik. Bursa'da yaprak tütünde çalıştık bir 8-9 ay kadar, oradan dağıtım pazarlama müdürlüğüne geçtik, dağıtım pazarlama müdürlüğüne geçtiğimiz günden itibaren de verilen her işi yaptık, iş ayırmadık, yeri geldi kanalizasyon işlerinde çalıştık, yeri geldi inşaat işleri yaptık, yeri geldi sigara pazarlama bölümü depolarında sigara yükledik, sigara boşalttık, meydan temizliği yaptık, tuvalet temizliği yaptık, koridorların odaların temizliğini yaptık, boya badana yaptık yani her türlü işi yaptık, verilen hiçbir işe itiraz etmedik, yani elimizden gelen her türlü işi yaptık. (Bursa Çadırı, Erkek, 45)

We did every job. We were employed as electrician. We started in TEKEL match factory. I worked there for 11 years. They ended match production and we transferred to TEKEL tobacco leaves. We continued to work as electrician yet we did informally. Only the furnace room was working. After a while, minimization of tobacco depots came into agenda. At this moment, we were transferred to Bursa. In Bursa, we worked in tobacco for 8-9 months. Then, we transferred to distribution and marketing directory. Since we transferred to distribution and marketing directory, we have done every task asked such as sewerage and construction. Sometimes we loaded and unloaded cigarettes to depots, we cleaned the building, the toilets, the rooms, and the aisles. We painted walls. We never rejected any task asked. Thus, we did our best. (Bursa tent, Male, 45)

The privatization of Tekel caused at the same time uncertainties in working place and time and brought about worker transfers from one vacated factory to another. This has caused uncertainties and irregularities in workers' lives, too. Work under these circumstances has meant the imposition of relatively harder living conditions particularly for women. Two women workers from Adıyaman and Batman tents give us a clearer understanding of the process they experienced:

Adıyaman'da işe girdim 93'te oradan 2001 de Malatya'ya, eşimin belli bir işi yoktu ben Malatya'ya gittim yani kendi şeyimle, ailece gittik orda bir kadro verildi orda 5-6 yıl kaldım. Oradan da Samsun'a geçtik orası özelleştirildi kapatıldı, oradan Samsun'a tayin istedim ben kötü kaderim mi diyim iyi kaderim mi orda da 3 yıl çalışmadım orada özelleşti tekrar Adıyaman'a döndüm 2 yıldır ordayım. Adıyaman'daki halimizi de, sonucu da burda görüyorsunuz. (Adıyaman çadırı, Kadın, 37)

I was employed in 1993 in Adıyaman, then in Malatya in 2001. My husband did not have a regular job by that time, so I went to Malatya and took my family with me. They gave me a permanent position there. I stayed there for about 5 to 6 years. Then, we went to Samsun, the [previous] place had been privatized and closed, and I asked for a transfer to Samsun. What should I say, is it my bad luck or good luck? I

worked there not for 3 years in total before it was privatized, then I returned to Adiyaman again. I have been working there for 2 years, and now you see how our situation in Adiyaman has ended. (Adiyaman tent, Female, 37)

89' da Batman'da işe girdim. 2001'de Tarsus'a zorunlu bir tayin oldu, ordan Mersin alkol içkilerde pazarlamaya geçtim, 2008'de de zorunlu bir tayin, fabrikaların özelleştirilmesinden dolayı, pazarlamalar da otomatikmen kapandığı için 2008'de Batman'a gittim. 16 ay evimden çocuklarımdan ayrı yaşamak zorunda kaldım. Ailem Mersin'de yaşıyordu. Zorunlu tayin oldu, çocuklarım da istemiyordu artık. Zor bir dönem yaşadılar zorunlu göç olunca, ben ayrı yaşamak zorunda kaldım. 01. 12. 2009'da Adana'ya gittim ve 2 hafta sonra da eylemdeyiz. Adana ekibindenim ama şu an Batman çadırında kalıyorum, ayrılamıyorum. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

I was employed in Batman in 1989. In 2001 there occurred a compulsory transfer to Tarsus. Then, I moved to Mersin for marketing alcoholic drinks. I went to Batman in 2008 by another compulsory transfer in 2008 and marketing department closedown due to the privatization of factories. I had to live away from my family and my children for 16 months. My family was in Mersin. This was a compulsory transfer. My children did not want this anymore. They had a hard time due to forced migration. I had to live alone. I went to Adana in 01/12/2009 and two weeks later, we are here, protesting. I am in the Adana team but I am staying in Batman tent, I cannot leave here. (Batman tent, Female, 42)

5.3 Approaches to the Union and the Strike

5.3.1 About The Union

Trade unions have been seen by workers as tools for re-acquiring job security, recognition and self-expression lost after the industrial revolution and capitalist development(Rose, 1952:7). For this reason, workers usually perceive unions as organizations that pay off on economic welfare and security, and thus they think that their membership to unions is justified. In other words, unions become economically functional. We realize a similar approach towards unions in Tekel workers' general view of the unions, too:

Benim için önemi var tabii. Benim bütün haklarımı aramasıdır önemi. . . Sendika güvencedir. (Adiyaman Çadırı, Kadın, 37)

To me, it's important of course. It claims my every right; that is its importance... The union is an assurance. (Adiyaman tent, Female, 37)

Sendika kısaca özetlemek gerekirse işçinin hakkını koruyan bir örgüttür bir nevi avukattır... Sendikanın önemi işçilerin çalışma esnasında hak ve özgürlüklerini savunmak amacıyla kurulan bir kuruluştur. (Aydın Çadırı, Erkek, 45)

The union, in short, is an organisation that protects the worker's rights, a kind of lawyer. The importance of union is [that it is] an organisation established to defend the rights and freedoms of the workers during working. (Aydın Tent, Male, 45)

Sendika benim bildiğim, bu işçinin hakkını savunur işçinin geleceğini düşünen, yani işçiyle bir olan, devletiyle değil de, devletiyle sadece anlaşma yoluyla olur. İşçiyle bir olan işçinin yanında olandır... Sendikanın önemi yani işçinin haklarını koruması, sendika önemlidir yani. (Denizli çadırı, Erkek, 42)

The union I know defends the rights of the worker. The union that is concerned about the future of the worker, I mean, union becomes one with the worker, not one with the government; it only makes deals with the government. The union is with the worker, at the worker's side. The significance of the union is to defend the rights of the worker, that is, union is vital. (Denizli tent, Male, 42)

Another essential point about trade unions is that they take shape as working class organizations that are self-formed by the workers in order to resolve issues of daily wages and working hours, as Marx indicated, too (Marx, 2008:152-3.) In other words, unions are organizations that realize the demands of collective interests of working class.

Sendika, işçiye işçi olduğunu, yani işçi olduğunu sağlıyor, örgütlü olmayı sağlıyor, örgütsüz olmak hiçbir şeydir. Bir kere yarısını başarmak demektir, bir mücadelenin yarısı başarmak demektir örgütlü olmak. (İstanbul Çadırı, Kadın, 40)

The union [reminds] the worker that she is a worker, I mean, it ensures that the worker is organized. Being unorganized is nothing. Being organized means half of the struggle is achieved. (İstanbul tent, Female, 40)

Most of the trade unions in Turkey are part of the State Economic Enterprises' (KİT) organization, therefore workers in the public sector sign, without even knowing they did, also membership forms to unions together with signing their statement of employment; while monthly membership fees are cut from their salaries, they do not even become conscious of whether they are a member of the union or not (Müftüoğlu, 2007:96). This method causes workers to define the union as some institution they know via the cut shown on the salary roll and as service provider in return of the fees they pay; in other words, this leads to "wage unionism". Tekel

enterprises had been part of Tekgıda-İş under Türk-İş since 1968, however, as a result of the jurisdiction plea by Hak-İş, it has been re-decided that the authorized union in Tobacco and Leaf Enterprise is dependent on Orman-İş under Hak-İş instead; then, although Tekgıda-İş filed an appeal and stopped the execution of the decision, Tekgıda-İş has not been able to take monthly membership fees from the workers since one year now. (Paloğlu, 2010) Tekel workers' statements testify all the story above and also demonstrate their view of unionism, following the account of a worker from Manisa tent; they state in the interviews that they have been members to the union since the first day of their employment, but they have not paid any fees since one year, and their unions have been standing by them all this time even though it did not receive any fees:

Biz bazı şeylere ulaşmak için çaba sarf etmedik, yani sendikalı olalım, sendika nedir biz bunları bilmeden direk hazırlanmış bir sistem vardı biz de sisteme uyduk bu yüzden belki de şimdiye kadar sendikanın ne demek olduğunu idrak edemedim çünkü sendikalı olabilmek için bir mücadele vermedik her şey bize hazır sunuldu. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

We didn't make any efforts to reach something like to join the union or to learn about the union. There was a prepared system, without knowing these, we have only adapted the system, therefore, until now we didn't understand what the union is because we didn't struggle to join the union. Everything was ready for us. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

Şu anda işçi arkadaşlarımız 1 yıldır sendikaya aidatlarını ödemiyor ama Tekgıda-iş sendikası kapı gibi işçilerinin arkasında durdu. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 43)

Currently, our fellow workers have not paid their membership fees since one year, but Tekgıda-İş Union has supported its workers in a big way. (Manisa tent, Male, 43)

The function of the union should not in a direction that is based on economic interests, merely thinking of wages and working hours. From this perspective, Marx had argued that unions should inquire upon political questions as well as economic problems in the capitalist system (Hyman, 2001:18). Likewise, Lenin had stated that economic struggle on its own would not provide enough improvement for the working class situation, economic and political struggles could not be separated, and, workers' struggle against capitalists would bring about another struggle with governments(Larson-Nissen, 1987:59). In other words, it is pointed out that workers'

problems should not be limited to the workplace, the factory, yet workers' everyday lives have to become part of the unions' agenda(Akkaya, 2007:87). So, unions are interested also in other policy areas about labor process (privatization, flexibility implementations, etc.) for another. In this context, it is found out in the interviews that Tekel workers believe that trade unions should have a say in areas other than the economic problems. A worker interviewed in Bursa tent stresses that trade unions have to create policies, be alive and part of the realities of life; while he suggests unions should not be practicing wage unionism or pursue wage policies:

Sendikalar her toplumsal olaya tepki koymalı, politika üretmeli sendikalar. . Şimdi bir işçi hareketi çıkıyor, sendika bir hareketliğe giriyor. Sendika bundan önce her türlü toplumsal harekette faaliyet göstermeli, yani hareketin durumuna göre politikalar üretmeli. Hayatın içinde olmalı, sendikalar siyaset yapmalılar. Ne kadar da işte hep bizi ufak tefek hikayelerle kandırdılar, işte sendika siyaset yapmaz, sendika ücret sendikacılığı yapmalıdır, yani bunların koskocaman bir yalan olduğu ortaya çıktı. Gördüğünüz gibi 1 günde 12. 500 tekel işçisi işsiz kaldı. Ama bir de dediğim gibi, bunun üretici kesimi var 400. 000 aileden bahsediyoruz burda. Ha şimdi bu sene tütün alacaklar, ama iddia ediyorum önümüzdeki sene Türkiye'deki tütün üreticileri tütününü satamazlar. (Bursa çadırı, Erkek, 45)

Unions should have a standpoint about any social event and create policies about them... Now there is a workers' movement, the union has a new dynamism. Primarily, the union should be active in any kind of social movement, I mean, it should create policies according to the movement's situation. It should be alive; unions have to do politics. They all deceived us with trivial stories of 'union cannot be political, union should focus on wage unionism', so it's understood that these are nothing but one big lie. As you see, 12500 Tekel workers were fired in one day. But, there is a producer segment here, as I said. We are speaking of 400000 families. Now, they are going to purchase tobacco this year, but I claim that tobacco producers in Turkey will not be able to sell their produces. (Bursa tent, Male, 45)

A worker from İstanbul tent, stated that the unions has to defend the country's and the peoples' interests and s/he argued that there are few organized powers for workers today because the unions failed to be at the center of the politics:

Her konuda yani ülkemizi ilgilendiren ve ülkenin çıkarlarını, ülke insanının çıkarlarını, menfaatlerini, ilgilendiren her konunun içinde sendikanın olması gerektiğine inanıyorum. Sendikacı ve sendikalar siyasetin tam merkezinde olması lazım, hem sendika görevini yapıp, hemde parlamenter siyasetçi olarakta görevini yapması gerektiğine inanıyorum. Çünkü eğer bu şekilde olsa bugün emekçiler 70 milyonluk bir toplumda 1 milyonluk örgütlü bir güç olmaz. Bugün en azından eğer ki bu sistem doğru olsaydı, bizim savunduğumuz tez gibi olsaydı, bugün en azından

bu ülkede 25-30 milyon insanın örgütlü olması gerekirdi. Toplum da bu halde birileri tarafından yönetilmezdi. (İstanbul çadırı, Erkek, 37)

I believe that unions have to be involved in any issue, that is, every issue that concerns the interests of this country, interests and benefits of the citizens of this country. Union and the unionists have to be at the center of politics, I believe it has to function both as union and politician in the parliament. Because, if this happened, workers today would not be just 1 million organized people in a country of 70 million people. If the system today were right, if it were the way we argued, the way out thesis is, today there should have been at least 25-30 million people in this country who were organized. Society, then, would not be governed by such people as the ones today. (İstanbul tent, Male, 37)

5.3.2 About the Strike

For workers, a strike in the simplest terms is not only a tool for claiming economic rights, that is, improving living standards or protecting their acquired rights against employers' powerful erosions; it is at the same time a means of education that shows workers that even the smallest right is acquired by struggles against the present status quo (Rocker, 2000:95). In other words, strike enables workers to perceive the extents of their power as well as that of the employers; in addition to this, it provides them a perspective in which they perceive the employers within the entire capitalist class, while they perceive the workers within the entire working class, instead of seeing these groups merely as employers and workers (Lenin, 1899).

