WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS:
PARTICIPATION AND RESISTANCE IN PATRIARCHAL ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS:

PARTICIPATION AND RESISTANCE IN PATRIARCHAL ORGANIZATIONS

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The purpose of this study is to examine unionist women's strategies of resistance to patriarchal power relations within trade unions through interviews conducted with a selected group of women unionists, in order to answer the question "how do women resist, survive, challenge, and overcome the manifestations of patriarchal power relations in trade unions?" Women unionists face certain restrictions that hinder their equal participation and representation in trade unions, develop individual and/or collective strategies of resistance, such as "carefully planning every move", "prioritizing and planning each moment", and "redefining and transforming unionism", that aim at survival within hostile union environments, and/or at transforming those structures. Individual strategies are adopted by all women who aim to stay within trade unions, and the union movement in general. On the other hand, collective strategies that have the purpose of transforming trade unions into more women-friendly environments are adopted by the women who possess a level of feminist consciousness, which leads to the conclusion that feminism is the ideology that is required to be influential among union members and officials for the establishment of gender equality in trade unions.

Keywords: Trade union, women's resistance, patriarchy, feminism

ÖZ

KADINLAR VE SENDİKALAR:
ATAERKİL ÖRGÜTLERDE KATILIM VE DİRENİŞ

Damarlı, Nihan

Yüksek Lisans, Kadın Çalışmaları Anabilim Dalı

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Bu çalışmanın amacı kadın sendikacıların sendikal yapılar içerisinde deneyimledikleri ataerkil iktidar ilişkilerine karşı geliştirdikleri direniş stratejilerini yapılan mülakatlar aracılığıyla incelemek, ve "kadınlar ataerkil iktidar ilişkilerinin sendikalardaki tezahürlerine nasıl direniyor, karşı koyuyor, üstesinden geliyor, ve buralarda varolmayı sürdürüyor?" sorusuna cevap vermektir. Kadın sendikacılar sendikalarda eşit katılım ve temsillerini engelleyen bazı kısıtlamalarla karşılaşıyor, ve "her hareketini dikkatle planlamak", "önceliklerini belirlemek ve her dakikayı planlamak", ve "sendikacılığı yeniden tanımlamak ve dönüştürmek" gibi, sendikal yapılar içinde var olmayı sürdürebilmeyi ve/veya bu yapıları dönüştürmeyi amaçlayan bireysel ve/veya kolektif direniş stratejileri geliştiriyorlar. Bireysel stratejiler sendikalarda ve sendikal siyasette yer almayı sürdürmek isteyen tüm kadınlar tarafından uygulanıyor. Diğer taraftan, sendikaları kadınların kendilerini ait hissedebilecekleri ortamlar haline dönüştürmeyi hedefleyen kolektif stratejiler yalnızca feminist bilince sahip kadınlar tarafından uygulanıyor. Bu durum ise, sendikalarda toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine ulaşmanın ancak feminist düşüncenin üyeler ve sendika yöneticileri arasında etkin hale gelmesiyle mümün olabileceği sonucuna işaret ediyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sendika, kadın direnişi, ataerki, feminizm

To My Niece Defne, whose smile enlightens my day…

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"In a sense, feminism has always existed. Certainly, as long as women have been subordinated, they have resisted that subordination."

(Jaggar, 1983: 3)

1.1 Objective of the Study and Problem Statement

In the feminist literature, patriarchy, which is defined as "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general" (Lerner, 1986: 238-9), remains an essential concept for the examination of women's subordinate position in society. Through the imposition of gendered societal norms that shape both women's and men's behavior, women's alternative choices in all aspects of their lives remain limited. Research on the constraining effects of these gender norms on women have led to specific conceptualizations of the nature and causes of patriarchy. In order to reveal the operation of patriarchal power relations, women's resistance to patriarchy also needs to be examined. As patriarchal power relations constrain women's choices throughout their lives, they also encounter resistance. Women resist patriarchy, in order to manipulate its terms and to open up spaces for themselves (Weitz, 2001: 670-82; Abu-Lughod, 1990: 43-8; Ong, 1988: 33-8; Ngai, 2000: 554; Kandiyoti, 1988: 274). They do this through developing various strategies, based on their evaluation of its forces, prevailing conditions, as well as possible consequences.

The objective of this thesis study is to explore and understand the resistance strategies of women trade union activists and officials against patriarchal power relations that manifest themselves as gender discrimination in trade unions. Trade unions are legally registered organizations with the purpose of representing the economic and political interests of workers, providing their members with certain rights and protections, and bringing workers

together within and across workplaces, communities and national borders (Mitter, 1994: 6; Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 5). However, working women's participation and representation in trade unions have never been equal to those of men's. In fact, since their establishment, trade unions have been male-dominated organizations (Glover and Kirton, 2006; Kessler-Harris, 2007; Berch, 1982). Female workers, who had long been considered as secondary to males, were not seen as equal members in unions either. As a result, gender discrimination has for long prevailed within trade unions. The exclusion of women from decision-making mechanisms, senior positions, and inner circles of men by male workers and unionists; marginalization of women's units; gender stereotyping; sexual harassment, and mobbing have been identified in the literature as the major mechanisms to keep women out of positions of power in unions, positions which are reserved exclusively for men (Ledwith, Colgan, Joyce, & Hayes, 1990; Colgan and Ledwith, 2002a; Hartmann, 1990, 1981; Sechi, 2007). It is important to note here that women continue to face those barriers that prevent their equal participation and career advancement in trade unions; yet, in order to resist these practices, they devise their own methods and strategies. This study analyzes specifically the strategies that women trade union activists and officials adopt to resist patriarchy in the union hierarchy. More specifically, it is the purpose of this study to analyze the case of women trade unionists in Turkey in order to demonstrate and highlight the operation of patriarchal power relations in trade unions, and explore women's ways of manipulating them.

In examining the patriarchal power relations within trade unions, which includes women's struggle with gender discrimination, this study adopts a conceptual framework derived from Foucault's conceptualization of power and resistance relations. Foucault widened the definition of resistance by positing that power relations are present in every social interaction of individuals, and resistance is never exterior to, but instead, an intrinsic part of power relations. Contending that "[w]here there is power, there is resistance" (1978: 95), Foucault drew attention to the possibility of some form of resistance being necessarily involved in power relations. This indicates that power relations are never static; but instead, they can be transformed through struggles and confrontations. The important point about the nature of resistance is that, resistance need not be limited to direct confrontation and open acts of opposition. Covert and indirect forms of resistance may also be the preferred route of action for subordinated actors so long as they think of them to be the best possible methods. This could also be a result of an evaluation of the conditions and one's resources, or of cynicism coming from past failures, or of a belief that consequences of open

resistance might be too much to bear (Scott, 1990: 85-6). Such acts of resistance constitute an important part of our everyday activities; in fact, each and every daily interaction can be seen as a constant struggle where limits are being pushed and tested, and power relations being transformed.

It follows that, if any form of domination always encounters resistance, patriarchal system of domination is also likely to encounter resistance. In this context, unionist women are also likely to devise specific ways of dealing with the patriarchal practices that they face in trade unions; confront directly when they can; conform when they feel they need to; or play the "men's game" when it seems as the best strategy to achieve one's goals (Colgan and Tomlinson, 1996: 69). Strategies might differ in their aims and methods, because they are influenced by a number of factors, such as gender consciousness, political environment of the union, the person's own perceptions of the situation and of possible future outcomes of her actions, willingness to take action, etc. The dynamic interaction of all these factors affect the adoption of certain strategies, which indicates that there is no single way of responding to a system of domination. Instead, different actors can develop diverse methods, such as establishing separate women's units within unions, establishing women-only unions, organizing conferences, training and education programmes; forming networks and alliances with certain groups from within and outside unions; implementing equality policies; confronting discriminatory practices and their actors; quitting; etc. (Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 3; Ledwith and Colgan, 1996).

The aim of this study is to bring into light precisely this interaction between the diverse factors that prevent women from practising trade unionism the way they want to, and the strategies that women develop in order to overcome these obstructions. I argue that the resistance strategies of women unionists mostly aim at survival within union environments that are often hostile to women. These strategies reproduce the existing circumstances due to the absence of a systematic challenge towards the system of domination; however, they are necessary for the maintenance of women's continuous existence within trade unions. The existence and success of collective resistance strategies aiming at transforming trade unions into more women-friendly environments, on the other hand, depend on the existence of women with gender consciousness, and on the existence of solidarity networks among women workers, unionists, and feminists. Accordingly, in this study, the following questions are asked: "How do women resist and overcome the manifestations of patriarchal power relations in trade unions? What are their strategies? Which factors influence the

3

adoption of certain resistance strategies? What is the effect of having feminist consciousness on the nature of the adopted resistance strategies? Where do the women derive their power from, which enables them to resist?". Answers to these questions will be, first, sought by overviewing the reasons of women's underrepresentation in decision-making mechanisms of trade unions in general and in Turkey, and then, by analyzing Turkish women unionists' narratives that are obtained through the research carried out for this study, the details of which are provided in the following section.

1.2 Research Procedure

Patriarchy, as a systemic power relationship, directs and shapes both men's and women's behavior; but simultaneously, it also provides areas and means in the context of multidimensional power relations that might be used to empower women. Hence, women also question and challenge the impositions of patriarchy; they sometimes accommodate, and sometimes actively resist to its terms, which are actions that are interrelated to one another. Kelly, Burton and Regan (1994) defined feminism as "both a theory and practice" which has the purpose of understanding women's oppression in order to end it. Therefore, feminist research aims to create useful knowledge that can be used to "make a difference" by informing activism (Ibid: 28). It aims to understand and reveal how the impositions of patriarchy, the constructions of gender, and the resulting inequalities, influence and constrain the lives of both women and men, which is necessary to be able to transform gender inequalities. In this context, feminist research has examined gender relations within patriarchal contexts in order to reveal and understand women's relationship with patriarchy; this is also the underlying concern of this thesis.

One of the merits of feminist research is its preoccupation with revealing the experiences of women through asking previously unasked questions, by using all the existing ways of gathering information (Harding, 1987). Instead of testing theories with concepts which were themselves formulated based on men's experiences, feminist researchers aim to take women's experiences as their source. This "field-based theorizing" establishes a strong link between theory and practice, provides researchers with new perspectives, and increases the possibilities of understanding women's realities (Christiansen-Ruffman, 1998: 28). However, research methods of positivist sciences, which are designed mostly for empirical testing, do not satisfy this purpose. Because of this, although feminist researchers can use a variety of methods as long as the methods are informed with a feminist perspective, they

4

are more inclined to use qualitative research methods, which make it possible to observe, understand, and interpret women's experiences (Kümbetoğlu, 2005: 56). Qualitative methods, such as unstructured or semi-structured interviews create the possibility for a free interaction between the researcher and the participant, and for clarification and discussion (Reinharz, 1992: 18). In-depth interviews provide the opportunity to learn what the participant has to say in her own words, not only through what she says out loud, but also with the observation of her body language. In-depth interviews are interactional in nature, because the narrative and behavior of the participant can lead the researcher to formulate new questions on the spot. Also, if possible, conducting multiple interviews could provide the researcher with the opportunity to ask additional questions, and to focus on topics that are not sufficiently discussed.

Feminist researchers challenged the conventional premise of an abstract, all-knowing, objective researcher, and instead, supported the inclusion of the researcher's subjectivity in her work through self-disclosure. Feminists criticize the subject-object dichotomy and the hierarchical relationship between researcher and participant, and aim to form nonexploitative relations with participants; because the purpose of feminist research is "to give voice to women who have been denied it" (Sprague & Kobrynowicz, 1999: 32). By revealing her ethnicity, race, class, culture, beliefs and assumptions, a researcher can demonstrate that she is not an "anonymous voice", and place herself and the research process in the same "critical plane" as the subject of the study (Harding, 1987: 9). Most feminist researchers give an account of the whole research process, because including the subjectivity of the researcher in this way "repairs the project's pseudo-objectivity", and also makes it become more comprehensible, because the process is an important part of the product (Reinharz, 1992: 212, 258). Including the subjectivity of the researcher is also crucial for the nature of the relationship between researcher and participants. In order for a relationship of trust to be formed, the researcher may have to disclose information about herself, and share her own experiences with the participant. Another reason for there to be a mutual interaction is that feminist research has the purpose of transforming the oppressive conditions that surround women, which can be possible for both the researcher and the participant if they can mutually share and learn from each other (Kümbetoğlu, 2005: 56).

In line with the premises of feminist research, the primary data of this study is collected through semi-structured interviews with a selected group of women unionists in Turkey. Since the purpose of this study is to understand the nature of unionist women's daily

5

encounters with patriarchal power relations, it was necessary and important to hear women's own narratives. A total of 15 interviews are conducted with women trade union officials in order to tap into their experiences to get a precise picture of union structures. I used snowball sampling in reaching the interviewees, who were very helpful and kind enough to refer me to other women. In addition to the interviews, I also surveyed secondary sources on women and trade unions to constitute a framework of analysis to understand women unionists' experiences and strategies of resisting patriarchal power relations within trade unions. Women's resistance is a crucial concept in investigating women's relationship with patriarchy; however, there are not a large number of studies that use this concept in examining women's relationship with trade unions. This is especially the case for Turkish resources, which mostly focus on the factors that prevent women's equal participation and representation in trade unions, without addressing the ways how women overcome and/or cope with these obstructions. The absence of such studies is a deficiency that makes it essential to conduct research which centralize women's point of view in order to expose the operations of patriarchal power relations in trade unions.

This thesis aims at contributing to the feminist literature by analyzing the experiences of women unionists who voluntarily enter into a world structured according to men's interests since its inception. More specifically, this study explores women activists' and officials' strategies of resistance to patriarchal pressures and forces within the male-dominated unions in Turkey, by providing an empirical analysis based on interviews with these women. As such, the analysis is not concerned with specific trade unions' organizational approach to the issue of gender inequality. The interviewees are selected from separate trade union organizations, and the interviews focused on women's experiences of patriarchal power relations within their respective union structures, and on the women's strategies of resisting them. Hence, this study should not be considered as providing an exhaustive analysis of women's relationship with trade unions; nevertheless, its findings will serve as a background for further study which would reveal women unionists' experiences in a more detailed and comprehensive way.

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

Within the research problematique of this thesis, the next chapter focuses on the concepts of power and resistance, and the relationship between the two. A brief discussion of Foucault's conceptualization of power relations is then followed by an examination of

women's resistance strategies to patriarchy in general. Chapter 3 focuses on women's relationship with trade unions, including the nature and the causes of women's underrepresentation in unions, and women's ways of resisting and overcoming these causes. Chapter 4 reviews the situation in Turkey through the findings of research which examined trade unions in Turkey, and women's relationship with them. Chapter 5 provides an overall analysis and discussion of the data obtained through interviews in light of the theoretical perspective of this study. Lastly, the conclusion chapter (Ch 6) provides a summary of the research major and restates its findings in line with the arguments put forward in the thesis, and offers general theoretical insights and new questions based on the findings.

CHAPTER 2

POWER, RESISTANCE, AND WOMEN:

IMPLICATIONS FOR GENDERED ORGANIZATIONS?

2.1 Power and Resistance: Following In the Footsteps of Foucault

The word "power" usually connotes something masculine that is possessed by men, and manifested through confrontation. It possesses negative connotations because of the way it is used in daily language, as something that "corrupts", used on or against others; however, Foucault's conceptualization of power has transformed this conventional perception. Although Foucault's framework did not address gender dynamics of power directly, adopting a Foucauldian conceptual framework seems crucial in understanding women's strategies of resisting patriarchal oppression. This enables us to consider power relations at the micro-level contexts of everyday life. According to Foucault, power was misrepresented as a prohibitive, negative, oppressive force. It was accepted as a restrictive force, as a limit set on freedom; because power hid an important part of its own mechanisms (Foucault, 1978: 86). But the actual operation of power cannot be reduced as such, because it operates in a number of ways with varying means or techniques (Lynch, 2010: 18). In order to overcome this analytical difficulty, Foucault stated that power should not be understood as "a group of institutions and mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens of a given state", or as "a mode of subjugation which, in contrast to violence, has the form of the rule", or finally as "a general system of domination exerted by one group over another" (Foucault, 1978: 92). These are simply different forms that power had taken, they were not given; but terminal and contextual.

It follows that power should be understood as "the multiplicity of force relations" (Foucault, 1978: 92). Foucault defined it as local force relations, and by examining individuals' behaviors and interactions with others at the micro level. Force relations can be defined as "whatever in one's social interactions that pushes, urges or compels one to do something" (Lynch, 2010: 19). Since individuals do not take up only a single position in

society, but occupy various roles, such as students, daughters, mothers, employees, and etc., there are many relations of force in one's social interactions, all of which influence and shape one's decisions and behaviors, such as the perception that a certain type of action will lead to certain consequences. However; this does not lead to the extreme point where there is no place for freedom. In Foucault's view:

> It's clear that power should not be defined as a constraining act of violence that represses individuals, forcing them to do something or preventing them from doing some other thing. But it takes place when there is a relation between two free subjects, and this relation is unbalanced, so that one can act upon the other, and the other is acted upon, or allows himself to be acted upon (quoted in Taylor, 2010: 5).

Moreover, power relations take place between free subjects; therefore, when one person acts on another, the other person can respond in a number of ways. Even though the relation between them is unbalanced and unequal, individuals can still react in ways that can shape the behavior of others. Therefore; power is not a form of repression that completely precludes any type of reaction. According to Foucault, "Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared" (1978: 94); therefore, it is not reserved for the possession of some specific people, but it emerges in the interactions of individuals. It "circulates" without a single center or focus, and operates through a "net-like organization" (Foucault, 1980: 71, 98, 156). Power relations are not exterior to, but immanent in other types of relationships, such as economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations, etc. Power relations emerge in these as the effects of the inequalities that occur in them; therefore, it can be said that there is no social interaction without any relations of power (Foucault, 1978: 94). However, this does not mean that one is trapped by this omnipresence of power, because it is not incompatible with freedom. Power "comes from below" (Ibid: 94); it emerges and develops "in specific, local, individual choices, behaviours and interactions". These relationships interact, combine, and constitute larger social patterns, which produce "macroforms" such as societies and states (Lynch, 2010: 22). Therefore, examining binary oppositions between rulers and the ruled is not sufficient; because power is not "a binary structure with dominators on the one side, and dominated on the other side" (Foucault, 1980: 142). These propositions bring power and resistance into daily life, into the mundane activities of individuals, which are often thought of as the least political. Resistance takes place more often than we think; because it does not consist of only massive scale actions. Foucault stated that "[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (1978: 95-6). This means that the possibility of some type of resistance exists

whenever there is a power relation; and since power relations are everywhere, then, so is resistance. The relationship of resistance and domination can be defined as interactional and cyclical; a constant relationship in which each provokes and leads to the other in a circular way (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004: 548; Witz & Savage, 1992: 28). Therefore, there is always the possibility to resist, to manipulate, and to alter power relations, which are ongoing processes that are constantly being transformed through struggles and confrontations. All social interactions consist of an interplay of force and resistance (Lynch, 2010: 24), which does not have a fixed ending. Similarly, patriarchy can be considered as a web of power relations that shape both the lives of women and men, and since resistance is an intrinsic element of power relations, then, women's resistance is an intrinsic part of patriarchal power relations. In line with this, gender relations can be seen as a process that involves strategies and counter-strategies of power, where women develop their own methods and means of resistance, in order to manipulate and transform the impositions of patriarchy.

Foucault also defined disciplinary power as a form of power that emerged with the aim of making individuals internalize norms, and of controlling their behavior, by solving "the problems of surveillance", so that an outside compelling force would no longer be necessary (1980: 148). Disciplinary power produces subjected docile bodies through the use of hierarchical observation; normalizing judgement; and the examination (Foucault, 1995: 170). It orders individuals in a hierarchically partitioned space, divides time into its fragments and plans every minute, observes and documents the behaviour of individuals, compares them against each other, asserts a standard of behavior, norm, and punishes those who depart from the norm in order to correct their behavior (Ibid: 140-57). As a result, it creates a social order in which individuals not only monitor their own actions, but also the actions of others to maintain compliance with the norm. Foucault stated that disciplinary power is a "generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men", which can be used anytime when "one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behaviour must be imposed" (Ibid: 205). Individuals can thus be made to monitor their own behavior; they are not simply passive receivers of oppression, but are also assuming an active role in their own subjugation, by internalizing and playing both roles. At this point what comes to mind is the possibility of transforming this relation. Is it not possible for individuals to transform this relation of domination, since they are playing an active role in its maintenance? In Foucault's (1978: 95) own words, "[w]here there is power, there is resistance", so

10

disciplinary power provides also a possibility of resistance. At the very least, individuals "can refuse to participate" in the relation of domination, which is a way that "the weak exercise their power" (Janeway, 1975: 105). Freedom and power relations are not incompatible; because for Foucault, freedom is not about getting oneself outside power relations; but it is the practice and ability to navigate power relations in ways that attempt to minimize constraints and develop new modes of thinking and being (Taylor, 2010: 4-5, 180). Power relations are everywhere, but individuals always have the possibility to resist, which arises from their own experiences that may be different than the imposed standards. The important point to realize is that the existing order and its limits are not a necessity. Then, how is this navigation of power relations and development of alternative ways of thinking and being, that is, resistance, possible?

Taylor briefly described how individuals as subjects are produced: individuals constitute themselves as subjects through various practices, and at the same time, they are constituted, because the way these practices are undertaken is shaped by societal norms and values. Therefore, subjects are produced "in and through relations of power" (2010: 173), which involve continuous struggles of multiple forces. What individuals are supposed to do is to "reflect critically on the very process of becoming a subject" by finding out when, how and through which practices they are constrained, and through which practices they can resist normalization. This critical reflection is "critique", and it is called by Foucault the "art of navigating power relations", which entails questioning power and its discourses of truth (quoted in Taylor, 2010: 173, 179). Through critique, which is possible with the practices of refusal, curiosity, and innovation, imposed norms can be refused and re-examined, and their contingency can be exposed through the development of alternative modes of thinking and being. Critiquing and raising questions of the "commonsense acceptance" of social norms and imposed roles is a "political challenge to those who have formulated social regulations in certain ways" (Farganis, 1994: 43). These practices that characterize critique, therefore, emphasize the active role of individuals in the construction of their own subjectivities, which possesses an emancipatory potential (Taylor, 2013: 411). Thus, for Foucault, power is not exercised by certain groups from top down onto others, and it does not restrict all the actions of individuals. Resistance does not consist only of massive scale and visible acts; instead, it takes place all the time, in every social interaction. So, women can question, refuse, and negotiate the terms of patriarchy from within patriarchal contexts, and create alternatives through the adoption of a critical perspective; because they are not simply constituted, but also constitute themselves.

11

Foucault's writings have influenced and inspired a wide range of thinkers, including feminists. However, he has been criticized because there are only a few direct references in his writings to women and gender (Afary & Anderson, 2005: 39; Martin, 1982: 6-7; King, 2004: 29). Even though Foucault examined power relations in general, and disciplinary power and its effects on the body in particular, he did not specifically analyze gender relations, as if it has no impact. He analyzed the disciplinary practices that construct docile bodies and subjects, but did not make a distinction between women and men (King, 2004; Bartky, 1990), as if bodies are gender-neutral. Foucault's gender neutrality is problematic, because the society in which we live is in fact gendered. However, this does not necessarily diminish the importance of his work, and does not change the fact that it can be related to women (King, 2004: 29).

Although Foucault did not write directly about women, there are convergences between his writings and feminist theories, which make it possible to relate his theories to women. Afary and Anderson (2005: 39) argued that both Foucault and feminist writings focus on the body as a site of power and domination, point to the local operations of power instead of focusing on power at the macro-level, and emphasize the role of discourse in the construction of power and subjectivities. Another point of convergence is the refusal to accept those which are presented as natural and necessary. Both Foucault and feminist theories emphasize "refusing to accept what we are told we must be and experimenting in ways that open onto not yet thought or imagined ways of living" (Taylor 2013: 416; 2010:4). Foucault demonstrated how the current situation is contingent, and is the result of certain historical developments, which is also the concern of feminists who argue that the existing patriarchal system of domination is not inevitable, and that it could be transformed to achieve gender equality.

Additionally, both Foucault and feminist writers criticized and distanced themselves from totalizing grand theories that claim to provide scientifically objective explanations (Afary & Anderson, 2005: 40). Instead, Foucault analyzed power and resistance at the micro level, in terms of their local manifestations. Similarly, feminists challenged Western paradigms that were taken for granted since the Enlightenment (King, 2004: 32), because they were based on the life experiences of men, and did not reflect the realities of women. Focusing on the diverse experiences of women was necessary in order to understand the real conditions of women's lives, how they were constructed, and how they were perceived by women

themselves. A macro-level approach seems to be limited because it only offers a generalized and abstract account of power which conceals differences and complexities at the micro levels. Foucault's work illuminates how individuals are involved in power relations through everyday practices, while avoiding grand narratives (Bradley, 1998: 31-2). Similarly, understanding the relationship between patriarchy and women through analyzing local manifestations of domination and resistance provides detailed information on how women perceive and cope with patriarchal power relations. Since women do not constitute a homogeneous group, and do not live in the same conditions, their experiences of power relations are diverse. Therefore one can rightly hold that focusing on these different contexts, such as the experiences of women trade unionists, provides insights into different patterns of patriarchy, and the resistance strategies that are adopted by women, which are crucial in understanding the dynamics of patriarchal power relations.

2.2 Women and Resistance to Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a system of domination where men are privileged over women. It is one of the most fundamental forms of oppression, because it permeates into every aspect of society. Accordingly, patriarchy is defined by Rich (1986: 57) as:

> A familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.

According to Lerner (1986) patriarchy is "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general". Lerner emphasized the systematic and institutional nature of male dominance, which implied that power in all the important institutions of society belong to men, and that women's access to such power is restricted. However, this does not necessarily mean that women do not have any "rights, influence, and resources" in the society (Ibid: 238-9).

Hartmann's (1981) account also points to the systematic nature of patriarchy; she defined it as "a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women". The material base consists of men's control over women's labour power, which is maintained by restricting women's access to resources, and controlling

13

their sexuality. This definition emphasizes men's "shared relationship of dominance" over women, and men's interdependence for the maintenance of this domination (Ibid: 11). In Hartmann's view, patriarchy predates capitalism, and that capitalism builds upon and takes advantage of women's subordinate position which is the result of patriarchy. Since women were paid lower wages in the labor market, male workers considered women's employment as a threat due to the rising competition among workers. To deal with this situation, men chose to exclude and/or segregate women workers, instead of organizing them for equal pay. Hartmann argued that this was possible since men had better knowledge of the techniques of hierarchical organization and control, as a result of controlling the labor of women and children within the family even before capitalism (1990: 147-156). Male-led unions have implemented policies that benefited male workers, and male workers, through unions, have played a crucial role in "the creation and maintenance of hierarchical job structures" (Ibid: 168). Hartmann interpreted this by underlining men's desire under patriarchy to "assure that women continue to perform the appropriate tasks at home"; which is a privilege that they do not want to lose (1990: 160; 1981: 14).

Along with the systematic nature of patriarchy, a useful definition should also take into account different forms of power relations, such as race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, age, etc., since women's oppression does not take a single form. In fact, universal conceptualization of patriarchy, which did not take into account cultural and historical differences, has been widely criticized (Butler, 1990; Walby, 1992; Ramazanoğlu, 1989). Walby (1992: 36) suggested that in order to avoid reductionism, an account of patriarchy should not be based on simply one causal base. According to Walby, patriarchal system is composed of six structures which are "paid work, housework, sexuality, culture, violence and the state". Analyzing how these structures and their interrelationships constitute different forms of patriarchy widens the scope of the term, and acknowledges variety among multiple relations of power that intersect. Likewise, Briar (1997) criticized theories that took capitalism and patriarchy as two independent systems, because of the fact that once it is thought that employers aim only to maximize their wealth, then their preference for hiring men for higher status jobs cannot be explained. She argued that capitalism is being redefined as a "patriarchal socioeconomic system, which controls and exploits subordinate men by giving them privileges relative to women" (Ibid: 174). This way, by analyzing the interactions of different relations of power, the nature of women's subordination can be grasped in a more detailed way.

Hartmann highlighted the difference between sex and gender, and the socially constructed nature of the latter, by stating that "[w]e are born female and male, biological sexes, but we are created woman and man, socially recognized genders" is how (1981: 12). Feminist writers have pointed to this difference in order to show that gender attributes and the resulting inequalities are actually contingent. Powell (2011) described gender as "the psychosocial implications of being male or female, such as beliefs and expectations about what kinds of attitudes, behaviors, skills, values and interests are more appropriate for or typical of one sex than the other", and added that gender differences influence people's reactions to the behaviors of others. Traditional gender roles suggest that women should behave in a "feminine" manner, and men should behave in a "masculine" manner, consistent with presumed attributes, deviation from which is interpreted as "abnormal behavior" (Ibid: 4-14). Similarly, underlining the socially constructed nature of gender, Bradley (1998) defined the term as refering to "the way we allocate different social roles and attributes to biological sexes", which covers both "the sexual division of labour and cultural definitions and ascriptions concerning femininity and masculinity". The important point here is that, these beliefs regarding the differentiation of the attributes and behaviors of each sex involve an inequality, a hierarchy that disadvantages women, by placing them in a subordinate position to men. As Acker (1992: 250-1) argued, gender is "patterned, socially produced distinctions between female and male, feminine and masculine" that "usually involves the subordination of women". These analyses of patriarchy show how unequal gender relations structure the overall subordination of women, and suggest that patriarchy is a system of domination that affects every aspect of life. However, discussions of gender point to the fact that the imposed roles are not absolute necessities; but they are socially constructed. Therefore, the gender hierarchy, and the resulting inequality is contingent, and can be transformed into a more egalitarian order.

I argue that since the feminist literature on patriarchy focused on analyzing the nature of women's oppression, in order to make gender discrimination visible, it somehow inadvertently depicted women more as victims. In my opinion, feminist analyses should equally centralize women's resistance, in order to stress that women are not passive recipients of patriarchal impositions. Additionally, revealing women's resistance is crucial for exposing the nature of patriarchal power relations. Abu-Lughod (1990) suggested that the analysis of different forms of resistance in a community should be used as a "diagnostic of power", in order to understand the structures of power in that community. This does not suggest that women's resistance should be romanticized and portrayed as if systems of

oppression are ineffective or have failed in the face of that resistance (Ibid: 42). However, since a Foucauldian understanding of power relations indicates that power and resistance are not exterior to each other, it is necessary to examine women's resistance, with a focus on everyday strategies, which may lead to the recognition of previously ignored forms of resisting.

The concept of everyday forms of resistance indicates that the lack of an observable, organized and collective act of resistance does not signify passivity or false consciousness (Scott, 1990, 1985). Therefore it is unwarranted to assume that women are passive recipients of the conditions that are imposed on them by patriarchy. In this context, albeit without specifically focusing on gender, Scott (1990) explained how subordinated groups formulated resistance. He rejected the idea of an all-encompassing hegemonic ideology constructed and imposed by powerholders, and of individuals who willingly consent to this imposed ideology. In conditions where the existing relations of domination are not hegemonic, unlike totalitarian dictatorships or concentration camps, there is always an autonomous space that cannot be observed by powerholders in which resistance can be organized. Subordinate groups are able to evaluate and interpret the system of domination differently, which is presented by the dominant ideology as natural and inevitable; because they are able to see the contradictions between the prevailing ideology and their own daily experiences (Scott, 1985: 319). Therefore, they could question the system of domination, imagine another world where relations of subordination are reversed, or eradicated completely, and act on that imagination. This is because, there is no reason to assume that subordinate groups are so encompassed by a system of domination that they are not even able to imagine its negation, or act on that negation (Ibid: 335). This line of thinking is very similar to Foucault's conceptualization of the operation of critique, which also emphasizes the acts of doubting and questioning the existing system, and bases the formation of an alternative way of being on these practices.

Then, asked Scott, if individuals are able to conceive of changing their conditions, even when systems of domination present themselves as natural and inevitable, what explains the conforming behavior of subordinates? He contended that subordinated groups may look like they are conforming and yet they may resist oppression through indirect, unorganized and daily acts of resistance. They may not always afford to resist openly; they may believe that the possible response to a visible act of resistance might be unbearable, or they may have become cynical from past failures (Scott, 1990: 85-6). As a result, they find ways to

resist which are not formal or collective, to lower the risk of receiving even more oppressive responses. Scott (1985: 34-5) defined everyday forms of resistance as informal, individual, opportunistic, self-indulgent, often covert, and as concerned with immediate and practical de facto gains. They have no formal leaders, no manifestoes, no formal organizations. Individuals undertaking these acts may not necessarily possess revolutionary aims; but since revolutions are based on the gathering of large numbers of discontent individuals with mundane demands, these acts may very well be foundations of revolutions.

The reason why I found Scott's work interesting is his questioning the conforming behavior of subordinate groups; since I often found myself asking the same question about women. However; the question includes a non-validated assumption about the conforming behavior of women. What is my evidence for assuming that women are passively conforming to the norms of patriarchy? Is it because I do not see all women marching on the streets everyday with the aim of undertaking a feminist revolution, even though that probably would not be the way to a feminist revolution? Is it because I do not see women openly opposing men all the time? What caused me to ask that faulty question about women was my adoption of a very narrow definition of resistance. The inclination to accept only visible and open acts of opposition as resistance made me ignorant of women's daily resistance; and therefore, I found myself face to face with the assumption that most women are passive against patriarchy. In this sense, Scott's conceptualization of daily acts of resistance seems illuminating, because it introduces the indirect and unorganized resistance of ordinary people, who cannot or do not always oppose openly and collectively. The crucial point Scott makes is that power relations cannot be assessed simply by analyzing what is observable; therefore, what is not easily recognized should also be considered. This is because neither everyday forms of resistance which are not always meant to be recognized, nor the open and observable practical resistance can be understood without examining both of them simultaneously (Scott, 1985, 1990; Weitz, 2001).

In *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (1985), Scott analyzed the resistance methods of peasants in a Malaysian village, by focusing on class relations. Peasant revolts are rare and uncommon, because peasants usually deal with their situation through more daily and indirect acts of resistance, such as foot-dragging, tax evasion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, sabotage, petty theft, cheating, rumor, gossip, etc. (Scott, 1990: 191-2). However; this does not change the fact that peasants are active agents who evaluate and assess their situation, calculate the possible repercussions

and act according to those calculations. As Scott put it, "[m]ost of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in the overt collective defiance of powerholders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites" (1985: 136). His objection is to those explanations which view subordinate groups as passive and falsely conscious individuals who either tacitly or willingly give consent to their own subordination.