Grev benim en doğal hakkımdır, yasal hakkımdır, mücadelemdir, ekmeğimdir. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 44)

Strike is my most natural right; my legal right; my struggle; and my bread. (Tokat tent, Female, 44)

Grev işçi için kendi çalışmama hakkını kullanmaktır, bu onun yasal hakkıdır. Grevin önemi Türkiye'deki işçi sınıfının, çalışan kesimin, emekçi hareketin varoluşunun bir mücadelesidir, var olması demektir. (Muş çadırı, Erkek, 43)

Strike means to use one's own right not to work, this is his legal right. The importance of the strike is that it is the struggle of existence for working class, for working masses and for the labor movement; it means they exist. (Muş tent, Male, 43)

Grev işçilerin kazanımını biraz daha arttırır. Ne istediği bilen bir işçinin silahıdır. Hangi yönde olursa olsun gerek ücret yönünde olsun gerekse sosyal hakların geliştirilmesi yönünde olsun. (Bursa çadırı, Erkek, 45)

Strike advances workers' gains a little more. It is a weapon for a worker who knows what he wants. No matter what the gain is, say, it is about wages or the improvement of social rights. (Bursa tent, Male, 45)

Marx had suggested that strike has the quality of a political movement besides being an economic movement, and indicated that the struggle for an eight-hour work day was an example to that:

On the other hand, however, every movement in which the working class comes out as a class against the ruling classes and attempts to force them by pressure from without is a political movement. For instance, the attempt in a particular factory or even a particular industry to force a shorter working day out of the capitalists by strikes, etc. , is a purely economic movement. On the other hand the movement to force an eight-hour day, etc. , law is a political movement. And in this way, out of the separate economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a *political* movement, that is to say a movement of the *class*, with the object of achieving its interests in a general form, in a form possessing a general social force of compulsion. If these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organisation, they are themselves equally a means of the development of this organisation. (Marx, 1871)

The major point emphasized here is that the it becomes more than a private demand of the worker groups in the narrow sense; as the struggle for an eight-hour work day grows and expands, it becomes the demand of an entire class and take on a political character, thus, such demands can expand if they refer to the fundamental social conditions of the class(Cleaver, 2008:51). We have seen an example of this in the Tekel resistance, too: the abolition of the article called 4/C and defined the temporary employment form became more than a demand of Tekel workers only, it became the demand of all others employed or to-be-employed according to 4/C:

Grev artık Tekel'in olayı değil, toplumsal bir olay oldu. 4/C'ye atıldık eğer bunu yok edemezsek, bu yasa çocuklarımızın önüne çıkacak. Şu an bu toplumsal bir olay oldu. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 43)

The strike is now a social event; it is not Tekel's only. We've been left with 4/C, if we cannot defeat this, this same law will affect our children, too. Now, this has become a social thing. (İzmir tent, Female, 43)

Strike struggles are the most instructive tools for introducing workers with the actual essence of the social problem and coaching them out of economic and social slavery. (Rocker, 2000, 95) In this light, Engels had suggested it is necessary to go on strike in order not to submit to social conditions and explicated this in the following way:

It will be asked Why then do the workers strike in such cases, when the uselessness of such measures is so evident? Simply because they must protest against every reduction, even if dictated by necessity; because they feel bound to proclaim that they, as human beings, shall not be made to bow to social circumstances, but social conditions, an admission of the right of the bourgeoisie to exploit the workers in good times and let them starve in bad ones. Against this the working men must rebel so long as they have not lost all human feeling... (Engels, 1987:228)

Tekel workers' experience of strikes is not limited to 78-day-long protests in Ankara. Prior to and in the Republican era, it was the case that there were significant strikes in the history of resistance. Starting with 1904, these protests that constitute significant worker movements in Turkey continued with the ones in 1906, 1908, 1911, 1915 and 1919; however, Kavala strike in 1904 was the most unforgettable one among others (Doğruel, 2000:81-82). There were several instances of ceasing work after the Republic's foundation, too, starting with Tekel Cibali Tobacco Factory in İstanbul on 21st December 1979, spreading to Cevizli Cigarette Factory, Tekel warehouses and Paşabahçe Rakı Factory between 24th and 27th December, and recurring in January and February 1980. The reason for the growth of these protests that had started on 21st December was the fact that collective labor agreement was not signed for twenty-two months.¹⁸ Since the privatization, Tekel's course of protests has been restarted from where it had left.

Özelleştirmenin ilk gündeme geldiği 90'lı yıllarda başladı özelleştirme, o zamandan beri istiyorlardı hep biz karşı çıkıyorduk. Ta ki bugünlere kadar. Yapmadığımız eylem kalmadı görmediğimiz zulüm kalmadı. . Akp¹⁹ binalarını mı basmadık, gemi mi kaçırmadık, boğaz köprüsüne pankart mı asmadık... (İstanbul çadırı, Erkek, 43)

¹⁸ Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi, vol 3, 177

¹⁹ The ruling party, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi(AKP)

It started with the '90s, when privatization was on the agenda for the first time. They have wanted this since then, and we always used to refuse it, persisting till today. We did all the protests we could; we saw all the violence we could. We thronged the AKP headquarter, we hijacked a ship, we hung a banner on the Bosphorus Bridge... (Istanbul tent, Male, 43)

Eylemlere zaten biz 1998 yılında göreve başladık, işe başladığımız günden itibaren hep kendimizi eylemlerin içerisinde bulduk. Biz işe girdik özelleştirme furyası başladı. O nedenle eylemlerde biz deneyimliyiz. Ankara'da bu 3. yada 4. eylemimizdir. (Muş çadırı, Erkek, 43)

We started to protest in... we started to work here in 1998, and since the day we're in, we have found ourselves in protests. Just after we were hired, privatization rush started. That's why we are experienced in protesting. This is our third or fourth protest in Ankara. (Muş tent, Male, 43)

5.4 What Do We Learn From Tekel Resistance Movement

“Buna grev de denemez, bu daha farklı bir şey. Şimdi grev, bir işyerin olur da sosyal hakların ya da ücret haklarını geliştirmek için yaparsın. Bu tamamen iş kaybı, grevden ziyade bir direniş, yani bunu direniş olarak adlandırsak daha doğru olur” (Bursa tent, Male, 45)²⁰

5.4.1 The Organization of A Resistance Movement

“Kediyi sıkıştırdığın zaman kedi kaçır, ama köşeye sıkıştı mı çaresiz kaldığı zaman tırnaklar adamı buda bunun gibi bişey yani” (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 46).²¹

²⁰ “You don't name this a strike now, this is much more different. You go on a strike if you have a place to work and you demand social rights or wage improvement. This, however, is about losing your job, it is rather a resistance than strike, so we had better call this a resistance.” (Bursa çadırı, Erkek, 45)

²¹ “When you try to drive the cat into the wall, it runs away, but when it is driven into the corner and feels helpless, the cat claws you. This [resistance] is similar to that.” (Manisa tent, Male, 46).

On the 15th of December, Tekel workers came by busses from cities of tobacco enterprises from around the country to Ankara in order to refuse temporary employment anticipated by 4/C for their future as a result of workplace privatizations and to defend their acquired rights. It is a big enigma how they collectively organized in the cities they come from and arrived in Ankara. Therefore, different opinions are proposed on this subject. A number of interpreters of this protest predicate the initiation of action on workers' motivation to act based on their fear from being unemployed. Boratav, thinking in this direction, states that Tekel workers realized at some point that things were crossing the line, and their action was an immediate response to the events at the tipping point.²²In a sense, this view implies the case of which Lenin had attributed as "revenge" outbursts (Lenin, 2004:37). Accordingly, a Tekel worker from Manisa tent expresses that the reason he has come to Ankara is because he had nothing left to lose and things came to a boil:

Şimdi bizim buraya gelişimizdeki ilk neden birincisi kaybedecek hiç birşeyimiz kalmamıştı işsizlik veyahut bir ay sonra işsiz kalacağımız, dolayısıyla işsiz insan nasıl bir düşünce ve duygularla geldiyse ne ister işine kavuşmak için ister. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 46)

The first reason why we came here is that there is nothing left to lose. We were unemployed or would be laid off in a month. So, [we came here] just as similar to how an unemployed person thinks and feels, or what he/she wants. He/she only wants to return back to work. (Manisa tent, Male, 46)

Another Tekel worker from Tokat tent expresses that she came here to obtain human dignity in living conditions:

Başbakan nasıl insansa bende insanım onun yaşamak için başka şeylere ihtiyacı varsa benimde var. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

I am human as much as honorable Prime Minister is. He needs other things to maintain his life, and I need them, too. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

Özügurlu argues that the resistance was the movement of the trade union organization; decisions were made by the grassroots within the movement; union

²² Boratav, Express, 2010/ocak, 12

endured an organizational hierarchy; and, all activists were both activist and spokesperson of the resistance (Özüğurlu, 2010:48). The Tekel workers, meanwhile, thought differently with regard to the evaluation of movement's formation process: They stated that they either acted independently from the union to set out for Ankara by their own means, or, they acted together with the union, or, they forced the union to come. The worker from Denizli tent highlights that they travelled to Ankara by their own will and means, and the union just accompanied them:

Sadece arkadaşların bir olup kenetlenmesiyle olan bir olay... Kendi aramızda birleştik biz, kendi gücümüzle. Biz sendikaya güvenseydik, yani sendikanın sadece olayı şu yani bize burdaki başımızda bulunması oldu. Ha Mustafa Türkel²³ sağolsun baya bir şeyini gördük, ama bizim başımız olarak biz ondan fazla bir şey görmedik. (Denizli çadırı, Erkek, 42)

It happened only with friends coming together and supporting each other... We gathered, with our own ability. If we had trusted in the union, I mean, we had the union only beside us, attending us. Well, Mustafa Türkel was a great help, I must say, but we didn't receive any other help except that he attended us. (Denizli tent, Male, 42)

Tekel workers in Tokat and Aydın tents, on the other hand, emphasize that they decided and acted together with the union. The worker from Tokat tent stresses that although the union did not have a material gain from them in terms of monthly fees, it supported the workers. The worker in Aydın tent suggests that workers would not be addressed and taken seriously at all without the union's support; therefore, it would not signify anything without unions:

Hep birlikte konuştuk, sendikamız bizden uzakta değildi bizim içimizdeydi çünkü onlarda mağdur durumdaydı bizimle birlikte, onların yetki belgeleri yoktu, onların bizden bir kazançları yoktu ki. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

We always talked about it together [with the union], the union was not remote from us; it was part of our lives, because they suffered as we did from this condition, too. They lost their authorization certificate. They did not make profits on us! (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

²³ The President of Tekgıda-İş Union.

Sendikanın iradesinde, sendikanın bazında biz hareket ettik çünkü bizim bildiğimiz tek bir şey vardı, sendikasız hiç bir şey olmuyor maalesef. Bir işçi kendisi sendikayı yanına almadan, en küçük bir işte temsilciyi yanına almadan gittiği zaman bir işyeri amirinin yanına, muhatab bile almıyorlardı. Sen git sendikacın gelsin diyorlardı, sendikanın önemi orda başlıyor zaten. Bir köprü oluyor. (Aydın çadırı, Erkek, 45)

We acted upon the union's will and based on the union, because we knew just one thing, there is nothing you can achieve without the union, unfortunately. Employers would ignore a worker going up to them without the union representative, even for small requests. They'd say, leave now and let your representative come. Union's value appears at this point. It becomes a bridge. (Aydın tent, Male, 45)

Workers in Samsun and Adıyaman tents state that they forced the union and came here with the union backing them, however, a worker from Samsun tent suggests this is a half-union, half-worker initiative:

Ne kadar sendikanın da olsa yarısı bize aittir. Çünkü sendikanın burda kaybedeceği sadece işçi var, ama ben ekmeğimi kaybedecem. %20 sendikaysa %80 ben kendim için geldim. Sendikada bir şeylerin farkına varmış, aramızda toplantılarla beraber omuz omuza geldik yani. (Samsun çadırı erkek, 40)

However much it belongs to the union, half of [the movement] is also ours. Because, union has only workers to lose here, but I'm going to lose my job. 20 % of the reason I came here is for the union, 80 % is for me. Union also realized certain things, so we met and came here standing shoulder to shoulder. (Samsun tent, Male, 40)

Biz sendikayı zorladık geldik. İlle de gideceğiz hakkımızı alıp öyle geleceğiz dedik. Bizim sendikamızsanız bizim arkamızda olacaksınız geleceksiniz dedik, tamam siz varsanız geliyoruz dediler. (Adıyaman çadırı, Kadın, 39)

We forced the union to come here. In any case, we will go claim our rights and come back after taking what we want. If you are our union, you will be with us, you will come with us, we said, and they said, Ok then, if you are in, we are in. (Adıyaman tent, Female, 39)

Lenin touched upon the case of workers' spontaneous movement, and, he wrote that there is nothing but a process of seed-like consciousness in the essence of spontaneity; he claimed that this kind of worker movements begin as a result of workers "absolutely refusing to submit like a slave to the authority and feeling the need for a common resistance", and these movements are an indicator of emerging enmities between employers and workers (Lenin, 2004:37). That is to say, workers' experiences of spontaneity are restricted to their economic struggles and the relations

between employers and workers (Hobsbawm, 1967:392). Hobsbawm, in order to put it more clearly, made this statement regarding the spontaneity of working class:

The 'spontaneous' experience of the working class leads it to develop two things: on the one hand a set of immediate demands (e. g., for higher wages) and of institutions, modes of behavior, etc., designed to achieve them; on the other-but in a much vaguer form and not invariably- a general discontent with the existing system, a general aspiration after a more satisfactory one, and a general outline of alternative social arrangements. (Hobsbawm, 1967, 392-393)