Hence, Scott made visible the hidden forms of resistance and argued that there is always a possibility of resistance, because an effort to bend one's will to others creates resistance; "because relations of domination are, at the same time, relations of resistance" (1990: 45). He also noted that, if resistance does not confront the system openly and directly, then, the system of domination will not be directly challenged, and will continue to exist. A "counterideology" is needed to systematically resist the ideological domination, which can give "a general normative form to the host of resistant practices invented in self-defense by any subordinate group" (Ibid: 118). Therefore, although daily acts of resistance are crucial as survival strategies, they are not likely to permanently transform the nature of the system of domination. In order for the development of a counterideology, there have to be autonomous spaces that enable individuals to avoid the gaze of the powerful, and to organize resistance. Women need such spaces in the absence of men where they can gather and share their experiences, realize the similarities and differences, formulate a systematic criticism, and develop resistance practices. Scott stated that these spaces are not given, but they are "an achievement of resistance; they are won and defended in the teeth of power" (1990: 119). This is especially true in the case of women, who live together with men in their homes, and whose movements are often restricted due to a number of reasons such as domestic work, time contraints, or prohibitions imposed by men, and the society in general. A traditional method of women to come together is to gather within the homes of others, and transform the so-called apolitical private sphere into a space where resistance can be organized (Ustubici, 2009). Since women are seen as "fit only for domestic roles in the private sphere" because of their "caring roles as mothers and wives", the public-private dichotomy is used to exclude women from the political arena, by restricting political activity only to the public sphere, and thus, rendering the private sphere of family life as apolitical (Bari, 2005: 2-4). However, as women come together within their homes, the artificial and misleading separation of private and public spheres becomes evident along with power and resistance as parts of daily life.

One problem with Scott's argument concerns the adoption of binary oppositions. He focuses mostly on class relations and views the society in terms of two opposing classes, and ignores other relations of domination that intersect with class, as if the society is divided into two as dominants and subordinates. Miller (1997) argued that this is a restrictive approach because "individuals can simultaneously enjoy privilege and suffer disadvantages according to their gender, race, class, age, occupation, or position within an organization". These "coexisting multiple hierarchies of power" make individuals both powerful and powerless at the same time (Ibid: 32). Foucault also stated that power should not be thought of as "a massive and primal condition of domination, a binary structure with dominators on the one side, and dominated on the other side" (1980: 142). The other problem common to both Foucault and Scott is their disregard for gender as a crucial category of analysis in contemplating power relations. In line with Foucault, Scott did not comment on the gender dimension of power and resistance relations, even though his framework can be read as compatible to the relationship of patriarchy and women. Power relations can be defined as relations of constant struggle, where limits are never absolute, and where individuals continuously take advantage of every opportunity by testing limits and pushing forward whenever possible. According to Scott, when limits are pushed, this may encourage others to make more pressure; but also, the limits may be pushed back by the dominant, in which case previously tolerated actions may be suppressed (1990: 196). Pushing the limits has been what women within the feminist movement have been doing all along. They try to gain rights, and to widen their realm of freedom; but at the same time, try to stop limits from being pushed back in order not to lose rights that have been previously acquired. Through developing resistance strategies, women do not accept, but actively manipulate, transform, reinterpret and redefine what is imposed on them. A closer look at these strategies will be provided in the rest of this section.

There is no single and agreed upon definition of resistance, since there is no limit to what counts as resistance; any kind of action can be called as such. Examples include social movements, protests, marches, working slowly, picketing, stealing from one's employer, telling or writing stories, publishing, silence, breaking silence, screaming, getting tattoed, forming organizations, dancing, singing, wearing or refusing to wear certain types of clothes, wearing hair in a certain way, claiming to be possessed by spirits, bargaining, writing poetry, etc. (Scott, 1985, 1990; Hollander & Einwohner, 2004; Ngai, 2000; Ong, 1988). An act of resistance may be individual, or collective; widespread or local. Actors may be highly organized and coordinated, or they may be unorganized. The act may be

planned and performed through the leadership of a formal organization or a single group, or there may be no formal leaders, and actors may be linked to each other through horizontal networks. The aims of these acts are also various, they may aim to overthrow governments or politicians, to transform political or economic systems, or simply to survive.

In the literature of resistance, there are two common elements: action and opposition; almost all usages of the concept imply the existence of an actor and active behavior; and this active behavior is always in opposition to something or someone (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004: 538). Besides these two common elements, the definitions of resistance differ depending on the writers' views on the issues of recognition and intent. Scott's point regarding this issue is that, the intention of an actor cannot be assessed definitively; because the resistant actor may not be able to articulate her intentions, or she may simply lie. Regarding the issue of recognition, it can be said that early work on resistance took for granted the existence of recognition in order for an act to be counted as resistance (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004: 539); However, this view leads to questions such as: recognized by whom? By the actor herself? By the target of the act? By a third person observer? Moreover, what if the act is purposefully hidden by the actor from any recognition? The visibility and invisibility of an act of resistance is decided by the actor herself, depending on the conditions, and on her purposes. The adoption of different strategies do not change the fact that they are acts of resistance.

Hollander and Einwohner (2004) identified the complexity of resistance in two aspects: the first is that, resistance may take place simultaneously with conforming behavior. One can support some aspects of the structures of domination while at the same time resisting others (Ibid: 549). This is usually the case when the aim of the resisting actor is not a revolutionary transformation; and is especially the case when she purposefully hides her actions or intentions. The second one is that, the resisters and the resisted do not constitute monolithic groups. This means that dividing the population into two as those who resist, and those who are resisted is an insufficient attempt in understanding power relations, which was mentioned above as an important element of Foucault's conceptual framework. Employing this kind of a dichotomy misses the fact that there are multiple systems of hierarchy which make individuals both powerful and powerless at the same time (Ibid: 549-50). Coexistence of resistant and conforming behavior is emphasized by Weitz (2001), who examined the strategies through which women struggle daily with cultural ideas about the female body, and seek power using their hair styles. She called those actions

"accommodation" which "accept subordination, by either adopting or simply not challenging the ideologies that support subordination" (Ibid: 670). She also argued that accommodation and resistance exist simultaneously, and therefore, should not be considered as opposites. In fact, women actively and consciously choose to accommodate, or to resist, or to combine these two strategies in order to achieve their goals, based on their evaluations of the conditions, societal expectations, and their personal resources. This means that women's choices are not limited to either obeying or revolting against the effects of patriarchy; that various strategies can be adopted by women who think of them as necessary.

The adoption of certain strategies of resistance are shaped by women's conditions, which may not provide women with a lot of possibilities sometimes, pushing them to feel trapped. Even in such cases, instances of resistance can be found in women's daily actions, as Ngai (2000) found in her ethnographic study of female peasant-workers in an electronics factory located in China. Every night at the dormitories, Ngai observed that one of the workers, Yan, was having the same nightmare over and over again, and waking up screaming in the middle of the night. Yan, who was working in the factory for twelve hours a day around toxic chemicals, was having chronic bodily pain. In her nightmares she saw herself walking towards a boat, but because of extreme pain, her body would stop, and she would get scared that she would be left behind. Right at that moment, Yan woke up, screaming in her bed. Ngai interpreted this scream as Yan's resistance to her situation, to her unsatisfactory job, and to her life in general, about which she was not able to do anything to improve. But this time "when the projection of the future was again blocked, she broke out in a scream, that most authentic resistance, and woke herself up at the dream's end." (Ibid: 554). Ngai's interpretation of this incident as resistance shows us that even a scream that is uttered "in between conscious and unconsious" can be counted as resistance (Ibid: 554). Another account of resistance where women's options are restricted due to socially accepted gender norms comes from Ong's (1988) study on the incidents of spirit possession that take place in the multinational corporations of Malaysia. Young single women who have started working in large factories since the 1970s with the establishment of free trade zones are believed to be possessed by spirits when they suddenly start screaming and shouting on the shop floor. Ong stated that, in Malay society, before the proletarianization of young single women, married women confined in domestic roles were the ones to report spirit attacks, which was a way to deal with the stresses of being a wife, a mother, a widow. Since factories were seen as traditionally male areas, young women's entrance into the workforce

was considered as a threat to morality by both the women and their families; and spirit possession became a way of dealing with these anxieties. In short, in a society where women are expected to be obedient, shy, and silent, episodes of spirit possession provided them with a chance to break that silence and express their fear or resistance without being punished.

Abu-Lughod's (1990) research of the forms of power and resistance in the Bedouin communities in Egypt showed how women observed the conditions of their society, and use them to their advantage when possible. One of the examples is the sexual segregation of men's and women's worlds, which isolates women. Women, who were pushed into this world of isolation by men, made it the locus of minor acts of everyday resistance, such as hiding knowledge from men, covering for each other for things like secret trips to healers or visits to friends and relatives (Ibid: 43). Abu-Lughod's analysis showed two things; firstly, sexual segregation and restrictions on movement are among the ways how power is exercised in this community. Secondly, women both sustain this segregation by either not confronting, or being unable to confront it, and resist by manipulating its conditions to their own purposes. Thus, women's resistance takes place within power relations, not outside of them; women observe the contradictions within power relations, and manipulate them in order to create means of resistance.

Another important feature of the development of resistance strategies is the individuals' perception of their own situation. Miller (1997) emphasized the importance of individuals' own perceptions of their power through the example of army officers and their adoption of the strategies, "weapons of the weak". According to Miller, although they are usually seen as the structurally dominant group, some male officers perceived themselves as powerless and considered women as the privileged group in the military. As a result of this perception, they reacted as an oppressed group, and because of their fear of negative organizational consequences, they employed covert forms of resistance, which include sabotage, foot-dragging, feigning ignorance, constant scrutiny, gossip and rumors, and indirect threats (Ibid: 32-3). Her research showed that resistance strategies could be used by anyone, no matter what their social position is. What matters is the person's own perception of her/himself. Miller argued that what she found in her research is men who enjoyed gender privilege, but "rebel because their public voice has been deemed sexist and has been silenced" (Ibid: 48). Therefore, it can be said that an individual's perception of her situation is a crucial factor determining the adoption of certain strategies; if one perceives herself to

be the oppressed party, then she may adopt methods that are usually associated with the powerless.

The foregoing discussion suggests that it is necessary to rethink the concept of resistance, and widen its scope since even the most simple, daily, and mundane act can be counted as resistance. It is not necessary for the actor to have the intention to resist, or rather, it is not possible to assess the intention of a resister definitively; hence, intent cannot be a criterion. Recognition cannot be a criterion either, because actors decide whether their acts will be visible enough to be recognized or not. Regarding their aims and resulting possibilities, obviously acts which challenge the system of domination directly and openly at the ideological level are different than daily acts that stay within the system and, as a result, maintain it. This is because those acts that question and confront the ideology which justifies inequality are more likely to lead to transformative results. However, this does not mean that everyday acts of resistance are any less political; even though they do not transform the existing system, they involve a critique of domination, and are essential as survival strategies.

Working women are likely to develop strategies of resisting various forms of gender discrimination in organizations, in order to create women-friendly working environments for themselves. Some women aim to transform organizational structures through collective strategies such as forming networks, some women aim to advance their careers, and some women simply aim to survive in hostile working environments. The existence of these strategies indicate that women are aware of the sacrifices that they have to make in order to climb "the traditional career ladder", because of the absence of sufficient support mechanisms (Gooch & Ledwith, 1996: 123). All of these are resistance strategies, and none of them are less essential or significant than the others. The next section provides an account of these strategies, and highlights the gendered nature of organizations.

2.3 Patriarchy in Organizations and Women's Resistance

Organizations can be defined as "social constructions derived in part from the gender-based experiences of social actors" (Sheppard, 1992: 152). This definition points to the contingent nature of organizations, whose current characteristics are the result of the interaction of historical, social, and economic factors, and whose structure can be shaped through conflicts and struggles. The facade of the "impersonal, objectifying practices of organizing,

managing, and controlling large organizations" reproduce the idea of gender-neutrality (Acker, 1992: 255-6). What this idea of gender-neutrality serves is the concealment of the gendered nature of organizational processes. On the other hand, the gendered nature of the seemingly "gender-neutral" organizational processes affect women's participation and representation in organizations. For instance, the patriarchal character of the criteria for recruitment and promotion within organizations in the job market constitute barriers to women's organizational advancement. Traits such as "dominance, autonomy, and achievement" are associated with masculinity, and characterize the male stereotype, whereas those that characterize the female stereotype are traits such as "deference, nurturance, and affiliation" (Eddleston & Powell, 2008: 247). Jobs which are associated with masculine characteristics are valued higher than the ones that are associated with women and with "feminine" characteristics; hence, women's work is devalued (Bradley et al., 2000). Women may not be recruited or promoted by employers based on a belief that they are not able to "take the pressure" of a competitive occupation; or that they may be seen as too emotional for high-level positions that require making important decisions (Ramsay & Parker, 1992: 262). Zimmeck (1992: 70), who examined the position of women in the Civil Service in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in England, argued that gendered occupational segregation was based on the idea of men and women having different "mental abilities and physical capabilities which fitted them for different types of work". Employers may also hesitate to employ or promote women based on the idea that "a long period of training and acquisition of firm-specific human capital may be wasted" if women decide to quit and become full-time homemakers (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 14). Since gender-based roles and stereotypes are carried into the workplace, what exist in other areas of society also exist in organizational contexts. Gender stereotypes and societal norms that are shaped by patriarchy influence women's possibilities, choices, and careers, because gender inequality shapes the occupational division of labor.

Men's privileged access to economic and political resources gave them a head start in entering employment (Davies, 1992: 241), which led to the idea of women being "intruders" in a male area, and to their employment in subordinate positions (Witz & Savage, 1992). As a result, women feel the need to develop strategic responses to their subordination in the workplace, such as managing their self-presentation. Women in organizations must simultaneously "behave like men but not be men and behave unlike women and yet be women" (Ibid: 53). Based on her interviews with women in organizations, Sheppard (quoted in Witz & Savage, 1992: 53) revealed how women feel

forced to wear "gendered" outfits like skirts, but at the same time, have to be "not sexualized" by not being too revealing. Trying to be both "feminine" and "businesslike" pushes women to develop methods, which Sheppard (1992: 155) calls "strategies of gender management", like trying to be "feminine enough" in order to be seen by others as "credible organizational members"; because being "too feminine" makes one "unbusinesslike". This suggests that it is necessary for women to be aware of their organisational image and credibility, and their self-presentation, in order to avoid gender discrimination in organizations.

Palmer (1996) identified three main areas in which the women managers whom she had interviewed acted strategically to advance their careers. "Getting the right profile" indicates that women identified what was needed to improve their profiles in order to increase chances of promotion, and took action to fulfill those conditions. This shows their knowledge of the organizational culture and awareness of what is valued in employees. "Planning for children and career" refers to women's planning of their actions in order not to damage their careers, such as waiting until 30s to have children, planning families to fit in with their careers, and taking minimum time off before returning to their posts. Lastly, "dealing with the macho culture and harassment" indicates that women mostly accepted the existing culture, and did not openly challenge men; instead, they chose to subtly educate men from within, by showing themselves as effective colleagues rather than as women, which is identified by Palmer as a wise strategy considering the conditions within their organizations (Ibid: 148). Adkins' (1992) study on the strategies of women working in a hotel and a leisure park includes a similar finding regarding sexual harassment. Her interviewees' responses to unwanted sexual attention coming from male customers mainly consist of "laughing it off" and "playing along with it"; whereas getting annoyed, looking angry, and not responding at all are stated as the worst possible responses, because these only provoke men to do more (Ibid: 219). According to Adkins, the women chose to handle sexual harassment quietly because the sexual component is perceived as a natural part of the job by both the employers, employees, and the customers; and also, resistance by refusing often led to dismissal (Ibid: 225).

Women in senior positions can be very useful to other women as role models and mentors who can share their own experiences and therefore provide women with examples of diverse ways of reaching the top. Sheppard's (1992) study showed that managerial women experience isolation because of the lack of support from male colleagues, and as a result,

they emphasize the need to establish a women's network. Kanter pointed to the low numbers of women in managerial positions as the cause of this problem by arguing that "the problem of acceptance and effectiveness that many women encounter in managerial and professional occupations derive primarily from their token status" (1980: 319). This token status leads women to experience "increased visibility, social isolation, and stereotyping, especially in male-intensive settings" (Powell, 2011: 108). The implication of isolation is women's lack of being able to learn the informal rules of organizational processes. Therefore, those women who wish to learn the experiences of others, and to overcome the feeling of isolation aim to establish networks with other women, and form positive relationships with men (Sheppard, 1992: 163).

Within organisations, informal rules and the masculine discourse of management establish the requirements of conformity to the existing culture. More specifially, sexist attitudes and sexual harassment are among the measures that are used to control, marginalize and exclude outsiders (Colgan & Ledwith, 1996: 32). The barriers that women face are not single incidents, and cannot be explained simply as "uninformed sexism" that can be prevented by "adding on a few women to leadership positions" (Franzway, 2002: 287). Even though women's presence in high-level positions is crucial since it shows that those positions are not only for men; simply recruiting more women to the higher echelons does not necessarily transform the patriarchal character of an organization (Witz & Savage, 1992: 43). Women can formulate strategies on their own in order to overcome barriers to their equal participation and advancement in organizational hierarchies; however, these methods would remain as individual actions with short-term effects. Women's activism and a more unified approach to gender equality is necessary for achieving results with long-term effects. This holds for trade unions too, despite the fact that trade unionism emerged as a movement with potential for social and political progress for everyone, men and women, which makes trade unions somewhat different than other male-dominated organizations.

This chapter provided an overview of the concept of resistance in general, and of women's resistance in particular. Power and resistance relations are part of daily life, and resistance takes place much more often than we see, because even acts that are likely to be considered apolitical can involve resistance, since resistance does not consist only of large scale, visible, and confrontational acts. Women's relationship with patriarchy can be viewed as a relation of constant struggle, in which limits are pushed and tested continuously, and the

positions of the powerful and powerless are not stable. Women take part in this constant struggle by developing methods of overcoming and manipulating the impositions of patriarchy. This is possible with refusing, doubting and questioning the norms of the existing patriarchal system of domination; which makes it possible for women to realize that these are contingent, and thus, can be altered.