In this context, the Tekel workers' experience of spontaneous movement was born out of the need for a common resistance with respect to economic problems. Later on, it opened the way for them to hold out on employers and understand the clash of interests between employers and themselves. In the interviews carried on with Tekel workers coming from various regions of Turkey, we observe that workers acted toward the same objective. Workers in Adıyaman, İstanbul and Muş tents indicate that they came here to struggle for taking their acquired rights as well as their jobs back:

Ankara'ya işimi geri almak için geldim. (Adıyaman, Kadın, 37)

I came to Ankara to take my job back. (Adıyaman, Female, 37)

Özlük haklarımı muhafaza etmek için geldim. İşe girdiğim zaman ben o hakkımı otomatikmen elde ettim. Adam çıktı, ben senin o hakkını gaspediyorum dedi. Bugünden yarına, öbür güne öbür güne hakkımı geri alana kadar burada bu direnişi sürdüreceğim. (İstanbul Kadın, 40)

I came to protect my acquired rights. When I started to work, I acquired this right directly. Then, a man lashed out and said: I usurp your right. From today until tomorrow, until the day after tomorrow and until the next, I'll continue my resistance until I take back my rights. (İstanbul, Female, 40)

Özlük haklarımızın geri alınması ve hükümetin bu vurdumduymaz politikalarına bir son verilmesi için geldik. (Muş çadırı, Erkek, 43)

We came here in order to stop insensitive politics of government and to take our personal rights back. (Muş tent, Male, 43)

The worker in Samsun tent points out that they came because they wanted to protect their rights without exploiting others', relating to the accusing discourse at that time

by the government that “workers were usurping orphans’ rights”; the worker from İzmir tent told that they came for their bread; while another in Tokat tent stated that they are here because they have been thrown away after years’ of labor:

İlk ne düşünerek geldik, haklarımı kaybetmemekti kafamdaki düşünce. O düşüncenin arkasında mücadeleci olmam gerektiğini düşündüm ve mücadelem de haklı bir mücadele. Kimsenin hakkına müdahale etmemek, sadece var olan hakkımın korunması düşüncesiyle geldim ve vicdanen huzurluyum. (Samsun çadırı, Kadın, 39)

What did we think at first? The thought in my head was, I should not lose my rights. I thought that I must be combative and my struggle is a legitimate action. I came not to interfere with anyone’s rights, but to protect mine. I don’t have a guilty conscience. (Samsun tent, Female, 39)

Ankara’ya geliş nedenimiz haklarımızı geri almak, ekme derdimiz yani başka bir amacımız yok. Zaten bizim bu hakkımız vardı, bu hakkımız elimizden alınmasını istemiyoruz açıkçası. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 40)

The reason why we came to Ankara is to take back our rights. Our concern is for our bread, we don’t have any other aim. We already had these rights and we don’t want them to be taken away from us. (İzmir tent, Female, 40)

Tokat’tan buraya geldiğimizde bildiğiniz gibi bir anda ayın 30’unda haklarımızın feshedileceği yazısını alınca şok olduk. Olmaz böyle bir şey dedik, biz 23 yıldır çalışıyoruz kadrolu işçiyiz. Nasıl bizi sokağa atar? (Tokat çadırı, Erkek, 45)

When we came from Tokat to Ankara, you know, we were suddenly shocked to hear that they will terminate our rights. We said: this is impossible. We have been working for 23 years and are permanent workers. How can they throw us in the street? (Tokat tent, Male, 45)

The resistance became obvious once they set up tents after they came to Ankara and decided to continue the protest. Tents were organized like a town, and they had the characteristic of a place that functioned as a workers’ council where problems are discussed and common decisions are made. Although Türk-İş did not support the protest much at the beginning, the Tekel workers set their tents around the union. Following a conventional union bureaucracy, Türk-İş seemed to own the protest actions only when it realized the actions carry a greater potential than its presence does. During the interviews, a Tekel worker from Bitlis tent told that Türk-İş was indifferent and not willing to solve the problem, maintaining that his own union Tekgıda-İş was an exception; whereas, a worker from Batman tent told that workers themselves came to take shelter in Türk-İş after the police intervention in Ankara:

Ben burda Tekgıda-İş sendikasını ayrı yere koyuyorum çünkü biz yani zorunlu olarak işin içindeydik üyelerine sahip çıkmak zorundaydı fakat Türk-İş ve bağlı federasyonların birçoğu 33 federasyon vardır, halende duyarsızlar içinde görünüyor gibiler ama duyarsızlar dolayısıyla Türk-İş şu an ateşi kendi elinde tutuyor, işçi getirdi ateşi eline bıraktı, bu ateşi Türk-İş de elinden atmak istiyor yani kucağındaki ateşi başka yere atmak istiyor yani bunu çözmek yerine. (Bitlis çadırı, Erkek, 45)

To me, Tekgıda-İş Union is apart from the others because we were involved in it and it was obliged to protect its members. But Türk-İş and many of the related federations, there are 33, were insensitive [to our situation]. They still are, it seems. So, Türk-İş is now sticking his neck out but the workers compelled them to do so. This is a fire, and Türk-İş wants to escape this fire that is on his lap, and wants to hand it over to someone else, instead of putting it out. (Bitlis tent, Male, 45)

Maalesef yani işçi kendi geldi Türk-İş sığınmak zorunda kaldı, abdi ipekçide yaşadıklarımızı az çok biliyorsunuz, darmadağın tarumar edilirken biz buraya sığındık. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

Unfortunately, the workers had to take refuge in the union themselves. You know more or less what we went through in Abdi İpekçi; we were dispelled and we had to look for a snug here. (Batman tent, Female, 42)

In the interviews, workers in Amasya and İzmir tent suggested that Türk-İş had to participate in the act because it did not foresee the potential degree of this protest. In Amasya tent, a worker underlined that Türk-İş later on tried to arrogate the protest to itself. In other words, both of these workers pointed to the fact that the conventional outlook and attitude of unionism were at work in the acts of Türk-İş:

Türk-İş ilk etapta olayın buraya geleceğini tahmin etmiyordu. Olayı buraya kadar biz işçiler kendimiz getirdik sendika bazında değil aslında biz kendi direnişimizle buraya kadar geldiğimiz için sendika arkamızda durmak zorunda kaldı. Bunu da şimdi kendine mal etmeye çalışıyor. Biz bu hakkı aldığımız zaman sendika işte bak mücadelemizi biz başardık diye kendilerine mal edecekler. (Amasya çadırı, Erkek, 42)

In the beginning, Türk-İş didn't predict the events will reach to this point. We workers, brought things to this point ourselves, not the union. Actually, the union had to support us because the events grew so much thanks to our struggle. And now the union tries to show that it created the event. When we have our rights back, the union will want to appropriate the success for themselves (Amasya tent, Male, 42)
Sendikalar bu eyleme katkı yapmak zorunda kaldılar. Çünkü ilk defa tabandan bir ses alınıyor. Şimdi yeterli veya yeterli değil ben onun tartışmak istemiyorum geldiğimiz nokta çok önemli. Şimdi insanlar bazı şeyleri yapmadılarsa bile yapmak zorundalar. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 38)

Unions had to contribute because there is the voice of the grassroots, of the bases, be it enough or not. I don't want to argue about that. The point where we have reached is important. Now, even if people did not act on certain things before, they have to do from now on. (İzmir tent, Female, 38)

Türk-İş, which is highly organized in the public sector, chose to protect employees' rights by adopting an easygoing attitude in relations with the state and compromises since it was established (Kalaycıoğlu, Rittersberger and Çelik, 2008:82). Hence, this leads Türk-İş to act with the concern of managing the interests, reactions and activity of working class by not conflicting with the state. Therefore, Türk-İş is in a crucial position for the state as well as for the capital in managing the working class.

Sendikanın bu dönemi atlatmak gibi bir derdi var, bu dönemi atlatıp tekrar kendi hayatlarına geri dönme derdindeler. Bu kişileri etkilemez, sendikanın yeniden yapılandırması lazım. Geçmişte sendikanın güvensizliklerini gördüğümüz için, işçiye çok oyun oynanıldığı için o yüzden güvenmiyoruz. Yanımızda gibi görünüyorlar, yoksa kesinlikle yanımızda değiller, zannetmiyorum. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 36)

The union only worries about having this period left behind. They want to be done with this period and go back to their own lives. This wouldn't change a thing for persons; the union has to be restructured. We don't trust the union, because in the past, we saw the distrust, we saw how the worker was deceived. They seem to be with us, though they definitely are not. I don't think so. (İzmir tent, Female, 36)

Uygur states that bureaucratic unionism, which aimed for making and applying policies in compliance with the state policies since its emergence in our country, acted after the 1980s with the worries and fears of simply maintaining self-existence and sustaining their social status against changing state policies (Uygur, 1993:170). The fact that trade unions remained indifferent before or after the privatization process of Tekel is a huge evidence for that. During the resistance, then, four major trade unions (Türk-İş, DİSK, Kamu-Sen, KESK) declared that they support Tekel workers, however they did not formulate a serious plan for action.²⁴ Power plays confused and infuriated Tekel workers, as these plays continued between their own union, which withdrew, and other unions, which remained at an uncertain position

²⁴ Özcan, socialistProject, www. soc. project. com

with regard to the protest.²⁵ In this light, a female worker from İzmir tent deduces that the trade union was late in taking action, while another female worker reckons that the resistance was carried through till today by workers' own compelling; yet, she thinks that it would not be possible without trade unions although unions erred on this issue:

Sendika daha önceden de bu eylemi yapabilirdi. Hani bir şarkı var; asker yolu bekledim günü güne ekledim, bizim de özlük hakkı bekledim günü güne ekledim oldu. Yani bu iş uzadı, uzatanda sendika. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

The union could take action earlier. You know, there is a song, 'for my soldier-man to arrive, I waited; one day after another I awaited'. We waited for personal rights just like that, one day after another. I mean, this is taking long, and the unions caused this prolongation. (İzmir tent, Female, 37)

Direnış işçilerin zoruyla, dayatmasıyla oldu. Şimdi 64 gündür buradaysak işçi adım attı, sendika arkasından geldi, zorla yani. Sendikaların katkısı olmadan olmaz, hani bir laf var ya en kötü sendika sendikasızlıktan iyidir. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 36)

This action was realized by the force or imposition of workers. We have been here for 64 days, that is, the workers took a step, and the union came after them, only by force. Without the contribution of unions, this is impossible. There is a phrase, 'The worst union is better than being without union'. (İzmir tent, Female, 36)

Workers in İzmir and Adıyaman tents stated likewise the previous ones that workers took the lead in resistance; however, they believed that union has to be on the forefront.

Ne işçi sendikasız olabilir, ne de sendika işçisiz olabilir. İşçilerin adımıyla oldu bu iş. İşçiler önderlik yaptı, konuştular anlaştılar ama sendikalar arkamızdan geldi. Öncülüğünü işçiler yaptı işin açıkçası. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 36)

Neither worker nor union can do without each other. This [resistance] became possible thanks to the workers. Workers led this event. They talked, they agreed, but the union followed us. Obviously, it was led by the workers. (İzmir tent, Female, 36)
İşçinin kendi gücüyle de devam ederdi ama birinin başa geçmesi gerekiyordu. Çobansız sürü olmaz. (Adıyaman çadırı, Kadın, 39)

Workers would continue this action with their own power but somebody must lead this. 'There is no herd without herdsman.' (Adıyaman tent, Female, 39)

²⁵ Özcan, socialistProject, www. soc. project. com

It is known that Tekel Resistance is a movement with great resonating power in society, after *Bahar Eylemleri* (the Spring Protests) in March-April-May 1989 and *Zonguldak Yürüyüşü* (Zonguldak March) in 1990. It is argued that Tekel Resistance has similar qualities with these two protest actions regarding the formation process and goals. *Bahar Eylemleri* in 1989 witnessed the demonstration of powerful demands by workers, who made up the Türk-İş grassroots, as they transcended union bureaucracy (Uygur, 1993:183). These actions developed under the leadership of workplace organizations, attracted worker masses towards them, and, with the motto of “we are hungry” and “general strike”, they called for struggle and unity voice their demands by receiving a large public support (ibid: 183). Another point in *Bahar Eylemleri* is that the protest was spontaneous and had a relatively political dimension, since it aimed directly at the ANAP government. (Çelik, 1996:104). Therefore, *Bahar Eylemleri* shows similarities with Tekel Resistance Movement in regard to their motto, spontaneity, and opposition to the government. *Zonguldak Yürüyüşü* basically appeared as an opponent against the neo-liberal policies in effect since 1980; therefore, it had a political characteristic beyond economic one (Yükselen, 1998:550-3). Whereas in *Zonguldak Yürüyüşü*, the primary aim was the restoration of the loss in real wages; the departure point in Tekel Resistance was an oppositional stance against precarious employment conditions that awaited entire working class.²⁶ Regarding the question whether these events are commonplace in Turkey or not, a worker from İstanbul tent in Tekel tent-town told that this outdistanced Zonguldak Yürüyüşü, while another one in Manisa tent indicated that this resistance has now become a case of social action greater than the previous ones mentioned:

Zonguldak bizim için bir örnekti, bu direniş onu da geçti, bu bir başkaldırıdır, bu bir isyandır artık. (İstanbul çadırı, Kadın, 40)

Zonguldak was an example for us; this resistance went way beyond that one. This is an uprising, a rebellion now. (İstanbul tent, Female, 40)

²⁶ Özuğurlu, www. emekdunyasi. net/. . . /6786-doc-dr-ozugurlu-tek-el-eylemi-halk-direnisi-ozelligi-kazandi

Hiç beklenmedik anda madencilerin yürüyüşü 90 yıllarda çok büyük ses getiren bir eylemdi o gün için, sonra seka eylemi oldu o da fabrikanın içinde kaldı yani. Bu hepsinden fazla, bu toplumsal bir eylem haline geldi aslında bu şimdi yani. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 46)

The miners' march back in the nineties was a big protest that resonated much and developed suddenly. Then, there was Seka Protest, but it was limited to the factory. This one is bigger than those; this has become a social protest bigger than the others now. (Manisa tent, Male, 46)

5.4.2 Is Tekel Resistance A Class Movement?

"-Ben burda öğrencilerin oluşturduğu dernek gibi bir yerde kalıyorum. Adı neydi, gelmedi şimdi aklıma, tabe lada yazıyordu, Devrimci Esterelya Birliği miydi, neydi...