The next chapter provides an examination of women's relationship with trade unions, including women's underrepresentation in unions, and its causes. Then, based on the overview of women's resistance strategies that aim at survival and progress in gendered organizational life, unionist women's methods of overcoming discrimination are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS

3.1 Gender Dynamics in Organizations and Trade Unions

The significance of analyzing trade unions in terms of patriarchal power relations arises from the fact that unions are organizations established to represent the rights of all workers regardless of gender. An organization with this purpose is expected to be a democratic organization, which is a necessary condition for the equal participation of its members in union structures. However, women are underrepresented at all levels of union activities and structures, especially in decision-making mechanisms. The barriers that obstruct women who pursue paid or voluntary careers in trade unions are not different from those that hinder women's advancement in management and occupational hierarchies in general (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 153). Trade unions are gendered organisations which have always been male-dominated since their establishment. Men have been primary members of unions, and as a result, there have been differences between union priorities and the interests of women workers. When women's interests are compatible with those of men, and of class in general, they have a better chance of being taken into consideration. Because of this, women activists have to find a balance between women's and men's interests, instead of simply focusing on women's issues (Franzway & Fonow, 2011: 38). For instance, arguments for women's issues such as raising women's wages, increasing union membership among women, and services like childcare have often been framed as beneficial for the family as a whole, and class in general. However, when it comes to issues related to the elimination of gender inequalities, which would eventually lead to women's equal participation and representation in unions, presenting the issue as beneficial for both sexes is harder, because it involves taking away men's privileges. These practices are therefore interpreted as practices that divide class, and are met with resistance and antagonism (Cobble & Bielski Michal, 2002: 245-52).

28

In the West, trade union membership in general has been falling as a result of economic restructuring, especially because of "the decline in the traditionally highly unionized, male dominated manufacturing sector, a growth in the less unionized, female dominated service sector" (Howell, quoted in Glover & Kirton, 2006: 138). The majority of workers remain to be employed in services and in white-collar jobs, which makes traditional shop floor trade unionism unattractive, and more importantly, ineffective (Cobble & Bielski Michal 2002: 233). Union members are not composed entirely of male blue-collar workers anymore; "the notion of a generic worker" is not sufficient in recognizing the different priorities and needs of all workers (Briskin, 2002: 31). All these facts forced trade unions to realize that to maintain their existence, it is necessary to recruit new members who were previously marginalized (Bradley, 1998: 163). The diverse interests and experiences of workers should be acknowledged for the development of an all-encompassing trade unionism; because there is no one single type of worker with certain common needs. An important step to realize this is to centralize women's issues. The understanding of what constitutes a union issue has changed significantly due to the efforts of women unionists, and of the women's movement in general. The issues of childcare, violence against women, and women's health are now more likely to appear in the union agenda (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 143). These improvements show that trade unions are increasingly valuing women's membership, however, as the next section indicates, there is still a long way to go before the equal participation and representation of women in unions.

3.2 Women's Underrepresentation and Participation in Trade Unions

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, due to the demand for production on a larger scale, the process of production moved out, and therefore became separated from the home, which in turn excluded women from the process of production. However, many women chose to work out of economic necessity, and thus, they entered the workforce in a secondary position (Hartmann, 1990: 154-7). In most industries, mechanization displaced the skilled craftsmen and made the employment of an unskilled or semi-skilled labor force possible, which was constituted in a large part by women (Wolfson, 1929). Women accepted low paying jobs with harsh conditions which provided no upward mobility; and they were still expected to quit upon marriage (Kessler-Harris, 2007: 24), which indicates that they were not seen as permanent members of the workforce. In Britain, large numbers of women were employed in the cotton industry which was among the first to mechanize and relocate to large factories (Davis, 2009: 15). Employing women was advantageous for

employers, but the maintenance of this situation required women to remain unorganized. Trade unions have always been associated with the male industry workers (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 138), who have been sceptical of women, regarding them as threatening men's job security and union solidarity (Cunnison & Stageman, 1995). In fact, in early nineteenth century Britain, trade unions were established across a range of occupations, and were concerned with organising skilled workers, limiting entry into their crafts, and also preventing the replacement of skilled workers by less or unskilled and lower-paid workers. As a result, women, whose employment would endanger men's jobs, were considered as threats. The argument of the centrality of the family was used by male unionists against women's employment. For instance, employers were accused by the Bookbinders' Union of "going against biblical teaching, 'by taking away men's role as breadwinner'" (Gordon, quoted in Fraser, 1999: 47-8). On the other hand, British women were organizing not with the encouragement of unions, but with the help and support that they received from outside the labour movement, from middle-class women philanthropists who were forming unions and umbrella organizations to encourage women workers to unionize (Davis, 2009: 103; Fraser, 1999: 51). Starting with the 1880s until the First World War, trade union membership in Britain increased; however, 90% of all trade unionists were still men, and more than 90% of women workers were not organized (Davis, 2009: 121-2; Fraser, 1999).

Kessler-Harris (2007: 27, 70) argued that when women were first admitted to unions, the major concern of male unionists was to control women from within, by making them "accept male assumptions" about their roles. Women were not seen as primary union members, because they were considered as temporary workers, who worked not out of necessity like men, but out of choice. "Locating meetings in saloons, scheduling them at late hours, and ridiculing women who dared to speak" were among the ways how male-dominated unions sabotaged women's participation (Ibid: 30). In the early 1900s in the United States, in order to drive women out of the labor force, male unionists called for the unionization of and equal pay for women, which would eliminate the economic appeal for employers of employing women, and lead to women's dismissal. Simultaneously, they also argued for women's childbearing and rearing duties, in order to send women back home (Ibid: 24-5). The idea of women's weakness and unfitness to factory work was highlighted, and "the dream of home and hearth" for women was promoted (Berch, 1982: 34).

Berch (1982) studied women's relationship with the labor market and trade unions, and showed how male-led trade union movement in the United States shaped women's labor

force participation. The exclusion of women from the workforce was not possible, because employers were bringing women and immigrant workers for replacement; so, in sectors where the increasing numbers of women formed a real threat on male workers, male-led unions adopted the tactic of segregation. For instance, cigar making, which was a home industry before 1800 (Hartmann, 1990: 165), became male dominated as demand for cigars increased. Later, the introduction of technology deskilled the task and women were employed again. However, Cigarmakers International Union responded by establishing male-only membership, which remained as a regulation for ten years. Later came the implementation of protective legislation, restricting the working hours of women and thus, reducing competition (Ibid: 40-50). According to the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor in 1920, there were at least nine international unions whose constitutions barred women from membership. In the absence of constitutional bars, there was a tacit understanding that a woman's place was in the home (Wolfson, 1929: 123). However, when women were excluded, they often responded by organizing on their own. In the early 1900s, there were sex-segregated unions run by "female garment workers in San Francisco and tobacco strippers, overall makers and sheepskin workers, and telephone operators in Boston" (Kessler-Harris, 2007: 23).

During the First World War, women, along with other unskilled workers, moved into areas previously dominated by skilled male workers, and thus, became substitutes (Fraser, 1999: 128; Wolfson, 1929: 123). However; women's earnings did not improve until the end of the war (Fraser, 1999: 135-6). Women's unionization in Britain increased during the war years; but simultaneously, employers altered work patterns, simplified processes and speeded up tasks, and exploited their workers, which was possible because of the relaxation of factory and workshop legislation due to war conditions (Fraser, 1999: 138). At the end of the war many workers were unionised for the first time; but unions in general continued to be male-dominated (Ibid: 143). In addition to that, at the end of the war, many women were forced out of work by agreements between employers and male-led unions, which were backed by state legislation (Walby, 1990: 57). Similarly, the Second World War also brought large numbers of women into production (Davis, 2009: 169). By the end of the Second World War, most of the British workers were unionized, and women workers had achieved some gains, such as increase in wages, and the removal of the bar on married women working in some areas of banking and the civil service; however, they did not receive equal pay (Fraser, 1999: 191).

Starting with the 1970s, due to globalization and the implementation of neoliberal economic policies, the labor market became increasingly irregular, and with the expansion of the informal sector, jobs became insecure. This restructuring of the labor market and the modes of production weakened the power of trade unions, which was to the advantage of employers who saw organized workers as an obstacle to lowering production costs. Since the new flexible and informal units of production were not suitable for traditional shop floor unionization, the rates of unionization fell, and the authority of trade unions diminished (Mitter, 1994: 4; Martens, 1994: 203). Relocation of labor-intensive production processes to the Third World and the formation of Free Trade Zones or Export Processing Zones, in which trade barriers were reduced, and existing labor regulations were loosened, created a large number of non-unionized workers, who consisted almost entirely of women (Ibid: 4). Trade unions' lack of adaptation to these new conditions was among the causes of the falling rates of union membership. As this brief summary of women's trade union participation suggests, women were either excluded from or segregated within male-led unions. Trade unions were portrayed as male institutions, and women were constituted as "second-class citizens" within unions (Bradley, 1998: 164).

Regarding women's underrepresentation in trade unions as members and leaders, the role of external factors alienating women are often underscored, and women are depicted as uninterested in unionism. Ledwith et al. (1990: 112) identified the reasons of women's underrepresentation in leadership positions of unions as "patriarchal attitudes, inequality at work, union rules on office holding, inconvenient times and locations of union meetings, unequal sharing of domestic responsibilities, loyalties divided between union and children, the lack of quality childcare provision, and so on". In the survey of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Sechi (2007: 16-7, 25) identified the following as factors that prevent women from joining trade unions, and that limit the number of women in decision-making bodies: lack of time due to family commitments, stereotypes concerning the role of women, lack of confidence in their own abilities, the way in which meetings and timetables are arranged, lack of any specific policy addressing the issue of women and leadership, women's failure to understand the importance of trade union membership, fear of reprisal from employers, and male domination of trade union activities. Mitter (1994) emphasized unions' failure to address women's issues such as "child care, sexual harassment, lack of access to capital, and social subordination of women" in causing women's distance to trade unions (Ibid: 7). Indeed, all of these reasons coexist and interact with each other, and hinder women's equal participation in trade unions.

Research indicates that minority groups within unions are likely to be excluded by the majority from power positions through certain methods, such as "excessive jargon, rigid constitutional rules and procedures, meetings in 'smoke filled rooms' in inhospitable environments and at times of day which are difficult for those with family responsibilities" (Colgan & Ledwith, 2002a: 11). Tshoaedi (2002) stated that in South Africa, women were equal partners with men in the formation of trade unions, which were formed in order to fight racial discrimination at the workplace. However; as trade unions became recognized and gained power in the political and social arenas in 1980s, a gendered division of labour occurred. Office-based administrative work became women's jobs, while positions like organising and general secretary, which involved interacting more with the public, became men's (Ibid: 216). As trade unions entered the realm of politics, which brought with it power, status, and competition, women were pushed aside by men, who reserved power positions to themselves.

3.2.1 Gender Segregation in the Labor Market

The nature of women's labour force participation needs to be evaluated in order to see its effects on women's unionization, because women's working patterns are different from men's. According to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) report, Global Employment Trends for Women, in 2012 globally a third of women were employed in agriculture, near half were in services, and a sixth were in industry (2012: viii). The global female labour force was estimated to be 1.3 billion in 2012, which is 39.9% of the total labour force of 3.3 billion (Ibid: 15). According to the preliminary findings of 2012, labor force participation rates of women in some of the selected economies were as follows: slightly under 40% in Italy; between 40-50% in Hungary; between 50-60% in France, Spain, Germany, United Kingdom, the United States, The Netherlands, Sweden; and between 60-70% in Canada (Ibid: 15).

Table 3.1

Share of status in total employment by region and sex, 2012

%	Wage and salaried workers		Own-account workers		Contributing family workers	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Developed Economies & European Union	89.8	83.7	6.3	10.3	2.1	0.1
Central & South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	79	76.4	14.6	18.6	5.4	2.1
World	48.2	48.6	25.5	39.5	25	8.6

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends for Women, 2012

Table 3.2

Employment shares by sector and sex, world and regions, 2012

	Agriculture		Industry		Services	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Developed Economies & European Union	3	4.5	10.6	31.3	86.4	64.2
Central & South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	20.3	19	18.3	33.3	61.4	47.7
World	36.4	32.8	16.2	25.9	47.4	41.3

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends for Women, 2012

Table 3.1 and 3.2 indicate that more men work for their own account, and more women work as contributing family workers. This shows that men are more likely to own their own business, and women are more likely to work for others, often as contributing family workers. Regarding sectoral distribution, both men and women dominate the service sector, however more men are employed in industry, and, with the exception of Developed Economies and the European Union, more women work in agriculture.

As explained, Hartmann argued that "sex-ordered job segregation" is the reason of women's subordinate status in the labor market, which are both caused by the division of labor between the sexes (1990: 158-68). Gendered occupational segregation is maintained through men's organization skills, and the state's support for and recognition of men as household heads; which is only possible due to the sexual division of labor within the

household that provides men with their superior position in the family (Ibid: 158). Hartmann described the status of women in the labor market as the outcome of "a long process of interaction between patriarchy and capitalism" (Ibid: 168). It is important to make this emphasis on the interaction between the two, because only this way employers' preferences for almost reserving higher status jobs for men, which would have no ground if the incentive was solely to maximize profit, can be explained. The existence of a collusion between male workers, employers and the state is what Briar (1997: 174) argued for, while defining capitalism as a "patriarchal socioeconomic system, which controls and exploits subordinate men by giving them privileges relative to women". Walby (1990), on the other hand, located the emphasis on the nature of the labor market, instead of the role of the family, by pointing to the structure of the market, and its role in limiting women's alternatives (Fine, 1992: 52; Witz & Savage, 1992: 260-1). Gendered occupational segregation pushes women to lower paying and lower status jobs that do not lead to financial independence, which in turn leads to women's exploitation within the family. Although the line of causality is different, both Hartmann's and Walby's arguments are important in seeing the significance of gender segregation at work, and sexual division of labor in general, in analyzing women's secondary status in the labor market.

Horizontal and vertical segregation, i.e., concentration of women in some areas of work, and in lower level occupations are responsible for women's subordination in the job market. The positions that men and women attain in an organisation are not the result of a neutral process based solely on merit; but of gendered preferences and organisational barriers that are involved in the process (Colgan & Tomlinson, 1996: 68). Gender stereotypes, societal norms, and socialization all play their part in limiting and shaping women's careers. Women's and men's grades of work are differentiated; women are mostly concentrated at lower level occupations, and upper levels such as managerial posts are reserved for men. Men are over-represented in "managerial and legislative" occupations; while women are concentrated in "mid-skills occupations, such as 'clerks and service workers' and 'shop and market sales workers'" (ILO, 2012: 26). This is the result of the patriarchal view of women being subordinate to men which holds that women cannot be leaders, especially if they are supposed to supervise men. Thus, occupational segregation by sex maintains women's subordinate status in the labor market by keeping most women at lower levels, and in certain occupations, mostly in the informal sector.

Informal sector is defined by Mitter (1994: 3-6) as "generally exempt or hidden from a country's employment and labor legislation", and not covered by "collective bargaining procedures of unions". These are forms of work that include own-account workers, contributing family members, wage workers who are employed in an informal way, involving job insecurity, low income, limited social benefits and statutory entitlements (ITUC, 2011: 12, 18). As globalization and neoliberalization expand, the labor market becomes more informal and flexible, and the trend that is observed both in developed and developing countries is the employment of men in "permanent core jobs" of the formal sector, and employment of women in "temporary peripheral jobs" of the informal sector (Mitter, 1994: 3). Instable and temporary jobs do not provide workers with the available ground for organized action. The lack of job security prevents workers from organizing, because the threat of being fired is always present; which is a real threat due to the high rates of unemployment. The other point that obstructs unionization is the working patterns of this sector, which consist of subcontracting, self-employment, homeworking, part-time employment, employment in family business, and small-scale workshops. These casual and flexible working patterns give rise to insecurity, which causes workers to loose their bargaining power, if they had any to begin with. The isolation that is experienced by workers of small-scale and scattered production units also puts them beyond the reach of unions (Ibid: 4).

The problem with women's working patterns is that, capital and employers need women to work, because they exploit women's labour; but at the same time, women are expected to perform care work within the home, releasing the state of the responsibility to provide care services. "Time-flexible labour", such as part-time working, or working shorter and flexible hours, is considered a solution to this situation (Glover & Kirton, 2006). But these policies do not challenge women's confinement to domestic work; instead, they adjust women's work schedules in a way that permits men's avoidance of domestic work. Also, they have negative effects in terms of reduced pay and possibilities of promotion, and contribute to the reproduction of gender stereotypes about women's lack of commitment to full-time paid work (Ibid: 129). Equality policies implemented by governments have contributed to the equal representation of women in the labor market and in trade unions; however, governments have also "co-opted women's organising, reproduced patriarchal and heterosexist family forms, policed reproduction and sexuality, and disproportionately addressed the needs of some women over others" (Briskin, 2002: 44). Because of this, pressuring governments instead of relying on them for the effective and continuing

implementation of equity measures is crucial for the generation of progress towards gender equality.

In light of these facts, it can be said that conventional beliefs about gender roles continue to be used as excuses to legitimize the employment of men and women to certain jobs and positions. Occupational segregation helps men in maintaining their advantageous position both in paid work and in the family. Women are burdened with domestic chores as a result of the sexual division of labor, which leaves little or no time to work outside for pay, and decreases their chances of finding a job with sufficient pay and social security. This way men benefit both at home by not being responsible for housework, and at work by having less competition for better jobs. As women are forced out of some areas of work, and of higher-level positions, they are being pushed to sectors which have not been unionized. Due to the competition for better paying formal jobs with high status that cannot meet the labor supply anyway, and because of men's monopoly on these jobs, women are forced to employment in lower level or informal jobs that are not unionized, which defines their relationship with trade unions as disadvantageous from the start.

3.2.2 Gender Division of Labor Within the Home

Gender division of labor, stemming from the relation of domination and subordination within the family, dictates that it is the natural duty of women to be involved with domestic and care work. The taken-for-grantedness of this division of labor is likely to push women union members to a triple fragmentation where they divide their time between home, work, and trade union. Since reconciling work and home already takes up most of the time women have, adding a third dimension to this is exhaustive, and requires true devotion. Time-budget studies show that women, whether full-time housewives or full-time employees, spend more time on housework than men. This holds true even when men are unemployed and their wives are employed (Walby, 1990: 82). According to the results of the WageIndicator survey which was published by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) on the factors influencing women's decisions for work, while fewer women with children work full-time compared to those without children, the opposite is true for men; more men with children work full-time compared to those without children (2010: 28-9). Men are not held responsible for the care of their children, childcare is not a constraint on their time. Instead, marriage brings order to men's lives, because it provides them with someone who takes care of most of the time-consuming work around the house.

37

Gendered division of labor divides and separates the public and private spheres and designates the former to men and the latter to women. Feminists of the Second Wave in the West challenged this distinction, and argued that the private sphere was not separate and independent from the public. They held that this distinction was created by the patriarchal ideology to keep women in their homes and to burden them with all the undesired responsibilities, which are "not considered by the society as real work, worthy of payment" (Bouchier, 1984). Employers and governments view policies of "social security, pensions, maternity leave, overtime payments, vacation and holidays and occupational health and safety" (ITUC, 2011: 13) as excessive financial burdens, and try to evade them, which is especially problematic for women. The absence of these policies transfers obligations and responsibilities onto women, because men do not share these responsibilities equally. This is why women's and men's union participation is not the same; women have more constraints that limit their time, especially in the case of married women who have young children (Healy & Kirton, 2002: 190). This lack of time make women seem as if they are not interested in activities of a political nature, such as union activities, which require a lot of time and commitment. Men, on the other hand, enjoy the comfort of passing domestic responsibilities onto their wives or to other women, so that they can make time for union activities.

Regarding the relationship between gendered division of labor and socialization, it can be said that due to the sexual division of labor, men and women socialize into different gender roles, which influence their choices in the future. Different characteristics and therefore, different tasks are attributed to men and women, which lead men to end up in superior positions; because the characteristics that are defined as masculine "receive higher social evaluation" (Bradley, 1998). Politics is perceived as a male area in which one needs to be competitive, aggressive, assertive and authoritarian; and since these are characteristics that are associated with men (Shvedova, 2005: 45), women feel distant to this way of politics, because they are not socialized to possess these characteristics, which in return makes it hard for them to be accepted by male trade unionists. Especially if one thinks of the position of unions as on the side of the workers against both employers and the government, then, seeing it as a competitive and fierce area of struggle that is full of men may very well push women away. However, this style of politics is not the only choice; instead, women trade unionists' styles of politics are defined as softer, more open, sharing, tolerant, friendly, and available (Colgan & Ledwith, 1996: 180). This indicates that women

do not necessarily accept male norms of politics; on the contrary, they find their own ways of performing trade unionism.

3.2.3 Women's Marginalization in Trade Unions

Male domination of union decision-making is a crucial barrier to women's union participation; because it creates the perception that union issues are not women's but men's issues, and also makes women feel "uncomfortable and unwelcome" in union structures (Healy & Kirton, 2002: 192). The survey of the ETUC, which was conducted in March 2012, in which 60 national confederations from 31 European countries participated, provided quantitative data of women in trade unions. According to the survey, female members constituted 43,9% of a total membership of 46.182,215 workers (Ibid, 2012: 2). The highest rates of women members were in Nordic and Baltic confederations with percentages around 60-70%; and the lowest percentages of women members were in Turkish confederations HAK-IS (10.6%) and TURK-IS (11%). Eleven unions reported more female than male members; and 16 national confederations had a gender balanced membership, that was around 45-50% (Ibid: 3-4). Regarding the decision-making positions within trade unions, in 2012, only four national confederations, which were in the Netherlands, Lithuania, and Sweden, had a woman president. Among the 77 vice-presidents, 25 were women; and in more than half of these, the positions were held jointly with men (Ibid: 7-8). These figures show that even though women members constitute almost half of the total membership of the ETUC member unions, they are still not equally represented in higher-level positions. In analysing this situation, the hierarchical and undemocratic structures of trade unions need to be examined.

After entry into membership, becoming a trade unionist means going up the stages of a hierarchy, starting with being an active member, then becoming a shop steward or representative, and later being elected or appointed to committees. Theoretically every member can participate in the elections for representatives, officers and on policy issues by voting, which is the first step of a union career; however, in reality, unions are run by men (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 144). Ledwith et al. (1990) identified the stages of a union career and distinguished four positions regarding this hierarchy. The first one is being an activist by attending meetings, speaking out and becoming an opinion leader. The second one is becoming a local union leader by being elected into an official leadership role. Being elected requires gaining the recognition and support of members, for which continuous

participation is a prerequisite. The third stage is becoming a member of the quasi-elite at branch level such as paid officials and leading lay branch officials. The last one is becoming an elite activist such as lay office holders at regional and national executive levels and paid full time officials at the national level (Ibid: 116). Union activism takes a lot of time and energy; because it is an activity that has no limits. Whether one is an unpaid activist or an elected or appointed official, unionism requires "long, strenuous hours and great emotional resources" (Franzway & Fonow, 2011: 36). However, even at the point of becoming members, and later being activists, women are disadvantaged, because as the foregoing discussion in the previous sections demonstrated, women's time and movements are more restricted. Additionally, networking and gaining the support of members, activists, and senior unionists is crucial due to the competition for professional union posts. Women and men do not compete on equal terms, which results in women's underrepresentation at senior levels of trade unions. The fact that senior positions are held by men, in return, leads to the determination of union activities and demands by men whose experiences and concerns differ from those of women. Differences based on gender exist in bargaining priorities; issues such as child care, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination are rarely brought to the agenda, and therefore unions are seen as "male-institutions" by women (Mitter, 1994: 7, 13).

As explained in the previous sections, when women enter the workforce, they enter into a structure that has been shaped by men. This structure dictates that a successful career entails a full time job, and lifetime commitment (Colgan & Ledwith, 1996: 9). This male career pattern exists in trade unions too; but, it is not suitable to the lives of women, who are constantly struggling to reconcile the conflicting demands of the different spheres of their lives. The stereotypical male model of career implies a long and continuous record of employment, which includes working long and irregular hours for years without interruption. Women experience more diverse career patterns than men, in order to cope with competing demands. They are forced to take breaks from work in order to take care of children, but at the same time, career breaks are interpreted as a lack of commitment to work (Wyatt & Longridge, 1996). As a result, women are often forced to choose among the limited share of possibilities that are left for them. Hence, senior women are less likely to be married, and have children, or they have less children than men in equivalent positions. Women's careers are being shaped by external factors; which, in turn makes their careers seem deviant than the norm that is set by men.

In order to cope with all of these factors that put women at a disadvantaged position in relation to men regarding trade union participation, and to reconcile home, work, and trade union, women develop certain strategies. The aims in adopting these strategies may range from adapting to the existing conditions without expressing opposition, to openly opposing in order to transform organisational structures. These strategies may be used by women purposefully or intuitively; individually or collectively, but either way, they show how women act as agents of change within organizations.

3.3 Women's Resistance Strategies Within Trade Unions

Trade unions are organizations in which members share a sense of unity and solidarity, but despite this, women are underrepresented in positions of organizers, local workplace representatives, paid union officials, and members of executive committees (Tshoaedi, 2002: 219-20; Glover & Kirton, 2006: 145). However, since women are not a homogeneous group, each woman react differently due to a number of factors, such as gender consciousness, awareness of the organizational culture, other people's attitudes and reactions, perception of possible future outcomes of her actions, willingness to adopt individualist, collectivist and/or separatist strategies, etc. (Colgan & Ledwith, 1996: 23). In order to formulate effective strategies, women have to possess an understanding of gender relations, but the level of this understanding varies among different groups of women, and is significant in choosing different strategies (Ibid: 5). It is not necessary for women's awareness to turn into action, but when it does, transformation of union structures requires a willingness to actively challenge the status quo, by exposing the contingency of existing hierarchies (Colgan & Ledwith, 2002a: 154). Without this, and the will and commitment of a strong leadership that supports and centralizes gender equality, comprehensive transformation is not possible; because the dynamic interaction of all these factors influence women's actions, and determine the success and failure of equality movements within unions.

Although gender consciousness is not the sole factor that influences women's strategies, it is a crucial determinant of the type and direction of women's activism. Looking at the choice of strategies of a woman may inform us about her awareness of women's issues; because women with different levels of gender consciousness evaluate situations differently. Colgan and Ledwith (2000) provided a "trajectory of women's consciousness and activism", which consists of welfarist women at one end, and feminists at the other end.

41

Welfarist women are those whose trade unionism is limited due to a lack of an ideological commitment to either trade unionism or feminism. They do not have strong political affiliations, and strong trade union backgrounds; they volunteer in order to correct an injustice against themselves or other women at the workplace. Traditionalists, on the other hand, broadly accept women's status in society because of a lack of awareness of gender issues. They are usually elder women coming from a labor movement family background. They attach importance to the traditional solidaristic framework of trade unions, see themselves as professionals instead of women, and deny differences between men and women. Traditionalists are likely to identify positive discrimination as special treatment, and see any attempt to change the structure of trade unions as an attack on the unions' ideology of unity, and oppose. As they move to the other end of the trajectory, Colgan and Ledwith identify women in transition, who question the existing order and the politics of the organisation, but do not have clear answers. They do not identify themselves as feminists, however, are not content with traditionalist explanations anymore either. This is probably the result of being exposed to the discussions and activities of feminists which make them see and evaluate conditions differently.

At the end of the trajectory, there are feminists, who are divided into two sub-groups: socialist feminists and feminist socialists (Colgan and Ledwith, 1996: 24-9). Socialist-feminists are the women who have developed a feminist perspective later through their experiences as socialists and trade unionists. They are active primarily as a result of socialist ideology but also acknowledged a feminist consciousness. According to Cockburn, however, socialist-feminist women experience a tension which arises out of becoming aware of women's subordination which conflicts with their previous political position and results in becoming "burned-out in dual struggles" (1988: 18). Feminist-socialists, on the other hand, are the women whose union activism, although informed by socialism, was in a form driven mainly by their feminism. They come to trade unions from the wider women's movement to introduce feminist practices in order to achieve equality for all women. They use the strategies of separate women's committees, forums, conferences, courses, alliances and networks within and across labor and social movements (Franzway & Fonow, 2011: 3). This type of a classification is helpful in showing how diverse women's positions and strategies can be against patriarchy, however, it is crucial not to forget that these categories are not fixed and permanent, but tend to be permeable and changeable.

A crucial problem for women unionists seems to be the absence of role models, who would be reference groups that provide direct advice or examples. Because of this, women have to figure out what to do themselves by developing their own strategies by evaluating the surrounding conditions (Colgan & Ledwith, 1996: 33). "Trying to blend in as one of the boys" in order to gain credibility and respect among other unionists is one strategy adopted by women (Ibid: 34). The factors leading to the adoption of such a strategy can be various; the woman might be against methods which view women's issues as different than men's, and which point to the gendered nature of organizational structures. Or, remembering Scott's argument on the existence of practical reasons that prevent an open and visible resistance, the organizational environment might be antagonistic to separate women's groups, or there might be only a few women to organize in a branch. In a situation like this, she might see it to be more advantageous to deal with any type of discrimination on her own, and to form networks with senior male unionists who can help her advance her union career.

Ledwith et al. (1990: 112) argued that in the making of union leaders, there are three problems to solve: entry into positions of leadership; consolidating his/her power base; and developing a directive role within union leadership. The process of entry into leadership positions is more problematic for women; because it requires building a power base by getting the support of other unionists and members. Women depend on sponsorship in order to move into their first official position more than men, because women often work in low status jobs and mainly female areas as a result of occupational segregation by sex, where it is harder for them to build a strong power base which would be effective in union elections (Ibid: 119). Tshoaedi (2002) argued that since men have more access to shop steward positions, they are more likely to advance to regional or national leadership positions than women. Also, because of the fact that leadership is associated with masculinity, male candidates are considered more suitable than women (Ibid: 218-21). Due to leadership stereotypes that favor men, women are less likely to be hired for management positions in organizations. As long as men remain in the majority in high level positions "the masculine leader stereotype" and the tendency to promote men are likely to prevail, and women in organizations will be expected to behave like men in order to have a chance in becoming leaders (Powell, 2011: 132-3). While dealing with these issues, women who aim to blend in tend to adopt the existing methods of climbing up the hierarchy. Associating with the right people in both formal and informal settings serves the purpose of building a power base, which is necessary for gaining the recognition of others. Forming personal contacts at all

levels, and establishing mentoring relationships with unionists or members who have access to the higher ranks are among strategies. Sponsorship by female officers and support by women members are important in pushing and pulling women into union positions; but not sufficient, because there are not a large number of women in senior positions who act as opinion leaders, thus, women end up being dependent on the male members of the quasi-elite, such as full time branch officials (Ledwith et al., 1990: 119, 125).

However, the problem with this strategy is that, trying to blend in as one of the men requires women to conform to the male-model of trade unionism, which is shaped according to the lives of men. However; as it was discussed in the previous section, women are burdened with additional domestic and familial responsibilities. Scarcity of time is crucial especially for women unionists who are mothers, and adding trade union activism as a third dimension to an already busy work and family life, and thus, voluntarily assuming another role seems to be "counterintuitive" for women (Healy & Kirton, 2002: 190). Not only that, but also it is harder for women to participate and associate with men in informal settings such as meetings that are held at dinners or bars at late night hours due to familial and societal pressures (Bradley, 1998: 169). As a result, women are left outside of men's inner circles where important connections and decisions are made informally (Ledwith and Colgan, 1996). In addition to these, since masculinity is associated with authority and leadership, women are often in a position of trying to prove themselves, and show that they are "at the same level" as men (Tshoaedi, 2002: 222-3). To compensate, women try too hard to prove themselves as competent unionists, because societal norms expect women in positions that are seen as traditionally male to prove themselves by being even better than men. Women must be the standouts, they must go beyond the requirements of the position, and must prioritize their careers above all else (Adler, Laney & Packer, 1993). Therefore, trying to blend in as one of the boys does not solve women's problems, instead, it maintains the male-dominated structure of trade unions without challenging them.

Strategies of blending in and acting like men are individualist methods that do not have the purpose of creating organizational change. They are immediate and short-term strategies developed by women who want to open up a space for themselves in the male-dominated environment of trade unions. However, they cannot produce satisfactory long-term effects, because individualist strategies are unlikely to create significant change even in the short term if they remain as individual acts. Seeing the absence of significant organizational transformation towards gender equality might also affect women negatively, they might see

it to be more advantageous to play according to the rules of the organization, which only reinforces the existing organizational structure. On the other hand, collective action provides the possibility of transformation; because it points to and criticizes the systematic nature of gender discrimination.

As a strategy, collective action provides something for women to lean on to when they experience or witness gender discrimination, builds up trust among women, and makes them feel more connected to their organization by identifying and trying to correct what is wrong. Colgan and Ledwith (1996: 290) stated that women's activism has two stages; the first is the development of women's gender consciousness; and the second stage is when women-aware or feminist women link up with the women with increasing gender consciousness, and develop strategies collectively. Women's linking up and forming alliances with each other, with other groups within the union, with external organisations, and with the wider women's movement (Colgan & Ledwith, 2002a: 20) is crucial, because even if women come to positions of power, no matter how willing they are to work for gender equality, this is not sufficient by itself. Collective action within trade unions can be an opportunity to influence unions to channel their resources into activities related to gender equality. For instance, women in South African trade unions pressured their unions to adopt violence and harassment policies, prioritize women's needs in bargaining processes, and establish separate women's structures. As a result, men became more and more exposed to women's issues, and realized that "women's issues are union issues" (Tshoaedi, 2002: 224). The challenge is exactly this; forcing trade unions to realize that women's issues do not concern only women, and that they cannot be handled efficiently without the will and commitment of all members.

Women unionists and members organizing collectively can push trade unions to implement various equality policies such as applying gender mainstreaming into collective bargaining by adding issues related to women; implementing gender quotas; organizing trainings and campaigns to encourage women candidates and to raise awareness; making gender equality a core union priority; addressing the image and culture of unions; providing gender-disaggregated data; etc. (Sechi, 2007: 19, 23). What is crucial about equality policies is the necessity of strict monitoring at all levels; because they may not be supported and implemented due to insufficient understanding or commitment, lack of resources, or antagonism of members. They increase competition for higher-level positions, therefore, such policies are often met with resistance. More importantly, equality policies should

coexist with other efforts to achieve women's equal representation in all areas of life. Although equality policies are helpful in creating possibilities for women, easing their participation, and giving the message that union politics are not only men's business; they may still fail to establish women's continuous participation. Meetings can be held in places and at times that are more suitable for women, or childcare can be provided at conferences; but still, what these policies do is to "help women manage their different roles in order to overcome domestic constraints, while accepting their existence" (Glover & Kirton, 2006: 147). A more strict stance against gender inequality and a more unified approach towards equality that will lead to a complete transformation of structures is necessary.