-Devrimci Proleterya Birliği olabilir mi?

-Hah işte orda kalıyorum."²⁷ (Hatay çadırı, 42, erkek görüşmeciyile bir diyalog)

Along with the intensification of the international economic integration, the rise of the neoliberalism in the state and the low cost production within industry brought together extensive changes both in the national and the international scale (Moody, 1997:143). In this frame Turkey left the economic policies that have been applied until 1980 and realized a transformation to neo-liberal economy politics. This transformation at the same time lived parallel with a process of the elimination of the state, limitation of all the rights gained in favor of labor, intensive liberalization and the constriction of public service employment (Çerkezoğlu and Göztepe, 2010: 65). As required by the employment policies of neoliberalism, the flexibility applications of the labor market prescribed diversification in the employment, a fundamental change in the labor force and the loosening of the rules that regulate the working life of the workers and provided for the employers to determine their own employment policies. On the other hand, as a result of the increasing flexibility applications in

²⁷ “-I stay here in a place like an association composed of students. What was its name, now I could not recall it, it was written in the signboard, it was something like Revolutionary Esterelya Union...

-Can it be Revolutionary Proletarian Union?

-Yeah, I am staying there” (The Hatay tent, 42, a dialogue with the male interviewee). ”

employment, force the unsecured working conditions. The unsecured working conditions prescribe not only for the informal laborers but for the workers working formally to work under the work forms such as 4/B, 4/C, 50/D like the seasonal workers (Çerkezoğlu and Göztepe, 2010:81). Consequently, the unsecured working conditions became the common feature of every form of employment and relatively, by transforming class into a homogenous structure, created the objective conditions of labor movement (ibid: 82). At this point, The Tekel resistance gains more importance in terms of the class struggle. In this respect, the Tekel workers claim that the insecurity is not only their but also of the whole sector's common fate. In other words, the Tekel workers appropriated their problems to the whole working class. We can realize this fact better if we pay attention to a worker in the Amasya tent:

Bu 4c'yi araştırdık ki bizim açımızdan ziyade toplum açısından da acı bir olay bu yüzden 4c kapsamına da biz karşı çıktık 4c kapsamındaki diğer 4b olayına da biz karşı çıktık. Bizim amacımız şurda özlük haklarımızla aynı haklarımızla başka bir kuruma geçmek. Burda tabi bu hakkı aldığımız zaman burda öğrencisi var diğer işçiler var memurlar var işte eğer aşağı indiyseniz gördüyseniz abdi ipekçi parkında uzman çavuşların böyle bir eylemi var ondan önce de sözleşmeli öğretmenlerin sıkıntıları var yani sıkıntı gitgide büyüyor, zamanla şu slogan vardı susma sustukça sana sıra gelecek diye bu sloganı gerçekliği şu süreçte devam ediyor yani. (Amasya çadırı, Erkek, 42)

We examined this 4c, which is more painful for the society than us that is why we opposed to it. Our aim is to be transferred to another institution with our rights same with our employee personal rights. Of course when we gain these rights here, here there are students, there are other workers, public officers, see, if you have walked down you must have seen, the specialized sergeants in the Abdi İpekçi Park has such protest, before that there are the discontent of the contracted teachers, so there is discontent and so the discontent gets bigger and bigger, there was this slogan once don't shut up if you do it will be your turn, the reality of this slogan continues in this process. (Amasya tent, Male, 42)

Hani işçi sınıfı dediğimiz zaman genelde orta eğitim düzeyine sahip insanların var olduğu kesim, ama diğer kesimler eğitim düzeyi daha yüksek insanlar; öğretmenler, doktorlar, memurlar ne biliyim en azından lise mezunu yani, şimdi bu dolayısıyla bu tür tepkinin bundan daha fazla çıkması gerekirdi, daha iyi çıkmaları gerekirdi. Ama tabi bu şimdi yaşanan şeylerle sıkıntılarla alakalı, kedi sıkıştırdığın zaman kedi kaçır, ama köşeye sıkıştı mı çaresiz kaldığı zaman tırnaklar adamı buda bunun gibi bişey yani. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 46)

When we say worker it is generally the strata of people from secondary education, but the other strata is of people with higher education; teachers, doctors, public

officers, I don't know what else, so at least high-school graduates, so now this kind of opposition should be more and better. But also it is related with what is experienced, the discontent, if you push a cat it runs away but if you corner it, if it finds no way out it scratches the man, it is something like that. (Manisa tent, Male, 46).

These expressions of the Tekel workers gives the impression that they have developed a spontaneous forms of class consciousness displaying a unified class struggle for emancipation. (Bulut, 2010) In other words, the struggle they give in order not to lose their vested interests are seen by them as a part of working class struggle in Turkey and they claim that demonstration will raise the consciousness of people from all sides and it will pose an example for them.

Valla bu tek el eylemi, Türkiye genelinde işçi sınıfını bir araya getirdiğine inanıyorum. Bundan sonrada örnek bir davranış olacak, diğer konfederasyonlarda olan işçi memur arkadaşlar bizden örnek alacaklarına inanıyorum, ama bizim en güzel verdiğimiz bir olay var burda; gençlerimize güzel bir gelecek bırakmak için çalışıyoruz. (Aydın çadırı, Erkek, 45)

Honestly, this Tekel resistance, I believe it united the working class together throughout Turkey. It will be a model behavior henceforward, I believe the other worker and public officer friends working in other confederations will take an example from us, but we have a situation we gave our best; we are trying to leave a good feature to our young people. (Aydın tent, Male, 45)

Şu anda uyuyan deviyi uyandırdık. Şu an mesela çiftçisinden, köylüsünden, belki evinde televizyonu yok ama hepsi öğrendi, şu an kimse kimseyi kandıramaz, şimdi herkes bilinçlendi. (Denizli çadırı, Erkek, 42)

We woke up the sleeping giant. Now, for example from the farmer to the peasant, may be they do not have television in their homes, but they all learned, now no one can deceive the other, now all became conscious. (Denizli tent, Male, 42)

Türkiye'ye çok şeyler getirecek. Sus, kapat çeneni, senin kazanılmış haklarını elinden alırım, seni 4c'ye veririm, oraya veririm buraya veririm, böyle bir şey olamayacağını öğretmeye çalışıyoruz. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 40)

It will bring a lot to Turkey. Shut up, shut your mouth up, I can take your vested interests from you, I can give you to 4c, to here, there, we are trying to teach that such kind of a thing cannot happen. (İzmir tent, Female, 40)

The Tekel workers by making the class, which has long been eliminated, visible; abolished the discourses on "the end of class". In other words, the Tekel workers raised their "worker" identity to the level of consciousness (Bükrev, 2010). In this

direction, they believed that the resistance will make a great influence on the working class in Turkey.

Bizim bu yapmış olduğumuz mücadelemiz inşallah Türkiye'deki tüm işçi sınıfına örnek olur. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 43)

If God permits, our struggle will set an example to all the working class in Turkey. (Manisa tent, Male, 43)

Valla Türkiye uyuyan işçi sınıfının, hani hep derler ya ölü toprağı sermişti, bütün ezilen toplumlar için o ölü toprağını biz sirkeledik inşallah tamamıyla dökeceğiz. (Adıyaman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

Honestly, Turkey, as they say, laid dead dust on the sleeping working class, for the whole oppressed societies we cleaned the dust and if God permits we will clean it all. (Adıyaman tent, Female, 42)

Bu hareket önemli tekelcilerin işi için, işçi sınıfı için Türkiye'de tüm yaşayan işçilerin gelecekleri için, eğer bunu biz kazanırsak Türkiye kazanacak, işçi sınıfı kazanacak. (Muş çadırı, Kadın, 39)

This movement is important for the work of Tekel workers, for the working class, for the future of all of the workers living in Turkey, if we win this Turkey will win, the working class will win. (Muş tent, Female, 39)

5.4.3 The Camaraderie/Adventure of the Identity and the Class

“Bütün şehirlerden otobüslerle Ankara girişine geldiğimizde polis durdurdu. Doğu illerinden gelenler geri dönsün diğerleri kalsın dedi. Onlar oturdular yola gitmediler. Bizde hemen onların yanına oturduk. O zaman orda anladım ben bir şeyleri...”²⁸ (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 38).

The Tekel resistance, that gained the feature of an opposition against acts on unsecure employment, became also the space of a demand for a humane life with its symbols. In other words, the different identities gathered together by the Tekel resistance, showed that all the identity structures are facing the unsecured

²⁸ “When we came from all of the cities to the entrance of Ankara by bus the police stopped us. They said the ones coming from Eastern Provinces will leave and the rest will stay. We directly sat near to them. Then, at that point I realized some issues (Tokat tent, Female, 38)”

employment conditions. The workers in the Tekel resistance explain the situation as “unification in the labor struggle” ad as “the unificatory power of the labor”:

Ben ilk başlarda biraz tedirgindim, birileri kavga eder, şu olur bu olur ama süreç geçtikten sonra baktım insanların ekmekten başka gözü bir şey görmüyor. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

In the beginning I was a bit troubled, someone starts a fight, this or tha happens bit after the process I understood people do not search for anything other than bread. (Izmir tent, Female, 37)

Şimdi değer olarak baktığımız zaman mesela... Tabi şimdi burda ortak bir nokta var; ekmek. Herkesin kafasında bu ekmek mücadelesi var, ortak değerimiz bizim bu. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 46)

If, now, we consider the aspect of values... Of course now there is a common point; bread. Everyone has this bread struggle in their mind, this is our common value. (Manisa tent, Male, 46)

Ben doğuluyum, ama mesela bir Samsunluyla iç içe olmadım, ne biliyim Tokatlıyla, Hataylıyla iç içe olmadım. Ama burda öyle bir şey ki sanki bütün çadır bir çadır, bütün insan bir insan öyle bir şey. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

For example, I am from east but I never had the chance of being close with somebody from Samsun, or what else, from Tokat, Hatay. But here it is something like all the tents are one tent, all the people are one person. (Izmir tent, Female, 37)

Hiçbir şeye bakılmadan elele, demek ki emek her yerde birleştiriyor. Bu farklı bir duygu, hani bazı şeyler anlatılmaz yaşanılır derler ya biz bunları yaşıyoruz anlatamazsın. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

Without looking for something else, hand in hand, this means labor unifies everywhere. This is a different feeling, s they say, some of the things cannot be told but experienced, we are living these, you cannot tell. (Batman tent, Female, 42)

The Tekel workers attempted to reconstruct their gender, ethnic and religious/sect identities on the relation of labor-capital during the process of resistance (Özügürlü, 2010:58). When the closed society structure of the regions they come is taken into consideration, the extent of the transformation they experienced in terms of their identities can be understood. The period where Turkey took place in the conjuncture before the Tekel resistance displayed a tendency of escalating the ethnic conflicts by the policies of political openings. Therefore for the Turkish and Kurdish national

identities of the workers came to the front and it was attempted to make them more visible.

The interviews made in such an environment of political conditioning in Turkey received the answers on their ideas for people from different identities directly focusing on analyzing the difference on Kurdishness. The woman worker from the Samsun tent of the resistance area, states that their ideas affected from external environment on Kurds, such as the stereotypes “terrorist”, “secessionist”, “aggressive”, have completely changed:

Genelde bunu kabullenmek lazım, Doğululara genelde terörist diye hitap ediyorlar, işte Doğulular vurdu kırıcılar, zarar görürüz her defasında diye toplumun kabul etmiş olduğu değer yargıları ister istemez kabul edilebiliyor. Önyargılı yaklaşım her insanın yapısında var, ama şu an tamamen yıkılmış durumda önyargılar. Çünkü kardeşiz, kardeş olduk. Gücümüz, düşüncemiz birlikte kuvvetlendi. Ben şimdi çok rahatlıkla diyebiliyorum ki Doğulu kardeşlerimin desteğiyle biz bu işi kopartabiliriz. İnanım ben Doğulular bize çok büyük destek veriyor diye onlardan güç aldığımı farkındayım. Güç birlikten doğar. (Samsun çadırı, Kadın, 39)

In general, it should be known, the Easterners are generally called terrorist, you can accept the value judgments of the society such as the Easterners are destructive, we can be harmed by them. The prejudices are in inside every individual but these prejudices are totally gone now. Because we are brothers and sisters, we became. Our thoughts and power strengthened together. Now I can say easily we can cope with this problem by the help of our Easterner brothers and sisters. Believe me, I am aware that I stand still since the Easterners are giving us great support. Power is born from unity. (Samsun tent, Female, 39)

On the other hand, the male worker from the Samsun tent stated that before the resistance he had prejudices for Kurds but what he witnessed during the resistance has no relation with what he has been told, his point of view completely changed, there is no need for political opening, the real reason behind the problem are the “people on top”:

Açılım diye başbakanımız çok uğraşılıyor. Şimdi ben açık konuşayım. Bu eylemler başlamadan önce ben Yozgatlıyım, bana deselerdi ki işte Diyarbakırlı birisi bir araya gelir misin, çok düşünürdüm. Niye çünkü bize onları çok farklı anlatmışlardı zamanında. Ama şu anda bana deseler ki seni Diyarbakır’a tayin ediyoruz, seve seve giderim. O insanların sıcaklığını gördüm burda, anlatılanlarla alakası olmadığını gördüm. Ne kadar sıcak, ne kadar misafirperver olduğunu gördüm, şu anda seve seve

giderim yani... Başbakan gelsin buradaki açılımı görsün yani. . Bizim halkla Doğulu-Batılı, Kürdü-Çerkezi-Lazı hiç kimseyle bir ayırımız gayrımız yok bu ülke bir bütün, bu ülkede bayrağın sallandığı her yer bizim, her yer... Aslında burada problemi çıkartan tepedeki insanlar tabandakiler değil. (Samsun Çadırı, Erkek, 37)

Our prime minister is trying hard for “initiative/opening”. Now, I may speak honestly. Before these actions had started (I am from Yozgat), if they have asked me that if I will ever come together with a person from Diyarbakir; I could not answer easily. Why? Because they had presented us those people differently before. But now, if they asked me a transfer to Diyarbakir, I would love to go. I see the warmth of these people here. The realities are not related to what we had told before. I see their intimacy, hospitality. I will go gladly today. . . The prime minister should come and see the “opening” here. . . We as people of this country as easterner-westerner, Cirsassian-Laz, we have no difference. This country is a whole, wherever this flag waves is ours, every place. In fact who create this problem is the people at the top... In fact, here the source of the problem is not the people of the base. (Samsun tent, Male, 37)

In the starting process of the resistance, the Tekel workers were filled with nationalism and ethnic prejudices, yet, the unifying effect of the struggle and resistance resulted with the destruction of these prejudices fast and their being transformed and ineffective (Bükrev, 2010). This situation that the issue of how the workers got rid of the prejudices as if they rip them off, becomes the distinctive feature of Tekel resistance. The workers coming from East and South were at first aware of the prejudices that are also accepted by workers from other regions. A worker from Bitlis tent in the resistance area expressed that he had no prejudice for the other people as a Kurd but this cannot be told for the others but later the prejudices were disappeared easily:

İlk geldiğimiz günlerde böyle önyargıyla birbirine bakan insanlar vardı şunu çok rahatlıkla söyleyebilirim bir Kürt işçisi olarak bende öyle bir önyargı hiç oluşmamıştı kendi açımdan söylüyorum belki bir diğeri açısından öyle bir önyargı vardı. Fakat karşı tarafta böyle bir önyargının olduğunu biz biliyorduk görüyorduk. Fakat çok çabuk ben buna tanık oldum çok çabuk bu önyargılar kırıldı bir kucaklaşma oldu ve çoğu insanlar bu önyargının mahcubiyetini yaşadılar ve dolayısıyla daha sonra bunu bu mahcubiyetlerini dile de getirdiler. Biz hak arayan insanlara hep terörist söyledik ve bu hale geldik diyenler oldu ve çok güzel bir kardeşlik bir pekişme oluştu ve gelen misafirlere ben hep söylüyorum sendikacıların, siyasetçilerin, akademisyenlerin, aydınların, yazarların, çizerlerin ve hatta öğrencilerin buradan büyük bir ders çıkarması lazım siyasi iktidarın buradan büyük bir ders çıkarması lazım çünkü halklarda hiçbir sorun yok halklar arasında bir sorun yok eğer sistem böyle bir ayrışmaya girmese haklar arasında hiçbir sorun yok. (Bitlis Çadırı, Erkek, 45)

In the first days, there were people having prejudices for each other. I can easily say that as a Kurdish worker, I never had such a prejudice. Maybe, the other had such a prejudice. But, we knew that opponents had such a prejudice. I witnessed that these prejudices were broken rapidly, people embraced each other and most people felt embarrassed consequently they expressed their embarrassment. They said that they always called people looking for the rights as terrorist and there was a great brotherhood between us. I always tell the guests that unionists, politicians, academicians, writers, illustrators, intelligentsias, also students have to take lessons from this event, the political power has to take lessons from this because there aren't any problems among communities. If the system makes a distinction, there aren't any problems among communities. (Bitlis tent, Male, 45)

Another worker of Kurdish origin/descent stated that they did not fear anyone and did not refuse any help offered to them, but the others were afraid; besides, their "Eastern" identity did not have priority over their human identity.

İzmirli bir arkadaşımız abdi ipekçide gazı yiyince, ben astımlıyım kötü fenalaştım kurtarmak için uğraşmışlar sağolsunlar. Başka yerlerden de, şimdi nerden olduklarını şey yapamıyorum, bizimkiler öyle, adam sürekli bacım bir ihtiyacın var mı diye soruyor en son dedi ki biz birbirimizden korkuyorduk diyordu, korkutulduk birbirimize karşı ama şu an biz onu aştık, biz kimseden korkmuyorduk, sizler korkuyordunuz, biz hiçbir zaman uzanan eli boş bırakmadık, ha doğuluyuz ama insanız, aynı dili konuşabiliyorsak olay bitmiştir. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

A friend from Izmir, when I was exposed to the gas in Abdi Ipekci, I have asthma, I got worse, thanks to them, they tried to save. From other places also, now I cannot remember from where they are, our ones are like this, a man asks continuously my sister do you need something, recently he said we were afraid of each other, now we are free of it, we were made as such, frightened from each other, we were not afraid of anyone you are frightened, we always answered the help calls, ha, we are easterners but we are human, if we can speak the same language than we need nothing else. (Batman tent, female, 42)

Two Tekel workers coming from Trabzon and Tokat provinces, depend their prejudices towards their friends from Eastern and Southeastern regions on the news in the media but they indicate that they realized in the Tekel resistance that they were agitated by the media:

Bazı şeyleri de insan burda öğreniyor, bazı toplum kesimlerini yanlış aksettiler. Yani benim Doğu'da Batı'da olan olaydan ne haberim olacak, medyadan okuduğum kadar bilirim. Ama buraya geldim, şimdi hepsini yaşadım, gördüm ki medya bizi kandırıyor. Örneğin, güneydoğudan Diyarbakır'dan adam geldi, Trabzon'dan bir

adamlar yan yana, geldik buraya ki sanki dersin 50 senedir bir arada yaşıyoruz. Dedim ya medyanın şişirmesi dolduruşu. Bir de açılım istiyorlar, açılım burda gelsin görsünler bedava açılım. Bu açılımı da kimseye mal etmesin Tekel yapıyor hepsini. (Trabzon, Erkek, 47)

There are some facts that a person learn here. They had wrongly presented us some social groups. How can I know about the events in East and West, I only learned from what I read in media. But I came here, I experienced everything and I realized that media is deceiving us. For example, a man had come from Diyarbakir stand here side by side with a man from Trabzon. By looking us, somebody can say that they are living together for 50 years. As I said, all were manipulation attempts and prejudice of media. And they want an “opening”, they shall come and see the opening here, “opening” without cost. Don’t dare relate this “opening” to anybody else, all is done by TEKEL. (Trabzon tent, Male. 47)

Önyargım, illaki vardı çünkü bizim değişik yöredeki insanları tanıma vesilemiz televizyondur, radyoydu onlarda nasıl aksettiriyorsa biz öyle tanıyorduk. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

In any case, I had prejudice because our opportunity to recognize people in different districts was via television and radio. We only knew how they are displayed. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

The first of the two female workers from the Tokat tent stresses the subordination of Kurds and on the other hand claims that in terms of identity she is more lucky than them and their having the Kurdish identity is not their choice:

Yani tabii önemli yani şu var ki o da insan bende insanım, onun hayata tutunmak için gayeleri de aynı benimkilerde. O sadece hayata tutunmak için benden daha çok enerji harcıyor yani o ezilmiş insan biz onlara göre çok daha rahatız yani onların orda doğmaları onların isteği değildi ki. Yani hiç kimse o seçeneği sunmadı ki onlara. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

Of course, it is important but, s/he is a person also I’m a person. In addition, both of us have purposes to hold on to life. s/he spends more energy to cope with life than me. S/he is suppressed person, we are more comfortable than them. That is; they didn’t want to be born there. Nobody has offered them any kind of choice. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

The other female worker express that the Easterners are known as “rude” but during the resistance she realized how gentlemen are the Eastern man, how suppressed and provoked they are and she claims that the problems on the identity level can be solved by having food and employment:

Doğu'nun insanlarına kaba saba insanlar derler o Abdi İpekçi parkındaki bankların üzerine naylonlar geçirdiler, yağmurdan korunalım diyerekten, para verip odun aldılar, ısınırken biz ordan geçiyorduk, bacım gelotur falan filan, yerlerini bize verdiler, aldıkları yiyecekleri bizimle paylaştılar, çok çok nazik insanlar yani, ezilmiş insanr bence kullanılıyor, birileri kıskırtıyor. Bak biz burda kaç çeşit insanız yani niye burda bir çatışma bir kavga olmuyor, herkes işinin peşinde o insanlara iş ekmek verilse kimsenin bir derdi yok, Kürtlüğü yok, Lazlığı yok, aleviliği yok öyle bir çatışma yok, bunları birileri bilinçli olarak yapıyor. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 43)

They say the people of the east are rude, they covered the seats in the Abdi Ipekci Park with nylon bags for us to be protected from the rain, they paid for woods, we were passing there when they warm themselves, my sister come and seat so on so forth, they gave us their seats, they shared their food with us, they are very kind people, I mean I think the suppressed people are being used, some people are provoking them. Look at the variety of the people here, why we do not have any conflict here, everyone is here for their job, if those people have bread and employment, no one has a problem. They are not Kurds, Laz or Alevis, there is no such conflict, some people are doing it on purpose. (Tokat tent, Female, 43)

Biz ilk gün çadırlarda birbirimize böyle bakıyorduk, ikimizde tekeliydik yani. Yan yana oturunca farklı olmadığımızı anladık yani, ama bu da bizim başımızdakilerden kaynaklanıyor. Bizi uzaklaştırmışlar sonuçta biz Türkiye içerisinde beraberiz yani. (Samsun, Erkek, 40)

In the first day we are looking at each other at tents, so we were both from Tekel. So, we say that we have no differences when we sat together, but this is come from the powers that be. In the end they estranged us but we are together in Turkey. (Samsun, male, 40)

The Tekel workers made local dances during the resistances and each region had the chance of seeing and learning the dance of other regions. The workers to stress their solidarity and fraternity were referring each other's regional folk dances. By this way, the Şemamme dance of Kurds and the Horon, Zeybek etc, of the other regions frequently used as the symbols of their unity in the struggle. Özuğurlu, claims that this solidarity represents the workers' culture and the identity developed during the resistance is the working class identity (Özuğurlu, 2010:58).

Bu direncimizi de arttırıyor. Bir Kürdün gidip Lazlarla horon tepmesi, Lazların gelip Kürtlerden şemmameyi öğrenmesi, bu bize hem direnç hem mutluluk veriyor. Demek ki bu insanlar birbirini seviyor ve demek ki insanlar ortak bir noktada bir araya gelebiliyoruz ve bir araya geldiğimizde birçok şeyi de kırabileceğimizi gördük yani emek, ekmek mücadelesinde bir araya geldik ama bunu diğer yerlere de uzattık. Bu çok önemlidir. Siyasi iktidarında buradan ders çıkarması gerekir. (Bitlis Çadırı, Erkek, 45)

This increases also our resistance. The fact that Laz plays horon together with Kurdish or Laz learns şemame from Kurd, gives us resistance and happiness. That is to say; these people like each other and come together in a common point. And when we came together, we saw that we can get over a lot of things. In other words, we came together for the struggle of labor and bread, but we reached the other places. This is very significant. The political power has to take lessons from this event. (Bitlis tent, Male, 45)

Yani bir kere diyelim ki ortak değerlerimiz, inançlarımız, ne biliyim kültür harmanı oldu aslında burda, yani harmanlaşmış kaynaşmış şeklini gördüm ben burda yani. Onlar bizim zeybeği öğrendi, biz onların şemammesini öğrendik, bu kadar yani, daha hiç görmemiştim ben şemammeyi, ama burda gördüm öğrendim. (Manisa, Erkek, 46)

First, we had common values, beliefs, I don't know, a mixture of our culture, I saw here the mixed and coherent form of it. They learned our zeybek, we learned their şemamme, it is as such, I have never seen şemamme before, but I saw it here, I learned it. (Manisa, Male, 46)

Farklılıklar güzel tabi, sonuçta yeni diller öğreniyorsun, yeni kültürel etkinliklerde bulunuyorsun. Mesela ismi neydi, o Anadolu'da oynanan halayı bilmiyorduk onu öğrendik. Kürtçe türküler dinlemiyorduk, Kürtçe türküler dinliyoruz, kulağa çok güzel geliyor bunlar. (Bursa çadırı, Erkek, 45)

The differences are good of course, in the end you learn new languages, you enter into new cultural activities. For example, what is that, the dance played in Anatolia, we learned that. We were not listening Kurdish songs, we are listening Kurdish songs, these all sound good. (Bursa tent, Male, 45)

After these interviews another evaluation to be made on the Tekel resistance is “for the first time in workers’ movement the Kurdish problem became that visible” and that the class struggle of the workers does not consume their other superstructure identities (Kalyon, 2010). In other words, the resistance brought an “opening” to the consciousness of the Tekel workers.

5.4.4 The Role of Women Workers in the Resistance

“Ara ara evime gittiğimde çadırda kalmayı özlüyorum. Burası rahat, çamaşır, bulaşık, çocuk derdi yok. Eve girmek istemeyecem

galiba böyle giderse...”²⁹ (İstanbul çadırı, Kadın, 41)

Flexibilization policies that emerged along with globalization and have been intensifying refers to reduced labor force costs, and increased part-time and temporary employment forms. The effect of these flexibility implementations on women’s labor is the visibly higher rates of female employment as a result of the spread of precarious and informal work forms. This increase is known as the “feminization” of labor or labor market. In this context, while women working in tobacco factories were exhaustively hired as temporary workers, and then were employed as factory worker in the privatization process; therefore, a structuration in the sense of the feminization of labor in these factories is observed, even if partially (Sayılan and Türkmen, 2010:134). For this reason, it is seen that a greater number of female workers were present during the Tekel Resistance, compared to other strikes and resistance movements.