One strategy of women unionists is separate organization. Separate organising can be considered as an end in itself; women may organise outside of trade unions, or form women-only unions; but this strategy might be unproductive if most of the workers in that sector are men (Mitter, 1994: 8). Another way to see separate organization is as an interim strategy, a preparation for mainstreaming marginalized groups' interests, and transforming union structures (Colgan & Ledwith, 2002a: 14). In order for separate organizing to be successful, a balance between "autonomy" from the existing structures and "integration" into those structures should be maintained; this way, marginalization can be prevented, and also, the group can continue to be autonomous in its actions (Briskin, 1993: 162). Separate units provide women with a space for developing their skills, gaining experience as activists, networking, mentoring, etc. (Ibid: 178-9). Education and development programmes are especially valuable in promoting leadership abilities among women trade unionists, which is a necessary condition for changing the male-dominated structures of unions (Mitter, 1994: 8). Many trade unions have women's units and staff working on gender equality policies, and most, but not all, of these are composed of women. Unfortunately these units often have few resources and low status, because of which, their demands may be ignored by the rest of the membership. The lack of recognition leads to a failure of linking the objectives of gender structures with the objectives of the union, which results in a lack of support, and inadequate budget allocations to these structures and their activities (Tshoaedi, 2002: 225). The real challenge is preventing the isolation of these units, through which, they can act according to and realize their purposes.

What is common to women unionists who adopt individualist and/or collectivist strategies is that, they are very self-conscious about all their decisions and actions. Kanter (1977: 248-9) argued that people whose type is represented in small proportions feel more pressure to

conform and make fewer mistakes, find it harder to gain credibility, and are more isolated. The existence of covert discrimination "in the form of subtle negative attitudes" (Brockbank & Traves, 1996), which is much harder, if not impossible, to eliminate through policy implementations, forces women to work twice as hard, and be careful not to make any mistakes. As a result, women unionists are forced to become careful about their self-presentation, behaviors, career moves, priorities, timing, connections, etc. This suggests that they are aware of the power relations that exist within trade unions, and that they identify and avoid practices which might damage their careers. For instance, as it was stated previously in this chapter, networking with members and unionists from both upper and lower levels can be helpful in order to get their support in advancing one's career in the organizational hierarchy. However, networking and mentoring relations should be formed carefully too. "Cross-gender networking" might be especially problematic for women. Since most of the senior positions are filled with men, a woman who aims at making herself known to and supported by senior-level unionists have to contact men. But this kind of a relationship may be interpreted wrongly, which may do more harm than good for a woman, by damaging her chances of climbing up the hierarchy (Colgan & Tomlinson, 1996). This is why women unionists tend to be careful with their behavior; because even daily acts that one does not pay much attention to, can be significant for the power relations within the union, no matter what type of strategies women adopt. Individual methods of handling these problems may help women in getting through unwanted incidents, however, what is crucial is to strengthen the connection between women and trade unions, so that they can fight against gender inequality collectively, which would have long term satisfactory effects.

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS IN TURKEY

In Turkey, as the size of the working class expanded with urbanization, the Constitution of 1961 introduced employees' right to strike and the right to collective bargaining (Bilgin, 2010: 28, 31). The military coup of 1980 introduced new working conditions and new legislation banning all strikes and lockouts. During the 1980's, with the weakening social welfare characteristic of the state under market-oriented reforms and the weakness of organized labour, the number and power of trade unions decreased (Yirmibeşoğlu, 2008: 68; Bilgin, 2010: 34-5; Urhan, 2005: 57). After the military coup, political parties in power, independent of their political preferences, distanced themselves from trade unions. As a result, the political power of trade unions was also weakened (Selamoğlu, 2004: 44). Although starting from 1989, unions have begun to regain strength, legal restrictions on union activities remained as an important problem. Market reforms also negatively affected women's employment by leading to the emergence and expansion of temporary or part-time jobs, self-employment, home-based work, or jobs in family businesses. These are employment patterns that do not provide available conditions for organizing, and are therefore among the causes that hinder women's involvement in trade unions (Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 41-48; Seçer, 2009: 30; Yirmibeşoğlu, 2008: 77-8; Urhan, 2005: 62). According to the recent labour force indicators, in 2012, the total labour force participation rate in Turkey was 50%; the percentage of men was 71%; and that of women was 29.5% (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2013a). The total labour force participation rate of March 2013 was 50.2%; the percentage of men was 70.8%; and that of women was 30.2% (TSI, 2013). The difference between the participation of women and men is striking, and shows that the situation is not even near equality. Table 4.1 shows the employment status of those who are in employment.

Table 4.1

Employment by Employment Status, March 2012 - March 2013

%	March 2012			March 2013		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Regular or Casual employee	62.8	66.0	55.0	64.0	66.9	57.1
Employer	5.0	6.6	1.3	4.8	6.3	1.2
Self-employed	19.8	23.0	11.8	19.1	22.6	11.1
Unpaid family worker	12.4	4.5	31.9	12.1	4.2	30.6

Source: TSI, Household Labour Force Survey, March 2013

It is clear that both the rates of women employers and self-employed women are lower than those of men, which shows that business ownership, and ownership of economic resources largely belong to men. Also, 30.6% of women work for no pay for their families, while only 4.2% of men work the same way. This indicates that women's labour is not considered as having market value, and it is not rewarded economically. Regarding sectoral distribution, 50.7% of the total workforce are employed in services, which is followed by agriculture with 23.6%, and industry with 19.8% in March 2013 (TSI, 2013). 48% of women, and 51.8% of men work in services, where 36.5% of women and 18.3% of men work in agriculture (Ibid). These rates show that more than half of both women and men are employed in services and agriculture, instead of industry, which has historically been the bedrock of trade unions. The percentages of unregistered employment can be seen in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2

Unregistered Employment, March 2012 - March 2013

%	March 2012			March 2013		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total	37.5	31.7	51.9	36.8	30.4	51.6
Agriculture	81.8	71.6	94.4	83.0	71.4	96.4
Non-agricultural	23.9	22.8	27.4	23.1	21.7	27.2

Source: TSI, Household Labour Force Survey, March 2013

As it can be seen in the Table 4.2, as of March 2013, 36.8% of all employment in Turkey is unregistered. However, rates for women are especially critical, because the percentages indicate that 51.6% of all employed women are not registered, and thus, work without social security and legal employment rights. Even a quick look at the situation clearly suggests that, simply increasing women's presence in waged employment is not the solution for women's emancipation, because what is crucial is the way how women are integrated to the market (Moghadam, 1999: 136-8). Quantitative indicators reading women's and men's labour force participation reveals that women are disadvantaged as workers, or employers, no matter what their position is. In this context, Kümbetoğlu, User and Akpınar (2010) emphasized that employers take advantage of women's subordinate position in the labor market, which stems from gender inequalities. Women cannot organize against this exploitation because of a lingering threat of being fired, and the rising unemployment which at the same time promotes unregistered work (Ibid: 116).

The total number of workers, including both public and private sectors, in Turkey as of July 2013 was 11.628.806, but the number of unionized workers was 1.032.166, with a unionization rate of only 8.88%, which is significantly low, and an evidence to the position of unions in Turkey (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2013b). Since the Ministry does not provide up-to-date data of gender breakdown on the unionization rates of workers, such information could not be included here. The total number of civil servants of the same period was 2.134.638, and 1.468.021 of them were union members, with a unionization rate of 68.77% (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2013c). Table 4.3 shows the numbers of unionized male and female civil servants for the year 2011 and 2012, from which it can be seen that both the numbers of women civil servants and unionized women civil servants are lower than those of men's.

Table 4.3

Unionization Indicators of Civil Servants

	2011			2012		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
No. of Civil Servants	797.414	1.077.129	1.874.543	829.425	1.188.553	2.017.978
No. of Unionized Civil Servants	409.466	785.636	1.195.102	490.780	884.881	1.375.661

Source: Labor Statistics, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2013

In paralel with the literature of women and trade unions in the advanced industrialized countries of the West, the causes of Turkish women's underrepresentation in trade unions are identified in the literature on Turkey as women's lower rates of labor participation, their overrepresentation in the informal sector, domestic responsibilities, workplace discrimination, and the male-dominated structure and image of trade unions (Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 17-8; Toksöz, 1994: 440-1; Yirmibeşoğlu, 2008: 74; Seçer, 2009: 28). In the Turkish society, men are usually seen as the primary "money makers", and women are given the role of "home maker", which places them in the private sphere, and restricts their "energy to get involved in bargaining for better conditions through worker's organizations" (Yirmibeşoğlu, 2008: 78). Working women experience and suffer from the double shift because of the responsibilities of traditional family life; but for women unionists, there is a third shift (Urhan, 2009: 89), which adds unionism to women's already busy schedules. Toksöz and Erdoğdu (1998) argued that reconciling work and home requires coping strategies such as finding help from other women who are either relatives or neighbors in order to be able to go to union meetings. But even then, these women work too much and too hard at home to compensate their hours outside the home (Ibid: 89). One of Tenekeci's (2010: 59) interviewees stated that in order to become an active unionist, first she had to come to an agreement with her husband that she would not hinder domestic work. The fact that women are forced to bargain and assure their husbands that the existing order in the home would not be altered dramatically, shows how difficult it is for women to participate in activities in which men take part easily. Because of the internalization and the strength of gender roles, even when women could find the possibility to actively participate in union activities, they feel guilty for not being at home and taking care of their families, which affects the nature of their participation. Another interviewee of the same study stated that the guilt and the emotional conflict made her to wish to go back home most of the time; because home for women is a familiar safe place similar to a "mother's womb" (Ibid: 66).

A striking example which depicts how women's resistance takes place within patriarchal gender relations is the case of the Novamed strike. In 2005, workers of Novamed, a pharmaceutical manufactures, applied for union membership, but the employer did not recognize the union as the representative of workers, and as a result, workers went on strike, which lasted for 15 months and ended with the recognition of workers' right to collective agreement. Ustubici (2009) identified the women workers' reasons for joining the union as "their poor working, health and safety conditions, and harassment by their

superiors in the workplace". While these may look like reasons that would push any worker, man or woman, to union membership, there were more to the harassment experienced by women. Women workers were required to get the employer's permission to get married; the time that they spent in the toilet was monitored; and to prevent simultaneous maternity leaves, pregnancy schedules were introduced. Not complying to these rules meant mobbing to a level that forced women to quit (Ibid: 20-1). Women's strike pointed to these disciplinary techniques and emphasized the fact that women were being treated differently, that they were experiencing patriarchal control mechanisms at the workplace. Revealing and publicizing these differences were possible through the active involvement of women's and feminist groups, which turned the image of the resistance into a "women's strike", and emphasized the gendered nature of women workers' exploitation at the workplace (Ustubici, 2009: 21). Yirmibeşoğlu (2008: 72) argued that trade unionism in Turkey was influenced by the women's movement of the West to some extent since the 1980's. In fact, a specific example of how feminism could form links with the union movement is the Novamed resistance, which brought feminists and the labour movement together at both national and international levels. The nature of women's resistance was also shaped by patriarchal power relations. For instance, some women had to struggle and get the consent of the men in their families simply to join the union. Since it was harder for women to come together in public spaces like men do, women mobilised each other through home visits, and thus, blurred the distinction between the apolitical private and the political public spheres. Also, the fact that some of the women brought their children to the strike "rendered women's reproductive burden visible", and showed that women's responsibilities of domestic and care work continued without being transformed radically during the strike period (Ustubici, 2009: 25-6). Ustubici argued that the reason why Novamed was differentiated from conventional strikes was because through feminist discourses, the women expanded the scope of the strike by linking their resistance to "other forms of exploitation of female labour and female bodies in paid and unpaid work" (Ibid: 19).

Another significant barrier to women's advancement into high-level positions of trade unions relates to the male-dominated structures of trade unions that alienate women, when unions do not take women's issues into consideration during policy-making processes, which consolidates the image of "men's club" (Toksöz and Erdoğdu, 1998: 50). Trade unions ignore and marginalize women's specific problems and their demands related to childcare, sexual harassment, discrimination, equal wage, etc., by presenting only men's

issues as the issues of the working class in general (Urhan, 2009: 91). In addition, women cannot find other women in senior levels with whom they can share their different experiences, and thus, they fail to form networks which might be helpful in supporting each other in case of discriminatory incidents (Seçer, 2009: 42). Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the numbers of women unionists at the higher-level positions of both workers' and civil servants' trade unions in Turkey as of 2012.

Table 4.4

Officials at the Mandatory Bodies of the Workers' Trade Unions - 2012

	Women	Men	Total
Chair	5	89	94
Managing Committee	32	439	471
Supervisory Committee	32	251	283
Disciplinary Committee	46	289	335

Source: Labor Statistics, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2013

As the above table shows, the existing five chairwomen represent unions organized in the sectors of wood; cement, clay and glass; metal; highway transport; storage and warehousing. At the level of workers' and employers' confederations (Table 4.5), which have the total number of four, there are, however, no chairwomen (Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2013a).

Table 4.5

Officials at the Mandatory Bodies of the Civil Servants' Trade Unions and Confederations - 2012

	Unions			Confederations		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Chair	5	106	111	-	7	7
Managing Committee	74	605	679	4	58	62
Supervisory Committee	43	327	370	5	24	29
Disciplinary Committee	48	331	379	6	23	29

Source: Labor Statistics, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, 2013

Two of the five chairwomen were in the unions organized in education, instruction and science; and the rest were in municipal services; agriculture and forestry; energy, industry and mining. What this data reveal is that women are significantly underrepresented at the decision-making mechanisms of trade unions. This, however, cannot be explained simply by women's lower rates of workforce participation. Tenekeci (2010) argued that women were likely to face discrimination when they enter the representative bodies of unions and do not conform to the existing male norms. Women are accused by men for being too emotional and unfit for the practice of politics, and for being unreliable since it is believed that women may quit anytime the economic necessity to work ends (Ibid: 31). One of the most effective ways of discouraging women unionists is to attack their allegedly immoral private lives. Because of this, women feel a need to prove the opposite by being extremely careful about their private lives, behavior, appearances, which is especially the case for single, divorced or widowed women (Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 133). Because of such an unwelcoming environment, women often feel a lack of trust to unions' attentiveness to their problems, and effectiveness in solving those problems (Toksöz, 1994: 442). Due to this absence of trust in trade unions, and due to the unions' reluctance to focus on women's issues, women members prefer to solve their job related problems on their own. In connection to this, the interviewees of Yirmibeşoğlu stated that the union did not provide them with "sufficient back-up and information", and that it was difficult "to voice their demands and to become visible" (2008: 84). This indicates that there is not an effective communication and a relationship of trust between women and their unions, which force women to deal with their problems at the workplace through individual methods, without seeking the help of the union.

Urhan (2009) identified women's conferences, committees, educational programmes, units, campaigns, informal networks, etc. as women's groups that are formed as collective spaces for women. She identified the aims of these groups as policymaking, lobbying to protect women's interests during collective bargaining, acting as intermediaries between unions and individuals, helping to increase women's union participation and representation, providing women with safe spaces where they could raise consciousness and increase self-confidence, challenging discriminatory practices, educating women on union structures, etc. (Ibid: 95). Trade unions' publications regarding these groups are helpful in understanding the function and operation of these structures in a better way. For instance, *Eğitim-Sen* (Education and Science Workers' Union) published the reports of its two women's

congresses that were based on workshops, which were held on 2004 and 2011. The publishing of congress reports is crucial for providing readers with ideas on women unionists' and members' perceptions of existing problems and their solutions, and also for keeping written records of the discussions. According to these reports, one thing that the women unionists underline regarding gender division of labor is that, they were criticized by their families and/or friends for neglecting their home and children because of the busy schedule of unionism. In response, they felt forced to try to overcompensate and become perfect wives and mothers, which, in their opinion, would rid them of the feeling of guilt (2011: 69); however, this only exhausts women. Regarding the male domination of trade unions, women participants of the congress criticized the lack of a gender perspective in policymaking, and unions' neglect of women's issues. By stating that "the family is not private sphere; trade unions should interfere", they underlined the fact that the causes of unequal participation and representation were rooted in the inequalities within the home, and could not be solved without interference (Ibid: 77-86). Another point emphasized and criticized by the women in the congress is the existence of certain political groups within trade unions. It was stated that for an independent woman who did not feel a sense of belonging to any of these different political groups, there was no real chance of being elected into decision-making positions (Ibid: 92). This also gradually alienated some of the women who are interested in unionism, and pushed them away.

The publications of trade unions, such as journals and periodicals, also serve the purpose of consciousness raising. A common point of these publications could be identified as the opposition to the portrayal of women's issues as consisting of nothing more than beauty and fashion. On the first issue of the journal "Petrol-İş Kadın", it was specifically stated that by taking into consideration that women exist in every aspect of life, the journal aimed at reflecting and spreading women's values, which were misrepresented by women's magazines and tv shows (2003: 2). The topics that were covered by union publications on women include laws and regulations related to women, as well as gender, sexual division of labor, double shift, trade unions and unionism, women's relationship with the labor market, mobbing, women's problems within unions (such as male-domination), violence against women, current activities of the feminist movement, interviews with women unionists and members, lives of historical women figures (such as the Mirabal Sisters, Clara Zetkin, Flora Tristan, etc.), the history of the 8th of March and the 25th of November, Ottoman and Turkish women's movement, women's health issues, etc. (Petrol-İş Kadın; Eğitim-Sen Kadın; BTS Kadın; Ses'li Kadınlar). These publications provide women with information

on these subjects, but more importantly, they create the idea that women and their problems are being recognized by their unions. Through publications that are designed specifically for women, these trade union administrations claim that women's issues are being taken into consideration. However, only a few trade unions have such publications targeting women. Allocating resources to such activities should be among unions' concerns, as a way of showing their appreciation of the importance of having women members and unionists.

In summary, it is argued in this chapter that women's relationship with trade unions has always been problematic. They have been excluded from, or isolated and marginalized within trade unions, which in turn has led to the institutionalization of gender discrimination. It is true that with the restructuring of the labor market, and the resultant changes in employment patterns, and due to a lack of adaptation to these new conditions, trade unions' power was seriously weakened in Turkey. Recognizing the importance of women workers as potential members, trade unions started to take action to tackle with gender inequality, in order to bring women in. This was possible because the pressure that the feminist movement both in the world and in Turkey have forced trade unions to put women's issues on the agenda, by challenging women's marginalization in unions (Bradley, 1998: 164; Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 178; Toksöz & Sayılan, 1998: 297-9; Yirmibeşoğlu, 2008: 72). Additionally, criticisms based on the strikingly low numbers of women represented in the decision-making positions of international networks also forced union men to support the election of token women as union officials and the establishment of women's units in order to save appearances (Toksöz, 1994: 439). Equality policies and affirmative action are also being implemented, which are significant in creating more women-friendly environments; however, the complete eradication of gender inequality cannot take place merely through the implementation of these and other policies. It can thus be contended that a substantive transformation of consciousness, and total commitment of all union administrators and members seem necessary for the elimination of gender discrimination from union structures. Until then, unionist women are likely to deal with, and overcome patriarchal power relations through strategies of their own. The next chapter elaborates on these strategies, by analyzing women's own accounts, which are obtained from the interviews in light of the arguments presented in the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Synopsis of the Research

As was explained in the Introduction, this thesis was based on a research which involved interviews with a group of women union officials in Turkey. The interviewees, who were or have been trade union officials, were well experienced and informed about the organizational structures of trade unions. I contacted these women through e-mails and phone calls, provided them with a brief information concerning my study, and we set dates for interviews. I have interviewed 15 women; we met with nine of them in their union offices, and with the others in public cafes. The length of the interviews ranged from 51 minutes to 190 minutes, with an average of 1.5 hours. I taped all of the interviews, and also took notes; but one participant objected to recording, so in that interview I took more detailed notes in order not to lose anything. I also took brief notes right after the interviews, as my reflections. Since I am not and have never been a trade union member myself, I was worried that I would not be able to form a connection with the women, which would make both of us uncomfortable and the interview unproductive. However, they were very friendly to me, and were comfortable in sharing their experiences.

Table 5.1
Interviewees' Official Union Positions

	Full-time	Part-time
Branch President	2	1
Central Women's Secretary	1	1
Branch Women's Secretary	-	3
Executive Board Member	-	5
Retired	2	-

All of the participants, except one, have been trade union members for more than 10 years; three of them are branch presidents, two are central women's secretaries, three are women's secretaries at the branch level, five are executive board members, and two are retired. Five of the women are full-time paid officials. The others, on the other hand, function as full-time staff on their day-off from work during the week, and spend that day at the union office. These unionists do not get paid by their unions. The unionists holding these different positions are identified as "professionals" and "amateurs" respectively by trade unionists. My objective was to interview women from at most two unions, one with a male-dominated, and one with a more balanced or female-dominated membership, and to compare them. However, due to the low numbers of women in executive boards, but more importantly, due to the problems that I had in reaching women and the time constraints, I had to change my initial aim; as a result, a total of ten different trade unions were included in this study. Seven of the women were members of civil servants' trade unions, while eight were members of workers' unions. Even though the women's professions and work environments are different, as I conducted the interviews and reviewed the data, I realized that their narratives were very similar.

In the interviews, I did not ask specific questions to gather demographic information, which I thought would formalize the atmosphere of the interview, and affect women's responses for the rest of the questions. Instead, I started with the question "Can you tell me about your life?", which was an unexpected question to some of the participants, who were expecting a more formal approach. The rest of the interviews included questions such as "Can you tell me of a time when you could not practice unionism the way you think you should have? What do you think and do if something that you do not like and approve takes place in the union? Why do you think there are more men than women in higher decision-making positions? Do you think something constrain women; can you elaborate? How do women cope with the barriers that they face? How do you cope with them?" However, depending on the course of the conversation, I did ask additional questions to detail women's accounts. Despite the presence of a tape recorder, the atmosphere of the interviews were not formal, due to the women's welcoming attitudes. In fact, some of the interviews were more like intimate conversations, mostly because of the interviewees' willingness to reveal their experiences. They were very supportive of a study that problematized women unionists' experiences of gender inequality within trade unions with a focus on women's methods of resisting and overcoming discriminative instances. Thus, they were open and willing to expose the existence and the effects of the male-dominated structures of trade unions.

Although it was not a specific request of the interviewees, since I have promised not to include their names in the research, with the purpose of making them more comfortable in sharing personal details concerning their experiences, I have changed the names of the interviewees. Information concerning the interviewees' trade unions, positions within unions, and durations of trade union involvement can be found in Appendix A.

5.2 From Marginalization to Resistance: Women's Narratives

In the rest of this section, following a brief analysis of the factors that motivated the interviewees to enter trade unions, the factors that shape their union experiences will be discussed through women's own narratives. This is because, understanding women's resistance strategies requires the recognition of the operation of patriarchal power relations. Such a recognition, on the other hand, is crucial and necessary for seeing what needs to be changed within trade unions, and how they can be changed. The interviewees' perceptions regarding these questions will be revealed with the analysis of their strategies of resistance.

5.2.1 Becoming a Union Member

Ledwith et al. (1990: 113) list the major factors that influence women's entry into union activism or leadership as family background, negative incidents such as discrimination at work, encouragement by experienced union officers or other workers, and existence of a vacancy that noone else fills. Waddington and Whitston identify two broad categories of reasons for women's entry into union membership: collective reasons such as "mutual support, improved pay and conditions, peer pressure and belief in unionism", and individual benefits such as "training and education, professional and financial services" (quoted in Glover & Kirton, 2006: 140). This research indicates that the factors which motivated my interviewees to become union members correspond with these objectives that are underlined in the literature. More specifically, nine of the women interviewed emphasized the encouragement and support provided by friends and/or fellow union members as their reasons to join as members and later, to become unionists. Also, women who experienced negative incidents, such as discrimination, at the workplace felt the need to struggle for their rights and seek support, which also led them to unions and activism (Franzway & Fonow, 2011: 24). For example, one of the interviewees, İpek, who is working as a nurse at a public hospital, was asked to give a written defence when she wore pants to work, because the women were supposed to wear skirts according to the dress

code. While trying to figure out what to do, she found the union, and the branch president of the time, who was also a woman, helped her in preparing her defense by leading her to previous notices and regulations related to the dress code. This incident made İpek realize that "knowing things makes our work lives easier", and then, she entered the world of unionism by first learning "what a trade union is." [*][1]

Another interviewee, Nilüfer, who was not actively involved in politics, was introduced by a friend to the women-related activities of their branch. After only a couple of weeks, she was offered the candidacy for the position of central women's secretary, because the central office needed specifically a woman to fill the vacancy in the candidate list, in order to satisfy the requirement of the gender quota. While thinking that being almost appointed to a post like this would not be a sound route to becoming a unionist, Nilüfer nevertheless saw this as her responsibility to fulfill the need of the union, and accepted the offer[2]. The guidance of friends and familiar faces has an important role in entry into union membership. This is especially the case when the person is not previously familiar with trade unions, and with politics in general. In such cases, they are most likely to be introduced to the union by their friends, coworkers, and well-respected "role models". For instance, Aysel, who recently retired from union branch presidency, became a member upon the suggestion of the head nurse at her workplace, whom she respected a lot:

> I started as a nurse, and became a union member with the encouragement of the head nurse. … I trusted her a lot, because she always sided with us, covered up for us. One day she said 'There is a union, do you want to be a member?', and I said 'I don't know what it is, but if you say so, I do'. And this is how I entered the union. After that I started reading about what a trade union is. I mean my entrance is totally because of my unquestioned trust to someone.[3]

There were also those who approached the union on their own, mostly out of a previous interest in the union movement, and in politics in general. Meral called the union office on the first day of her employment and asked to be a member. She was already a part of the student movement, and identified herself as a socialist since high school[4]. Likewise, Hazal and Mine also contacted the unions not long after they started working. Mine was already

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[*] These texts are translated from the interview transcripts in Turkish by the author.

[1] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul.

[2] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

[3] Interview, 25 October 2013, Istanbul

[4] Interview, 15 July 2013, Ankara

following the activism of her future union when she was a student[5]. Hazal, on the other hand, was familiar with the union movement, because both her father and uncle were unionists, and in this connection, she had grown up with their stories which inculcated in her the idea of the necessity of organizations that balance the society by providing workers with places where they can organize[6].

5.2.2 Determinents of Women's Trade Union Experiences

On this issue, it is necessary, above all, to examine women's own perceptions of the factors that create unwelcoming or hostile enviroments within trade unions that forced women to adopt specific individual and/or collective resistance strategies. Hence, in this section, with a focus on the interviewees' own accounts, women unionists' experiences of gender inequality in trade unions will be explored. The women identified the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities; gender roles and patriarchal attitudes in trade unions; and also the power struggle within union structures that trivialize women's issues as the causes of women's unequal participation and representation in trade unions.

5.2.2.1 Domestic Responsibilities

> Working woman has two employers; one at home, and one at work. Has two jobs; one at home, and one at work. Has four shifts; home, husband, work and child. She's tired and miserable. Double exploitation, two employers, two jobs, four shifts.[7]

All of the women interviewed for this study pointed to the lack of time and energy due to the unequal sharing of domestic and care responsibilities when stating the factors preventing their active participation in unionism.

As it can be seen in Table 5.2, the number of women who do not have any children is ten, while two of the interviewees have one child each, and the number of women with two children is three. The fact that only two out of the 15 women are married with children, while five married women do not have any children, and the other three who are mothers are single/divorced, implies that it is very hard for them to triple their burden by combining

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[5] Interview, 29 September 2013, Istanbul

[6] Interview, 21 October 2013, Istanbul

[7] Interview with Derya, 16 July 2013, Ankara

61

Table 5.2
Interviewees' Number of Children

No. of Children	Married	Single/Divorced	Total
None	5	5	**10**
1	-	2	**2**
2	2	1	**3**
Total	**7**	**8**	**15**

marriage and motherhood with unionism. Based on the interviews, one could say that it is more likely for women unionists to be either single, or married without children, or single/divorced mothers. Also, the fact that ten out of 15 women are childless demonstrates that women do not see child bearing and rearing as compatible with having an active union career, in terms of the time and energy they both require. At this point, insufficient childcare services emerge as a crucial factor that contributes to this situation. It is clear for the interviewees that trade unions should provide quality child care; however, even when daycare facilities are set up by unions, they may not lead to women's equal participation, because what they accomplish is to let women manage their different responsibilities, without changing the perception that they are women's responsibilities. Nazan explained this dilemma in the following way:

> For instance we set up the nursery room, but those who wanted to use it were all women. I mean no man came up and said 'I'll bring my children to the meeting' ... Because, normally men assume that their wives will naturally take care of the child. But women have to bring their children because noone else takes care of them. We, as a union, don't see the demand for child care as only women's demand. We don't see it as the responsibility of women and the women's commission; because if you define it like that, then you also assume child care as your responsibility. But even so, in practise, it remains on our shoulders.[8]

Not unexpectedly, unequal distribution of domestic tasks within the home is cited as a major problem by almost all of the interviewees, who emphasize its negative effects on their careers. For instance, Defne, who have been a union member for 13 years, pointed to disruptions in women's careers due to marriage and child bearing and rearing:

> So we draw the letter 'M', we rise in the unionist movement when single, and go down when we get married. Later, when that marriage relationship gets settled, we get active and rise again, and then with children, again we go down … When we constantly start from the beginning, from scratch … [our] power of representation

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[8] Interview, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

weakens … So, women unionists constantly have to prove themselves … have to recreate themselves again and again.[9]

This is, indeed, an important issue which was already underlined in the literature on women at work. Many women experience career breaks due to marriage and childbearing, and go back after some time, only to find jobs with less pay and status (Bryson, 1992: 202). These types of breaks make women unfit candidates for higher level positions, because success in organizations is based on a male career pattern, which indicates a continuous and unbroken career. For instance, out-of-hours work and working at weekends is an informal requirement for high-level positions (Watson, 1992: 196); however, satisfying these requirements is much harder for women, because of the demands of the different spheres of women's lives. Career breaks require women to start from the beginning and work twice as hard to prove themselves again, when/if they reenter the field. Interruptions also create the idea that one is not sufficiently committed to unionism, which is actually the result of the incompatibility of the existing male norms about being a unionist with women's lives. Leyla stated that:

> I am very well aware of the fact that if your partner is sexist about division of labor, you don't have much chance. … If you are experiencing unequal division of labor within the home as it is experienced in the society, then, you'll have problems about going to workplaces and meetings, about travelling, and about the late hours of meetings. And that, in turn, makes you a bad unionist. It makes you a bad unionist who can't even do her job.[10]

Another issue related to the above situation is that the gender-based division of labor negatively affects women's lives in a way that forces them to consider things that men normally do not. When deciding whether to attend to a union activity or not, women think about the work that is waiting to be done at home. So, just like İpek stated "Women say 'if I go to the union now, I'll learn things, and have a good time for maybe an hour. But when I go back home, loads of housework will be waiting for me. So, let someone else do the unionism'".[11] This means that the unequal division of labor within the home make women calculate pros and cons before acting. Women's narratives about the effects of gender division of labor imply that the attitudes of the men (partners/husbands) at home is crucial as a determinant of this calculation. According to Nazan:

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[9] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[10] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

[11] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

> … For many women it is not realistic; I mean, she may not cook when she goes home at night, but if she doesn't, then, they don't eat that night. That meal is not being cooked by anyone else, it is not even a possibility for the man to cook. They can at most eat simple things like breakfast that night. But housework is not being equally shared, nothing changes. The woman is just delaying her duties.[12]

For example, Nazan compared her ex-husband, whose share of housework consisted of occasional cooking, to her current boyfriend, who is conscious about gender politics, and stated that living together with a man who was reluctant to share domestic responsibilities constrained her by forcing her to spend more time with housework. In contrast to this, her current boyfriend's support for a more equal division of labor makes it easier for Nazan to concentrate on her job and unionism.[13] It can be said that even when women are conscious of the inequality, they may not be able to change the conditions; because not only women, but also men have to be willing for the establishment of an equal division of labor within the home. The narratives of Meral and Serap portray their husbands, who are not reluctant to do housework, as understanding and supportive, and thus point to the above fact by creating a picture as if this is something extraordinary, to a degree that leads these women to define themselves as "lucky" women. Meral stated that:

> I have nothing to do with my home, nothing about the housework. My husband does everything. He takes care of everything from the payment of a bill, to the cleaning of the house. If he hadn't, I wouldn't be able to work with this busy schedule. But many women are not lucky this way.[14]

Similarly, Serap stated that,

> For instance, I never hired a cleaning lady. I grew up in a crowded family, and I was a bit disobedient, so I have never done housework there either. After I got married it was a little bit weird. My husband was skillful in housework. Still, he cleans all the windows, does all the ironing. Now he assumed even more responsibilities. We talked about this, he was really understanding about that. We share all the housework.[15]

For single/divorced women, just like the attitude of husbands or partners, the attitude of the whole family is crucial in making women's lives easier or harder. For example, Nilüfer identified the changing balances as the cause of her family's lack of support for her career in the union:

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[12] Interview, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

[13] Same interview

[14] Interview, 15 July 2013, Ankara

[15] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

I spent years thinking that it was my duty to clean the house … I had to struggle with my mother for a long time, because she had to change and lower her expectations and habits related to me. After I was elected, they all said 'Why did you win?'. My mom and sister called and said 'Oh you won? Damn!'. Noone except my unionist sister congratulated me. When you offer something different than the life that they are used to, especially if that previous order eases their lives, they are not pleased with the change. I used to be like a servant, I used to make things easier for them. Now I can't, even when I want to.[16]

As Nilüfer explicitly points to, when women do something other than what has been expected of them, and go beyond what has been defined for them by gender roles, those who are around them are displeased, especially if the new order causes discomfort. Related to this point, the effects of gender roles on the union activism of the interviewees are further discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.2 Gender Roles and Patriarchal Attitudes

As various studies in the feminist literature have demonstrated, the division between public and private spheres, and the confinement of women into the latter primarily as mothers and wives exert enormous influence over the nature of women's political participation. Even though it has been a long time since women have entered politics and trade unions, doing union politics is still considered primarily a man's job; because the private sphere remains to be perceived as "the legitimate space for women" (Bari, 2005: 4). Because of this, women unionists are often seen by men as intruders in an area where they do not really belong to. This belief leads to the reproduction of sexism and gender discrimination in trade unions. The narratives of my interviewees include several accounts of sexism, only some of which will be cited here, as examples of the strength of gender roles in people's minds. One such example is Leyla's account of the sexism of the union president who evidently did not consider women as equal and primary members of unions, but as members who are there to make the unions seem as if they value gender equality. As she put it:

Even the way I was introduced as a candidate was the biggest reflection of sexism … 'We need a woman in management anyway … she will look good on our display.' He really said this. That was my first objection. I stood up and said 'I'm here to practice unionism as much as you do.' That was when I said 'Oh, God! Where am I?' I felt so bad, because it was one of the moments when sexism slapped me that hard. I mean there are many moments like that, but I was being

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[16] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

slapped in the face in a place where I thought I belonged. There, someone remind you that you are a woman after all.[17]