During the Tekel Resistance, female workers at first remained in the back; they waited, together seated silently in the corner of tents. However, in the course of the resistance, they later on communicated and socialized with male workers in their own tents, and with others in the surrounding tents, that is, with outsider guests and workers in the tents. Thus, they acquired self-confidence and developed a collective identity. (ibid: 145) We can see a substantial example of this in the words of a woman worker from Hatay tent as she describes how Tekel resistance changed her:

Ben bir kadın olarak burda kişiliğimi kazandım. Hep susturulduk biz bu ana kadar , diyorum ya yıllardır yapılması gereken bazı şeyler yapılmadı. Ben burda sesimi duyurdum, ben burda bağırdım, kimliğimi kişiliğimi kazandım, yarın ben buradan gittiğim zaman tecrübeli biri olarak çağırılan her eyleme gidebilirim. (Hatay, Kadın, 44)

²⁹ I miss staying in the tent when I go home from time to time. This is comfortable in here. No kids, no laundry, no dishes. Being in this surrounding long enough, I will not want to get home anymore. (İstanbul tent, Female, 41)

Here I found my personality as a woman. We were always silenced, until today, things that must be done weren't done for years, you know. I had my voice heard here, I cried out here, found my identity and personality, when I'm gone from here tomorrow, I can be present in any protest they ask as someone with experience. (Hatay, Female, 44)

Amongst approaches toward the lack of consciousness in female workers, one highlights the reinforcement and stabilization of female roles as mothers and wives via gender socialization and the ideology of life at home. (Chhachhi-Pittin, 1999: 67) In this direction, as a female Tekel worker from Batman tent denotes, their daily lives past between the home-work-kids triangle, and they lived a life of seclusion and protection; therefore, they did not have any ideas about the struggle prior to the resistance process:

Biz aslında mücadeleyi burada öğrendik bizim hayatımız ev, iş ve çocuklarımızdı. Bu üçgen içindeydik hayatımızda. Biz mücadelenin ne olduğunu bilmiyorduk burada öğrendik. Mücadele etmek zorunda bırakılmadık, eşimiz çocuğumuz hep koruyucu, biz çocuklarımızı korurken eşimiz de bizi koruma altındaydı. Ama işte bu sokaklarda yaşam var ya, biz çok şey öğrendik. Biz ekmeğimizin nasıl kazanılacağını, sahip çıkmak için nelere katlanmamamız gerektiğini öğrendik. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

We actually learned struggling. Our life consisted of home, workplace and kids. We lived in this triangle. We didn't know what struggle was; we learned it here. We weren't expected to fight for these; we had our husbands and kids as guardian; while we guarded our children, our husband would guard us. But there is such life on these streets that we learn many things. We learned how to earn our bread and what to withstand to defend it. (Batman tent, Female, 42)

As resistance proceeded, women started to pronounce, perhaps without realizing, that they were now a member of the working class:

Kadının olması çok güzel, erkek de emeğini kazanıyor ben de ekmeğimi kazanıyorum. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

It's very nice to have women here, men earn money by laboring and I do, too. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

It can be observed more clearly that women showed a strong and insistent attitude during the resistance, as it gained momentum. Part of this resistance and insistence was because women feared that they would lose their jobs, while part of it was

because they were the only breadwinning person at home. According to the interviews conducted with female workers in the Tekel tents, women generally indicated that they themselves were responsible for bringing money to the household because their husbands were unemployed. Therefore, women were more inclined to depend on the struggle as they had the main responsibility of earning a living for the family. A female Tekel worker tries to explain this general situation of the protest via her own situation:

Biz çalışan kadınlar olduğumuz için, şimdi burda tekelerde çalışan kadınların %80'inin kocaları işsizdir yani. Ben kendimden de örnek verebilirim. Yani bir hobi olarak çalışmadık biz, evi geçindirmek için çocuklarımıza bakmak için çalıştık, kadınların çoğu evi geçindirmek için çalışıyor. (İzmir Çadırı Kadın, 43)

We working women [are here]; I mean, here, 80 % of the women working in Tekel have an unemployed husband back at home. Take me as an example. We didn't work because we liked it as a hobby; we worked to earn money for our home and our children; most women [here] work in order to earn money for the house. (İzmir tent, Female, 43)

While it is observed that women take an active part in the resistance and put themselves in to the spotlight, it is also noticed that there is a gendered division of labor that is dominant in the resistance process. In the interviews, it was found that women accepted tasks, which were similar to what they did at home, such as the maintenance of daily life, providing basic needs, and cleaning. A male worker in Samsun tent associates this with women's emotional state of being and stresses that exalting women as caretakers is important for the manhood; finally, he unfolds the gendered division of labor in the tents:

Kadın teması çok farklı birşey. Kadınlar böyle daha vicdanen eğilimli, duygusal, insanları sakinleştirebilen yapıya haiz insanlar. Bizim önümüzde bayanların olması bizim için bir ayrıcalık, hatta onlar önümüzde yürürken biz daha da güçleniyoruz. Diyoruz ki hatta bunlar bayanlarken bizim önümüzde yürüyorsa, biz neden yürümeyelim. Kadınların bizim yanımızda çok farklı yeri var, mesela burda nasıl evlerinde rutin işleri görüyorlarsa, burda bizim battaniyelerimizi katlıyorlar, yerleri süpürüyorlar, hizmetlerinden ötesi var. (Samsun Çadırı, Erkek, 37)

The subject of woman is something different. Women are more conscientious, emotional and they are able to calm other people. It is a privilege for us that we have women in the frontlines and we become stronger and stronger since they are walking in the frontlines. We even tell ourselves that if these women can walk in front of us

as they are, why can't we? Women have a special place beside us. For example, they fold up our blankets; sweep the floor, just like they do in their routines at home. (Samsun tent, Male, 37)

Another point that is highly crucial in the Tekel Resistance is the following: While women workers, who come from where conservative and closed structure of society dominated, depended on their husbands' permission even to work outside the house, they spent time night and day there in tents, in which a common life prevailed. (Savran, 2010)A female worker narrates her life in tent, where she was with other people she did not know beforehand:

İşyerinde çalışıyorduk ama bu kadar samimi değildik arkadaşlarla bir resmiyet vardı ama burda yeri geldi omuz omuza yatuk uyuduk, birbirimize destek verdik, gerçekten öyle. Hiç tanımadığım arkadaşlarla yan yana yattım ben burda, beraber uyuduk yani. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 43)

We worked at the same place but we weren't that close with friends. There was a distance. Here, though, there were times we slept shoulder to shoulder, or we supported each other. Here, I slept side by side with friends that I don't know at all. (Tokat tent, Female, 43)

Among women, who feel men's pressure in every instance of social life, a female worker highlights that the process of which she was liberated from her husband's control during the resistance was a great change and achievement for her:

Evli bir insanım şu ana kadar böyle bir yerde tek başıma kalmamıştım. Belki eşim buna izin vermeyebilirdi, ama şu an ben eşime diyebildim sen eve git, ben burda kalabiliyorum diyebildim. Bu benim için güzel bir başarı. Demek ki ben burda artık bir şeyleri ifade edebiliyorum. Ben burda kalıyorum ve burda bir sürü erkek arkadaşım var. (Hatay çadırı, Kadın, 44)

I am married but I haven't been anywhere like this before on my own. Perhaps my husband wouldn't allow this, but now I could tell my husband to go home because I'm doing fine here. This is a big success for me. It means I can express certain things here. I stay here and I have many male friends. (Hatay tent, Female, 44)

Men and women staying in tents together helps overcome the norms of traditional social structures of their hometowns by opening lines of communication and contact between two sexes. Closing down woman's communication with the opposite sex is more prevalent in the social structure nested in Eastern and Southeastern regions.

This fact is emphasized by two female workers in Adıyaman tent as they mention the help of the resistance process in letting them overcome certain things:

Adıyaman'da çekiniyorduk erkeklerle konuşmaya burda geldik hep abi abla... Burda gerçekten dayanışmayı öğrendik. Erkek bayan ayırım olmadan eşitliği öğrendik. (Adıyaman çadırı, Kadın, 39)

In Adıyaman, we used to shy away from talking to men. When we came here, everyone was either brother or sister... We really learned to stick together. We learned equality without differentiating as men and women. (Adıyaman tent, Female, 39)

Ben 18 yıldır işletmede çalışıyorum, çoğu erkek arkadaşların isimleri bilmiyorum, görmemişim bile. 18 yıl sonra burda tanıştık. Kadınlar çekimser kaldılar, o da Güneydoğu'nun verdiği şeyden dolayı. (Adıyaman Çadırı, Kadın, 39)

I've worked in the enterprise for 18 years; I didn't know the names of many male, fellow workers. I haven't even seen them. We met here 18 years later. Women were shy, and that's because of the Southeastern thing. (Adıyaman, Female, 39)

Two female interviewees from İzmir tent, on the other hand, focus on men's attitude and approach towards women during the resistance. According to them, male workers never thought of female colleagues with sexual intentions ("*başka gözle bakmamış*"); likewise, female workers never had such a sexual intention in mind, either. As a result, they articulate that they gathered around the struggle, its common spirit and the solidarity relations:

Ben buradayım, hepimiz bayanız ve erkeklerle 65 gündür, burada ben hiçbir erkeğin bir bakışını asla yakalamadım, belki onlar bizi erkek olarak görüyor, belki biz onları kadın olarak görüyoruz, ben bunu asla hissetmedim ya dokunmayı bırak ben bakış olarak hissetmedim. Herkesin hedefi o kadar farklı ki, herkesin hedefi o kadar düzgün ki, insanın bir amacı olduğu zaman başka amaçlar peşinde koşmuyor. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

I'm here, we're all women, and have been here for 65 days together with men. I never caught a wrong glimpse by a man. Perhaps they perceive us as male, or perhaps we perceive them as female. I never felt that kind of glimpse, let alone touching. Everybody's aim is so different and noble that you see people stop entertaining with other things when they have a goal. (İzmir tent, Female, 37)

Valla biz öyle oldu ki Doğulu ile Batılı aynı şeyde, belki elimiz birbirine çarptı, belki abinin kolu sırtıma geldi, ama ben kalkıp ona ne yapıyorsun diye sormak

aklıma bile gelmedi. Çünkü dert var ortada, belli bir sıkıntı var ve tek bir noktada birleşiyoruz, ekmek kavgasındayız. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 39)

At times, the Eastern and the Western came together, perhaps our hands touched, perhaps the arm of a brother touched my back; honestly, I didn't even think of asking and scolding him that what he was doing. Because there is a common issue, clear enough that we all have a certain trouble and we all share a common point in this, we fight for our bread. (İzmir tent, Female, 39)

Another finding in the interviews in the resistance period is that men and women workers try to defend each other as they speak of their relations with the opposite sex. In this context, women state that there is a “sister-sibling” and “brother-big sister” relationship, knowing that there is a gendered, male-dominated understanding of the life in tents and the surrounding places, when they are asked about the life in tents (Sayılan and Türkmen, 2010:139).

Biz artık kadın erkek diye görmüyoruz biliyor musunuz, mücadele sadece bir emek bir hedef bir olduğu için bu ayrımları yapmıyoruz. Biz bazen onlara ana oluyoruz, bazen abla oluyoruz, bazen kardeş oluyoruz onun için hiçbir sorunumuz yok bizim. (Batman çadırı, Kadın, 42)

We don't differentiate people as men and women, you know, because the struggle is united around labor. Sometimes we are mothers to them, sometimes sisters, therefore we don't have any problems with them. (Batman tent, Female , 42)

Similarly, men also depend on “sister-sibling” discourse. A male worker from Manisa tent compares women's roles as woman and mother in the resistance with the “manhood”, and expresses that he is proud of it, while subordinating woman in a sense:

Valla kadınlar bizim bacımız kadınlara bu konuda yüreklerine ayaklarına sağlık. Yani çoğu erkekten bile direnişçi çıktılar, sonuçta işte ekmeğimiz geleceğimiz yarınlarımız, onlara çok çok teşekkür ediyorum onlardaki bu yürek, onlardaki o direnç biz erkekleri daha çok ateşliyor yani onların bayan olarak burada belki 61 günden beri çocuğunu görmeyen bayanlar var yani onlar böyle direnç gösterirken biz erkeklere daha çok güven geliyor yani onlar bayan olarak bizlerin gururu. (Manisa çadırı, Erkek, 43)

Honestly, women are our sisters, thanks for coming and supporting us. I mean, they proved to be more resistant than most men. In the end, here is our future, our bread. I thank them very much. Their courage and resistance stimulates and empowers us, the men more. That is; there are women who have been away from their children for 61 days and they show such strength that we men become more confident. We are proud of them as women. (Manisa tent, Male, 43)

Another male worker finds it valuable that women take part in the resistance and thinks that this movement brought about advancement for women activists from the East, emphasizing their status back in there:

Biz abi kardeş, bacı gibiyiz. Kadının katılması zaten çok güzel bir olay yani, neden; öncülük yapmaları, vatandaşıla iç içe olmaları gerçekten çok güzel bir şey yani. Bizim zamanımızda mesela ben doğulu değilim de, doğu da bildiğim için, yani orada kadınların bir erkeğin yanına gelmesi öcü gözüyle bakılıyor, ama şurada biz kardeşiz, her akşam başka çadırlardayız, onlar bize geliyor, biz onlara gidiyoruz, öyle bir olay yani. (Denizli çadırı, Erkek, 42)

We are like brothers and sisters. It is great to have women in this movement, for one thing. Why, because they lead, they are hand in hand with the citizens, this is such a nice thing. Back in our time, it was a great taboo that women comes near men, I am not from the East but I know the East; but here we are like siblings. Each night in a different tent, we go to theirs, they come to visit ours, it' such a fine order of things. (Denizli tent, Male, 42)

In Turkey, according to unions, low rates of unionization amongst women and their almost absence in the decision making processes are explained by women's powerlessness against the power of traditional and social habits as well as women's own uninterested stance (Toksöz and Sayılan, 2008:263). Whereas it is true that women's interest towards unions is limited by traditional norms, the fact that unions assume this data as valid makes unions contribute to the traditional structure in a problematic way. Traditional norms depend on the assumption that "woman belongs to home" and restricts women's mobility. In this light, a woman worker in Tokat tent realizes the role of social pressures in being a member to the union:

Çalıştığımız yörelerin toplumunun çok etkisi var sendikaya katılmamızda, toplum baskısından kurtulmak illa ki gerekli ama bu zamanla olacak bir şey. (Tokat çadırı, Kadın, 39)

The society of where we live greatly affected our membership to the union, you have to free yourself from the social pressures, it is a must, but it'll happen in time. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

On the other hand, women's lack of interest in unions is real and dependent on the task such as housework and childcare to be entirely left to women. Therefore, women workers toil both at home and at workplace, then, having left no energy whatsoever to be interested in trade union physically, mentally and on a time basis (Toksöz and Erdoğan, 1998:41). A female interviewee tells that women want to become part of the unions; however, this is not possible because of the male-dominated structure of the trade unions as well as double labor responsibilities of women:

Kadınlar girmiyor değil, onlar kadınları sokmadıkları için. Yani şimdi bana deseler sendikada görev al, ben rahatlıkla görev alırım. Bilmiyorum neden sokmuyorlar, belki kadınlar daha kurnaz, ya bir şeyleri görür diye olabilir. Kadın eve gidiyor, çocuklara bakıyor, iş yapıyor. . Yani burda mesela çok kadın var, özellikle kadınlar için bunu daha çok hızlandırmaları gerekirdi. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 37)

Women would be interested in the unions, but men do not let them be so. I mean, if they ask me to be in the union, I will definitely do. I don't know why they don't let women into the union. Maybe it is because women are smarter, they can see things. Women go home, look after the kids, works much... Here, for example there are many women, so they should have put a priority on this issue for particularly women. (İzmir tent, Female, 37)

Another reason why women cannot be actively participating in trade unions is that there is no priority for women's problems in the union's bargaining agenda; therefore, women do not see it necessary to be in an organization that does not respond to their needs (Toksöz, 2004:236). In other words, unions defend the interests of male workers and put it as the interest of working class; this marginalizes women laborers' interests and demands as partial demands (Sayılan, 2008:273). In this context, women's interests and demands are not sufficiently acknowledged and protected by the union. In a similar discourse, a women worker from the resistance tells that she informed the union about her problems at the workplace, yet, the union was not much interested:

Mesela hamile arkadaşlarımız vardı, sıyırma bölümü dediğimiz işte, işletmenin o en ağır olduğu yer, karnı burnunda sıyırma yapan arkadaşlarımız oldu. Günde 16 balya veriliyordu. Sendika hiçte el atmadı bu olaya, biz kendi aramızda konuşarak, amirimizle konuşarak yaptık. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 36)

For example, there are pregnant workers among us, working in the hardest section called peeling department of the enterprise. Some of our friends worked under those heavy conditions, while they were pregnant. They were given 16 bales a day. The union did not do anything about this, made no moves, we had to gather and talk to the director ourselves. (İzmir tent, Female, 36)

Amirimiz bizi köle gibi çalıştırdı, yanımızdaki suyu içemez olduk ya, tuvalete gidemez olduk ya. Erkekler laf söyleyemiyorlardı bayanları daha çok eziyorlardı, bastırıyorlardı. Biz o kadar çok ezildik ki anlatamam yani. Ses çıkaramıyorduk, çıkardık mı 17. madde deyip koyuyordu önüne. 17 madde; amirin imza atarsa seni işten çıkarabiliyor yani. Bizi resmen köle gibi çalıştırdılar, sonra da tekel işçisi yatarak para kazandı diyorlar. Kanunda 8 balya yazıyor bizim günlük yapacağımız, fazla oldu mu söylüyorduk sendikaya, onlarda hayır efendim amirinizi dinleyin diyordu. (İzmir çadırı, Kadın, 36)

The director made us work like slaves. We couldn't drink water or go to WC during work. They weren't able to treat men like this, but they were tyrannizing over women. I can't tell how badly we were treated. We couldn't say anything, or, he would show you the 17th article. 17th article was about the following: If director signs under it, your work can be terminated. They treated us like slaves, now they say Tekel worker makes too much money by doing nothing. It says 8 bales for a day in the law, we would tell the union if it exceeded this number, but they would suggest we listen to the director. (İzmir tent, Female, 36)

Another female interviewee, regarding the improvements needed in women's working conditions, has a different perspective, stating that heavy tasks do not frighten her, and that she knows her male colleagues will lend a hand in doing these difficult tasks:

İnanır mısınız şu anda ben onu düşünmüyorum ben ekmeğimi istiyorum, onurlu çalışmak istiyorum, şartlar ağır şu bu demiyorum zaten yanında çalıştığım erkek arkadaşım ben ağır bir şey yapacaksam bana destek oluyor ki. İlla yani insanca duygularla kendimizin halledeceği şeyler. (Tokat çadırı, kadın, 39)

I don't think about that, I want my bread, I want to work proudly. I'm not saying that working conditions are hard. Anyway, if working conditions are hard, my male colleagues will help me. In any case, we can solve problems with a humane approach and among ourselves. (Tokat tent, Female, 39)

In order to address women, trade unions make up women's committees to work on what they call "women's problems"; yet, these committees function in the form of advisory board and get involved in rather symbolic activities such as those on March 8 (Sayılan, 2008:276). In other words, unions' agenda of activities for women members do not go beyond the celebration of 8th March. (Toksöz, 2004: 243)

Sendikamız bizi nasıl hatırlardı? Yalnızca 8 Mart dünya kadınlar gününde bize 7 karanfil gelirdi yani böyle hatırladılar bizi. . . Yalnızca biz çalışan emekçi insanlar olarak görüldük, yalnızca bizim emeğimiz söz konusu oldu şu ana kadar, başka hiçbir şeyimiz düşünülmedi. Yani kadınların sorunları var mı, ev içi aile içi şiddet var mı, mesela benim moralim bozuk geliyorum işyerine, belki ben o sinirle arkadaşımı kırabiliyorum, işime veremiyorum kendimi, eksik balyalarla çalışabiliyoruz, balyasını eksik verenler var, hiç çalışmayan insanlar var. Bizim sorunlarımıza değinen kimseler yoktu, olmuyordu , bekliyorduk ama kendi kendimize çözebiliyorduk her şeyi. Ama ben isterdim ki bir kadın sendikacımız olsun. Bunu başaran bir arkadaşımız olmadı bugüne kadar. İnşallah olur, işçi olarak kalırsak yaparım ben. Buna gerçekten işçi olarak kalırsam ben inanıyorum ki bir kadın sendikacı olabilirim. Bunu yapmaya çalışacam işçi olarak kalırsam. (Hatay, Kadın, 44)

How did the union remember us? Only on March 8, we would receive seven cloves, that's all... We were seen only as laborers; it was only our labor that they were interested; we meant nothing else. I mean, do women have problems? Are there problems at home, is there violence at home? For example, if I'm really down when I come to work, I can hurt my colleague's feelings; I cannot concentrate on the job. We sometimes have incomplete bales; some people submit bales with missing weight; some people even cannot work, but we would figure out our problems on our own. Nevertheless, I'd like to have a female representative. None of our friends has achieved this until this day; I hope one day someone will. I'd do it if I continue to work as a worker. I certainly believe this is possible; if I continue to be a worker, I can be a female trade unionist. I'll try to make this real. (Hatay, Female, 44)

Finally, following women's status in the resistance and thoughts on the union structures, we learn that they were not freed from the traditional behavior norms and gender roles. Therefore, the Tekel resistance process provided a relatively liberated status for women to the extent that it saved them from patriarchy. Despite all these, women experienced a common class, struggle and solidarity via the Tekel resistance.

5.4.5 The Invisibility of Union in the Tekel Resistance

Through the process of resistance of the TEKEL workers, trade unions show their traditional, central and bureaucratic understanding once again. The experiences of TEKEL workers throughout the resistance displayed the negligence of trade unions in defending the rights of workers against insecure work conditions and how the workers were left by themselves. Workers of TEKEL clearly observed this situation and tried to express this all occasions. In this direction a worker in Aydın tent relates the strenght of the action to the commitment of workers to their cause. Another worker in Denizli tent relates this success to the support and contribution of the public at large.

Bu eylem, işçilerin bu kadar direnmesi neticesinde işçilerin kararlılığı, hırsı, haksızlığa uğramaları bir nevi kırbaçladı. (Aydın çadırı,Erkek,45)

This action as a result of workers' long duration of resistance, commitment and ambition, which is also triggered by the reactions againts injustice. (Aydın tent, Male, 45)

Biz görmedik ya katkısını şunu bunu, vatandaşın şeyiyle desteğiyle biz buradayız. Ankara halkına teşekkür ederiz, yani gerçekten çok duyarlı bir halkı var. (Denizli çadırı,Erkek,42)

We are here with the support of citizens, we did not see any help from the union. Thanks to the people of Ankara, they are reallly sensitive and supportive. (Denizli tent, Male, 42)

The worker in the Istanbul tent states that the action is created by Tekel workers' uprising and it should not be attributed to trade unions. The Tekel worker while mentioning traditional pro-government bureaucratic structure of trade unions emphasizes that Tekel resistance today is a consequence of the classical trade unions' disability to understand and perceive the new conditions of inscure employment and the need for new forms of resistance.

Bu eylem bir kere tekeli işçisinin bir başkaldırısıyla başladı, şimdi bunu kimse inkar edemez.Eğer sendikalar ilgilenseydi tam anlamıyla, bugün 61. gün 61. güne kadar beklenmezdi, en fazla 3-5 gün içinde çözülmesi gerekirdi, ama bugün 61.gün hala sendikalar ve konfederasyonlar kimisi toplantıya katılıyor, hükümet çıkıyor geri

vazgeçiyorlar. İşte Türkiye'deki sendikacılık bu.Türkiye'de ilk defa Türk-iş'in ne olduğunu toplum öğrendi. (İstanbul çadırı, Erkek, 37)

This action started with the revolt of workers. No one can deny this. If the unions had really concerned about it today is 61. day. 3-5 days would be enough to resolve the problem. But today still some trade unions and confederations are attending the meetings, when government left, they gave up. That's the trade unionism in Turkey. For the first time, people of Turkey learned the insufficiency of Türk-İş. (İstanbul tent, Male, 37)

Another Tekel worker from Hatay tent perceives that unions are institutions that are only capable of service thanks to the fees they collect from members; and, thinks that the protest would have yielded results if workers had not been sued for their union membership and if they had paid their membership fees. This worker criticizes the centralist and bureaucratic structure of the unions, as well, stating that workers were not accepted to the meetings between the unions and the government during the resistance; for this reason, they were not aware of the bargains that took place. Finally, this worker argues that the reason why the resistance continued for so long is the weaknesses of trade unions.

Bizim sendikamız bize bunu yaparken sağolsun maddi ve manevi desteklerini esirgemiyor. Dün bize bir bildirge yayınlamıştı, bizden 1 senedir para almıyor, almadığı halde bize bu desteği sağladığımı söylüyor.Herşey çıkar bu dünyada.Eğer benden para alıyor olsaydı belki daha bir farklı olurdu bu eylem diye düşünüyorum.2 ay sürdü bu eylem, hep sendikacılar girdi çıktı hiçbir zaman işçiyi aralarına almadılar.Bir toplantıya girildiği zaman, birkaç işçi temsilcisi alınsın bu toplantıya, bizlerde duyabilelim içerde ne konuşuluyor.Hani çıkıp bize açıklama yapıyorlar ama ben onu duyamadım, yani ne pazarlık yapıldı bilemiyorum ki ben.Niye bu kadar uzun sürdü bu.. bu işin şimdiye kadar çoktan bitmesi lazımdı, çok uzadı biz perişan olduk.Bu kadar uzaması sendikanın zayıflığı. Benden maddi çıkarı yok diye şu an pasif belki ama... (Hatay çadırı, Kadın, 44)

Our trade union, thanks so much, give us material and moral support. Yesterday, the trade union published a proclamation for us. They did not take money from us since last year. They say that they support us although they did not take any money. Everything is profit in this world. If they had taken money from me I think maybe this action would be different. This action lasted two months. There are always trade unionists around but they never integrate workers to their activities. When they organize a meeting, they should invite some representatives of workers so we can hear what they are talking inside. They are giving instructions after the meetings but I still do not know about the negotiation processes. Why this take such a long time? It was supposed to be end already. It lasted long and we became miserable. This extension is the weakness of the trade union. Trade union is passive today probably because they can not take money profits from us... (Hatay tent, Female, 44)

During the Tekel Resistance, workers were the closest witnesses of unproductive unions and representation crisis. During this time, they showed these weaknesses of trade unions to the entire working class, as well. Tekel Workers' Resistance, which highlighted the workers' opposition against the precarious employment conditions as an obvious result of neoliberal policies, showed up as another consequence of weak and traditional trade unions. The fact that unions experience a representation crisis and stay inert in the face of neoliberal policies also shows that in a sense unionist perspective is increasingly withering. In this context, the comment of a worker from İzmir tent that the unions will lose if workers lose, and, unions will win if workers win is quite meaningful.

Sendika şunu farkında değil, tamam biz bitiyoz ama kendi de bitiyor, Türkiye' de sendikacılıkta bitiyor, o şekilde.Şimdi burada bir olay var, sendikalar eğer kendileri birşey öğrenmezler, bizim gibi işçi arkadaşlardan birşey öğrenecekler,biz bu şekilde götürürsek sendika da kazanacak,10.000 üyesini kaybedecek,niye bizim direndiğimiz kadar önümüze geçip direnmiyor ben şaşkıyım ya....,biz kazanırsak manevi olarak çok şey kazanacak sendika tazelenmiş olacak,kitle daha da büyüyecek. (İzmir çadırı, Erkek, 42)

Trade union is not aware of something. Ok, we are falling, but they are also falling with us. Trade Unionism in Turkey is coming to an end. Here there is an action. If trade unions do not learn something by themselves they learn from our worker friends and if we carry on in this way, trade unions will also win. Trade unions will lost 10.000 members. Why they are not resisting like us, I am confused. If we win trade unions will also win spiritually, it will be freshed, the crowd of people will become bigger. (İzmir, Male, 42)

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The trade unions appeared as an outcome of the capitalist mode of production, continued their existence developing within the system. The period when the trade unions entered into a dependency relationship with system displays the features of widespread and empowered trade unions. Therefore, the trade unions which form themselves in accordance with the mechanisms of capitalist system and create their means of struggle according to them, along with the crisis of the capitalist system entered also in the crisis. Capitalism, as a result of the feature of self-renovation in its nature, continued its way after the mid-70's by reforming itself with new means and politics along with its destructive effects on the economic, political and social spheres. By this means, together with neoliberalism that opens new areas for the accumulation of capital, capitalism gains its unique force again. The ideology of neoliberalism, as a result of its aim of orientation from society to the individual, from the state to the market, by purifying the state from its regulatory structure, integrates the collective rights such as education and health under the frame of the welfare state to the process of commodification by subduing them to the market. In other words, the collective rights that belong to the daily life, take a commodity form by being subjected to buying and selling. In a similar fashion, the deregulation and flexibilisation strategies in the labor market offered by the neoliberal politics results with the labors adopting a commodity function in the market relations. Therefore, the process of commodification that is generalized over the collective rights is not only limited with social policies and the products of the labor and affects the labor power. The applications of flexibility, privatization and subcontractor relations on the production and working conditions lead to the unemployment and insecurity, which take the form of the common feature of the employment models in the labor market,

also resulting with the lack of trade union activities by changing the features of the working class. In this context, the structure of trade unions that base on the homogenous worker mass, that is employed within the production industry where the relations of production conducted under a single frame entered into a crisis of representation as a result of the heterogeneous, fragmentary, layered forms of production, employment and labor depending on the service sector brought by the transformation process of capitalism.

The reasons which dragged the trade unions into a crisis of representation and the ways of coping with the crisis were foreseen in some critical debates on trade unions. In the frame of these discussions, it is claimed that the trade unions could not comprehend fully that the structure of capitalism dominates in the political and social spheres as well as the economic ones and relatively attempted only to increase the working standards of the working class and exclude the other spheres. In other words, the trade unions neglected the political and social hegemony of capitalism by targeting only the economic problems.

The tradition of trade unionism in Turkey, as a result of the late industrialization of the country, has a different route from the development of Western trade unions occurred parallel to the industrialization and the development process of capitalism. This tradition was formed around certain economic, historical and structural transformations around Turkey. In addition to these transformations, there is a legal dimension that obstructs the functional and ideological development of trade unions. The trade unions' being subjected to the rights coming from the top before and after the Republican era created a process where the trade unions either gain legal affectivity or lose according to the circumstances. As a result, the trade unions became ineffective in terms of the development of class consciousness by the working class.

Resulted by the policies of neoliberal transformation in Turkey, started the process of privatization which is the restriction of the space of the state on the public service

sphere, the state's losing its control over the public enterprises, that are mostly the outcome of the statist politics of the state and the elimination of the employees of these enterprises. It is seen that the Tekel Enterprises, which had great support to the economic and social life as well as being one of the most important institutions in terms of transfer of resources to the state, by being taken under the scope of privatization, left to the regie period when its history is considered.

The Tekel enterprises at first fragmented and by creating different enterprises it was aimed an easier privatization process for the institution. As an outcome of these privatizations, on 2008 what has left was only the tobacco enterprises and after their privatization in January 2010, the agenda for the workers of this institution became their employment under the unsecured working conditions in another institution. The Tekel workers who refused to obey the dispossession of their vested interests and unsecured working conditions came to Ankara by buses from all over Turkey and started the process of resistance.

The structuring of the labor market with flexibility after the 1980 in Turkey leads to market's gaining an informal form and the employment taking new forms such as provisional, contracted and part-time. The very situation in the labor market, by gradually forcing the unsecured working conditions, result with the creation of deregulated and flexible employment relations and working society. The resistance of Tekel workers in Ankara becomes the signifier of both the stance against these conditions created by neoliberal understanding and both the lack of trade union representation created by these conditions.

The resistance of Tekel workers includes distinctive features from a lot of aspects. The spontaneous development of resistance and their acting with their own will on the front by taking support from the trade unions since they already had the danger of being unemployed and had nothing to lose. The appearance of the resistance from the class perspective is on the ongoing visibility of class as a response to the discourses on the identity problems replacing the class. Another dimension of the Tekel

resistance is its the different ethnic identities coming together became its focus since its occurrence happened within a period when Turkey was confronting debates and tension in the frame of ethnic identity politics. Yet the union of these ethnic identities which are forced to the conflict with each other became a distinctive feature of the Tekel resistance. In this resistance for the female workers their becoming on the forefront as much as they can transcend their gender roles and traditional models of behavior led their adoption of the struggle. The Tekel resistance continued its struggle started from unsecured employment by incorporating with the identities based on ethnic and gender and various social movement structurings and different non-governmental organizations and unite all on the basis of unsecured conditions. In this respect, the Tekel resistance displays that the insecurity created by the flexible working conditions applied in terms of the neoliberal policies becomes the common problem of all the parts of the society and that the trade unions enter into crisis since they cannot grasp this problem's common features and the fragmented structure of the working class created by the changing employment structures.

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Appendix A: English Version of In-depth Interview Questionnaire

A) Socio-Demographic Information

- Age
- Gender
- Education
- Place of Birth

B) Workplace Information

- Where is the Tekel Enterprise you worked at?
- What did you do in the workplace?
- What is your work experience?
- In which department did you work at; is it a desk job or manufacturing job?
- Did you receive any training for this job?
- How and where did you find this job? How did you start working?
- Did you work elsewhere before employment in Tekel?

C) Trade Union Membership

- Are you member to the trade union?
- If yes, since when/for how many years have you been a member?
- Which trade union are you a member of? Do you pay regular fees, do you participate in meetings?
- Did you become a trade union member by a conscious decision? (How and why did you become a member to the union?)

D) Thoughts about Trade Unions

- What is a trade union?

- What is the importance of trade unions?
- Should the functions of trade unions be simply economic?
- What is trade unions' approach with respect to you and to social problems? Should unions approach these in a certain way?
- Can the union take action and protest on issues not directly related to the workers' rights?
- Do you think trade unions were useful and contributed to this protest? How?
- Would this protest be possible without unions' participation/ support?
- So, will unions be effective in reaching an agreement in the end?
- What is a strike? What do you think is the importance of right to strike for workers?
- What is good/ bad about strike?
- Have you ever been involved with a movement similar to strike? What were these?
- Have you ever been involved in a rights-claiming movement other than strike? If so, can you please explain more about it?

E) Experiencing Ankara

- What is the reason you came to Ankara?
- Are these kinds of protests usual in Turkey?
- For how many days have you been here?
- What have you lived and experienced here from the beginning up to now? What difficulties and fears have you had? Can you tell me all you went through here?

F) Questions about the Tekel Resistance Movement

- Did your trade union play a part in your coming to Ankara from where you live? How and to what extent?
- If it did not play a part, how did you organize then?

- What does this movement mean to you? That is to say, is it important for you? Why is it so?
- Did you meet people that are regionally, culturally and politically different from you here for the first time?
- Do these differences matter to you?
- Did you have some preconceptions/prejudice against people that were different from you before?
- If you had some preconceptions, did they change after you came here? How did they change? How do you get along with others?
- Have you had problems here with those that were different from you?
- How do you feel about being together with those who are different from you here in this movement?
- How do you get along with fellow workers who are younger/older than you? Have you had any problems?
- Here, male and female workers are altogether in the movement. What can you say about this?
- Women were not much active in trade unions, strikes and unionized resistance before. Why do you think it was so?
- Women workers were on the forefront and they even led in many instances in this resistance movement. What do you think about this?
- Do you feel any different now in terms of being politically active, compared to before you came here?
- After the Tekel resistance, after this period, will you be active in support of new victims of privatization and, generally, others who suffer because of the violation of their rights, too?

G) Questions about the Future

- What kind of effect do you think the Tekel resistance will have in Turkey in the future?

- According to you, how will this protest influence the trade unions? What will the trade unions make sense out of this protest?
- What effect will the movement have on governments?
- Will this movement lead to a change of state of the things legally?
- What will happen if you do not gain what you demand? Can you tell me what could be your next employment status?
- Do you have anything else to add/tell?

Appendix B: Turkish Version of In-depth Interview Questionnaire

A) Sosyo-Demografik Bilgiler

- Yaşı
- Cinsiyeti
- Eğitim Durumu
- Doğum Yeri

B) İş Bilgileri

- Tekel işletmesinin bulunduğu yer
- Çalıştığı yerde yaptığı iş
- İş tecrübesi
- Hangi bölümde, masa başı mı yoksa imalatta mı çalıştınız?
- Bu iş için herhangi bir eğitim aldınız mı?
- İş nasıl, nereden buldunuz , nasıl başladınız?
- Tekelden önce başka işlerde çalıştınız mı?

C) Sendika Bilgileri

- Sendikaya üye misiniz?
- Evetse, sendika geçmişiniz kaç yıl?
- Hangi sendikaya üyesiniz, düzenli aidat öder misiniz, toplantılara katılır mısınız?
- Sendikaya bilinçli olarak mı üye oldunuz?(Sendikaya nasıl ve neden üye oldunuz?)

D) Sendika Hakkındaki Düşünceleri

- Sendika nedir?

- Sendikanın önemi nedir?
- Sendikanın görevleri sadece ekonomik mi olmalıdır?
- Kendinize ve toplumsal sorunlara ilişkin sendikaların tavrı nasıl ve bir tavrı olmalı mı?
- Sendika direk olarak işçi haklarını ilgilendirmeyen konularda da eylemler yapabilir mi?
- Sizce sendikalar bu eyleme katkı yaptılar mı, nasıl?
- Bu eylem sendikaların katkısı olmadan da yapılabilir miydi?
- Peki, sonuçta anlaşmada sendikalar etkili olacak mı?
- Grev nedir?Grev hakkının işçi için önemi nedir?
- Grevin olumlu olumsuz yönleri neler?
- Daha önce hiç grev benzeri hareketler içerisinde oldunuz mu?Neler?
- Daha önce grev değil ama herhangi bir hak arama eylemi içinde oldunuz mu, evetse açıklayın.

E) Ankara'daki Deneyimleri

- Ankara'ya geliş nedeniniz nedir?
- Bu tür eylemler Türkiye'de olağan mı?
- Kaç gündür buradasınız?
- Başından itibaren burada neler yaşadınız , tecrübe ettiniz, neler çektiniz?(sıkıntılar, korkular)Bana tüm yaşadıklarınızı anlatır mısınız?

F) Tekel Direniş Hareketi İle İlgili Sorular

- Bulduğunuz yerden Ankara'ya gelmenizden sendikanızın bir etkisi oldu mu , nasıl, ne kadar?
- Etkisi olmadıysa nasıl örgütlendiniz?
- Bu hareket size ne ifade ediyor, yani bu eylem önemli mi, neden önemli?
- Sizden farklı (kültürel değerlerde, düşüncede ve bölgede) olan insanlarla ilk kez burada mı karşılaştınız?
- Bu farklılıklar sizin için önemli midir?

- Daha öncesinde sizden farklı olan insanlara karşı birtakım önyargılarınız varmıydı?
- Önyargınız vardıysa burda değişti mi, nasıl değişti?Nasıl anlaşıyorsunuz?
- Burda sizden farklı insanlarla sorunlar yaşadınız mı?
- Sizden farklı olan insanlarlabu eylemde beraber olmak size ne hissettirdi?
- Sizden farklı yaştaki işçi arkadaşlarınızla nasıl anlaşıyorsunuz, sorun yaşadınız mı?
- Burada kadın-erkek işçiler hep birarada eylemdeler, bunu nasıl yorumlarsınız?
- Kadınlar daha öncesinde sendikalarda, grevlerde, sendikal direnişlerde fazla etkin değildi bunu neye bağlıyorsunuz?
- Bu direniş hareketinde kadın işçiler ön planda, hatta çoğu yerde öncüsü oldu, bunu nasıl karşılıyorsunuz?
- Buraya gelmeden önce kendinizde siyasetin içinde olma bakımından bir değişiklik hissediyor musunuz?
- Tekel direnişinden sonra, yani bu süreç sonrası zamanlarda, yeni özelleştirme mağdurları ve daha genel anlamda hak ihlallerinden mağdur olan farklı kesimler içinde eylemlilikte olacak mısınız?

G) Gelecek İle İlgili Sorular

- Tekel eyleminin ilerde Türkiye’de ne gibi başka etkiler yaratacağını düşünüyorsunuz?
- Sizce bu eylemin sendikalar üzerindeki etkisi ne olacak?Yani sendikalar bu eylemden ne çıkaracak?
- Hükümetler üzerindeki etkisi ne olacak?
- Yasal bir durum değişikliğine yol açacak mı?
- Eğer talebinizde bir kazanım elde edemezseniz neler olacak? Bundan sonraki iş durumunuz ne olabileceğini bana anlatır mısınız?
- Sizin başka söylemek/ eklemek istediğiniz bir şey var mı?