Leyla's initial reaction of standing up and clarifying her purpose in doing union politics shows how she resisted the sexist comment which trivialized her existence within the union. However, her account also shows her resentment towards being defined as ineffective in a place where she saw herself an equal member. Another example that Leyla recounted demonstrates the idea of who a unionist is:

> There was this horrible popular saying, it was so ugly I think, 'A unionist doesn't have a home, and his wife is a widow'. His wife is a widow … It's so ugly, the sexism that the language reflects … It doesn't say the husband is a widow; but the wife is, because the unionist is a man.[18]

Defne's account provides yet another example of the sexist attitudes of her union's branch secretary, who apparently believed that women should be protected and taken care of by men at all circumstances:

> There was a strike at a workplace. Our branch president and secretary were always there. I had to be there one day, due to the assignment of duties. The workers on strike were three men. When leaving, our branch secretary said to the workers 'You take care of Defne!' But I'm a manager too, right? So, actually, I should be the one to take care of the workers. And I was shocked. Because I'm a woman, I'm supposed to be taken care of by men.[19]

Obviously, women unionists, who want to participate in the union movement as equal members are disappointed and offended by such sexist comments and attitudes. However, male domination is not reflected only through actions; but it permeates the spatial organization of union buildings. When Leyla criticized the nonexistence of women's toilets, and the coffee-house atmosphere created with pool tables used by men along with deck of cards, backgammon, etc., which push women away, she was told that "those are for the amusement of the men who come to the union; women don't come anyway".[20]

The male-dominated structure of unions and their styles of politics create an unwelcoming environment for women. Bradley (1998) pointed to the link between trade unions and aggression. However, women want to avoid the "macho table-thumping style associated

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[17] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

[18] Same interview

[19] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[20] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

with collective bargaining, and adopt "less confrontational, more consultative" methods (Ibid: 170). As indicative of this issue, one of the interviewees, Meral mentioned that women tried to solve problems with more practical methods and through settlements, which are necessary, because by its nature, unionism is more open to settlements and negotiations: "We ultimately negotiate with the employer, don't we? And we solve our problems mostly through legal methods".[21] However, men's confrontational style of politics, and their unwelcoming attitudes such as laughter, negative labelling for raising women's issues, and the lack of respect intimidate women, who hesitate to talk in the presence of loquacious men (Dorgan and Grieco, 1993: 157). The interviewees' accounts include instances of women members and unionists who have remained silent more often than once, because of the fear of being mocked or judged:

> This area is new for women, because of this, they hold back, while men who assume to know everything use excessive jargon and talk with a certain manner. For a woman to enter that conversation, to express herself ... men making a face, laughing, not listening when she speaks; how discouraging this is for a woman. How hard it is to be there as a woman; and men have no idea whatsoever. Women are alienated, they estrange women.[22]

A crucial issue here is the problem of sexual harassment, which humiliates and oppresses women, and which takes the form of sexual assault, sexual advances, questions about one's sex life, insulting jokes, looks or gestures, and display of sexual materials (Powell, 2011: 155). Franzway (2002) stated that "sexual harassment is about power", it is a political strategy to make women unsure of themselves, to decrease their self-confidence, to intimidate them, in short, to create a hostile work environment for women. Since sexual harassment is directly related to "job security, wages, and health and safety as well as basic workplace dignity", it should be considered in the realm of union issues (Cobble & Bielski Michal, 2002: 247). However, not all unions have clearly defined rules and regulations that formalize a unified approach to deal with sexual harassment, which are necessary to conduct fair investigations within union structures in case of need. On the contrary, sexual harassment is usually being covered up by union managements, because, as the interviewees in this study also emphasized, sexual harassment is often seen as a private issue between "that man and that woman", rather than an institutional and systemic problem. Obviously, this attitude erodes women's trust in and their sense of belonging to their unions. The accounts of the interviewees also include a number of sexual harassment

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[21] Interview, 15 July 2013, Ankara

[22] Interview with Nazan, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

incidents, which were poorly managed by union executives; but here only one such case will be provided as an example to give an idea about trade unions' approach to the issue. According to Leyla's account, a male member of her union's executive committee was harassing several women members at workplaces, and the central office was aware of the situation due to the written and oral complaints of women. Leyla, who was a professional unionist and also an executive board member at the time, raised the issue to the attention of the union president to support a woman who complained, and she urged the union to take the necessary measures about the issue:

> For everyone who enters the union, there have to be punishments defined in the disciplinary regulations specifically in cases of mobbing and harassment. If the harasser is a board member, then he or she has to leave board membership, I mean there is no bigger crime than harassment I think. It's violence against a woman's psychological and physical integrity … and you're doing this to a worker. How can you do this to a worker, to your member, who enters your door? Weren't unions supposed to be the homes of workers? Won't these women enter their homes; are we supposed to experience this when we do?[23]

Leyla recounted that because of her stance against sexual harassment cases in the union, her existence as an executive in the union became a problem; and yet, at the same time it was impossible for her to stay silent. After disclosing her intention of revealing the incident and the harasser, she was promised by the union president that the harasser was not going to be reelected at the general meeting, and she was asked to remain silent until then, in order not to damage the reputation of the union. But then, just one day before the general meeting, Leyla was left out of the candidate list by being told that the workers did not want her anymore. Since she was a professional unionist, she had the right to go back to her profession after leaving the union post, but she got fired from her job too, and later she even lost the lawsuit for reinstatement to work. The harassed woman, on the other hand, experienced mobbing, and was later fired. This example shows how sexual harassment can be covered up within unions through the efforts of male administrators despite the pressures from women, because of the absence of a clear and firm institutional position against sexual harassment against women, and the lack of clearly defined and enforced regulations to deal with such incidents.

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[23] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

5.2.2.3 Power Struggles

In Turkey, trade unions predominantly have highly centralized and vertical organizational structures (Urhan, 2005: 69), which significantly hinder the equal participation and representation of diverse groups and interests. Some of the interviewees in this research held that the way how decisions are made alienate members. For instance, İpek stated that when union managements organize activities or strikes without explaining their objectives, or without asking the opinions of workers at workplaces, they end up with having disinterested members who do not attend to those activities.[24] In accordance with this, participatory processes which may provide members with the possibility to express their own ideas, instead of strictly hierarchical structures, seem to be essential for creating the ground for solidarity and a strong sense of belonging among members within trade unions. In addition to that, union posts are attractive for those who see unionism mostly as a profession that brings money and status, instead of a movement that is based on volunteerism. As a result of the intense competition for union posts, and the absence of a well-established participatory inner structure, fierce power struggles take place within trade unions. In fact, all of the interviewees criticized unions in this respect by pointing to the disadvantageous position of women in this struggle for power. Gender roles and stereotypes produced by patriarchal ideology privilege men over women in power struggles. As a result, as Briskin and McDermott (1993) argued, there exists "a gendered structure with men in the formal leadership positions where key decisions are made, while women are either excluded from leadership or confined to informal, invisible, and less influential forms of leadership" (quoted in Cranford, 2007: 411). Gender roles that restrict women's time and movements provide men with a head start in sparing higher-level and higher-status positions for themselves:

> Yes, men reach high-level positions easily … This race is sometimes actually among just men and men. I mean its so simple, let's say that you get out of the union at night with a male friend, you go home, but he goes to a coffeehouse and discusses union issues with others, forms relations. These relations make it easier for him to come to power. But as a woman, you can't do this, you go home, therefore you can't form contacts. In order to be elected, you have to have some contacts, some relationships.[25]

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[24] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[25] Interview with Meral, 15 July 2013, Ankara

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When these limitations caused by gender inequality is not sufficient to discredit and eliminate women, men exploit the advantages that are provided by the patriarchal ideology. Since women are socially expected to be obedient and passive, active women unionists who are respected and supported by workers and union members attract the attention of male unionists, but they are perceived by these men as threats. Toksöz and Erdoğdu (1998: 159) argued that power struggles take place among all unionists; however, when women are present, the attacks are directed towards their private lives, and womanhood in general. Women unionists may experience "a scrutiny that is absent when they occupy their 'natural' place in the gender hierarchy" (Wajcman, 1998; quoted in Briskin, 2006: 369). Derya explained this situation in the following way:

> In an organization, a trade union, or anywhere, if a man does half the work a woman does, then he is called hardworking. If a woman even works twice as the man, then she is called ambitious. See, even that obstructs women. They don't say hardworking, driven, or consistent. 'Oh she's too ambitious, too competitive.' Can you think of something more discriminating? This pushes women, blames them. It makes you feel so bad, so bad. They blame you.[26]

According to Defne, another aspect of power struggles within trade unions is the distinction between full-time "professional" paid positions and unpaid "amateur" positions, which intersects with gender. Professionals, who are mostly men, are full-time officials who get paid by their unions; amateurs, on the other hand, get paid by their employers, and practice unionism on their days off from work. Toksöz and Erdoğdu (1998: 162) pointed to this fact by stating that when women's entrance into executive bodies is not wanted, but cannot be prevented either, they are offered amateur posts. Defne claimed that this is because amateurs are treated as "guest artists" who should know that being a guest requires knowing one's limits. An amateur's hard work is interpreted as ambition to become a professional, and thus, considered a threat:

> Let's say the number of those who listen to you when you talk are more than the ones that listen to him. Then he gets uncomfortable. But in fact you're there to make a contribution to the union, not to do something for yourself. And no matter how insistently I say this, they don't seem to understand. I remember saying 'Do I need to sign somewhere to convince you that I won't run for presidency?' Once I said 'If you made me manager for dressing up nicely and sitting next to you, you should have told me; but I want to do my job, because I came to this position, and I want to practice unionism.'[27]

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[26] Interview, 16 July 2013, Ankara

[27] Interview with Defne, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

Likewise, Dilek stated that men in unions may support women, provided that they are convinced that those women would not compete with them, or oppose them; but that support does not exist for the women who have the potential for being more successful.[28] Similarly, Nilüfer pointed to the limits of men's support for women by stating that when women show potential for reaching to upper level positions within union structures, which is interpreted as intervening in men's areas, men withdraw that support, and "remind you that you are a woman".[29]

Another issue raised by the interviewees related to power struggles is the existence of diverse political groups within trade unions, which was summarized by Nazan who stated that "unions are composed of and shaped by the alliances of four or five dominant, and a couple of smaller political groups".[30] Those alliances, and the agendas of these groups, apparently, can be really effective in determining unions' agendas. In order to come to and/or remain in power positions, these groups representing diverse political views either form alliances prior to elections, or prepare rival candidate lists due to conflicts. In order for anyone to have a real chance of being elected, one has to be a member of one of the groups, and be nominated as their candidate, to receive the support of that group's members. Regarding the candidate selection processes of political parties, Matland (2005) argued that "bureaucratically-based systems that have incorporated rules to guarantee women's representation" increase women's chances of being chosen, because the existence of clear rules that apply for everyone eradicates, to a degree, the arbitrariness of selection processes. On the other hand, in "patronage-based systems", where there are less clear-cut rules, and where loyalty to the leadership in power is paramount, it is much harder for women to "break into the inner circle of power" (Ibid: 95-6). This holds true for trade union dynamics too; women, who are surrounded with men as union members and leaders, employers and employees, face the problem of being left outside of men's networks. This blocks women's chances of being elected if they stand for election as independent candidates. As Nilüfer put it:

> There are political conflicts. 'Either you're with us, or with them.' I couldn't change this. I tried to continue without being part of a group, but they didn't let me; they definitely put you in a group. I was forced to. Surely I feel closer to a certain

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[28] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

[29] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

[30] Interview, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

group, but I tried to gather everyone to view women's issues from a different point, but I couldn't. As a woman, you get lost in men's power struggles.[31]

Nilüfer criticized the existence of power struggles and the domination of political groups over union politics, because they do not leave any space for those who wish to remain independent without being part of a certain group and ideology. Since they are male-dominated, the priorities of these groups do not always coincide with those of the women's. Thus, it is likely for women's issues to become secondary to more "bread-and-butter" issues such as wages and fringe benefits (Moody, 1988; quoted in Crain, 1994: 228).

5.2.3 Women's Resistance Strategies: Survival and Transformation

Martens (1994: 202) once asked: "What happens when women are convinced of the value of trade unions and recognize that they as members should be active participants, only to find that they are blocked?" Since, as emphasized in the previous chapters of this study, power relations always involve resistance, actors develop their own ways to overcome roadblocks. The strategies that stand out in the interviews can be identified as carefully planning every move, identifying priorities, and redefining or transforming unionism. Another noteworthy point concerns the women's self confidence, and pride in what they have accomplished both in trade unions and in their lives through struggles. Finally, what gives them power and confidence to overcome all the obstacles is their commitment to the union movement, and in general, to their political views and ideologies.

5.2.3.1 Strategy One: Carefully Planning Every Move

Carefully planning each and every move is a strategy that is common to almost all of the interviewees. This means that women unionists try to prevent incidents that may lead to their exclusion from higher-level positions. They are especially careful with their self-presentation, with the way they look, dress, wear make up, talk, behave around and communicate with others; because women realize that any mistake they make will be exaggerated by men to be used against them. Thus, they work with caution, and twice as hard, in order to avoid such circumstances. This, however, does not imply a total acceptance of, and conformity to men's rules. In fact, it indicates that women fully realize the existence of double standards that evaluate women's and men's actions differently, and

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[31] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

because of this, the women who are dedicated to staying in the trade union come to know what might damage their careers, and try to avoid them:

> This is obvious, when women come to management they cannot make any mistakes, we have to work harder. When we do anything wrong, we can be criticized and condemned much more quickly … because we are women. But an incompetent man doesn't get worn down like that. Another thing is, there are feudalistic thoughts. I mean if you are a woman executive you have to be careful about everything like your hair, your dress. You have to oversee these … who you talk to, who you sit with … because all of these might come back to you as problems … We have to be both better and more careful than men. [32]

As explained, women unionists in power positions face a competitive world where they have to fight for acceptance by proving their competency, while tackling with overt and covert forms of sexism coming from "rank and file members, male representatives, fellow officers and employers" (Bradley, 1998: 180-1). In order to survive in such a hostile setting, they often negotiate their role as union activists within existing gender relations rather than openly challenging them. Sheppard (1989: 148) argued that women may borrow "masculine traits or models of appearance", so that they can be perceived as more powerful, where power is associated with men and masculinity. In this research, Dilek, who is a branch president, mentioned that she tried hard to look tough and strong, so much so that even her daughters sometimes criticized her for acting manly; yet she thinks that she has to do this, because "if you look weak, they'll crash you". She also stated that she did not wear too feminine or revealing clothes; but also added that she did not give up her earrings and make up, which points to her awareness of the necessity for managing self-presentation in the union context, and also to her desire to balance it with her own style.[33]

Another reason for being careful with one's actions is because women can easily be denigrated through rumors about their allegedly immoral private lives (Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 159). In this respect, all of the interviewees emphasized how hard it can be sometimes to be a woman among so many men; however, the surprisingly similar accounts of two women testify to the seriousness of the issue. Aysel stated that, because of being a role model for others, a woman unionist has to be very careful about her private life, in such a way that her autocontrol has to be at the highest level:

> Actually this was what pushed me to marriage, I was always against marriage, but being a single women among so many men is troublesome … So I accepted the proposal, in order to be relieved. Because it provides safety … we have

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[32] Interview with Meral, 15 July 2013, Ankara

[33] Interview, 11 July 2013, Ankara

representatives, all married, you're introduced [to them] as president, and their wives' position becomes problematic ... I mean you can go to someone's house with your husband more comfortably, it's very hard when single ... But it's about who you choose. I mean my husband was also a unionist. We met within the movement, so he knew [the busy schedule of unionists].[34]

Similarly, Serap also had no intention to get married, but after being elected branch president she had to work until late hours, which created a little discomfort in her family. She thought it would be easier to explain herself to only one person, instead of the whole family, and got married. In addition to that, marriage became a safety shield within the unionist movement:

> This, in a way, became an armour for me. I mean this ring became a protector for me … Because, in the end, there are loads of men around you, one can easily denigrate you, to damage you, 'look they're chatting, there's definitely something between them' … I thought about it a lot, and made a decision.[35]

These accounts of Aysel and Serap indicate that marriage, which is usually discussed in the context of the hardships that it creates for women who have ambitions beyond the home, might positively affect women's union participation. However, it should be noted, as Aysel and Serap did, that this may be likely to happen only if the partner is also an active member of the unionist movement, who shares similar ideals.

5.2.3.2 Strategy Two: Prioritising and Planning Each Moment

Another strategy is identifying priorities and planning each moment to manage the scarcity of time. Union activities are a priority over many others for these women; they devote a lot of time and energy to union activities such as participating in meetings, trainings, or protests, travelling, following the union agenda, reading articles, etc. They try not to waste any moment of the 24-hour day with stuff that they deem less important, by rushing all the time in order to be able to catch up with the demands of the different spheres of their lives. Going to bed later, waking up early in the morning, working in a very organized and planned way, or simple things like using lunch breaks for union activities are common to all inteviewees. Derya emhasized how important it is to prioritize in order to manage one's time effectively:

> I had a child, I was married. A working woman is a woman who manages her time in the best way. She knows that the 25th hour does not exist. She can spend quality time with her child and give her love in just one hour. If she aspires to do

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[34] Interview, 25 October 2013, Istanbul

[35] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

something, she devotes herself, and becomes picky. Checks her schedule. Going to a wedding, or a protest? If that wedding is not that vital, she chooses the protest. Manages her priorities. Manages her time.[36]

Setting priorities indicates the evaluation and ordering of activities in terms of their importance and necessity. The practice of active unionism forces women to make time by minimizing the things that interfere with union activities. Since women's time is already limited due to work and domestic responsibilities, their relationships with their families and friends get affected. However, even though the interviewees talk about this as a negative aspect of unionism, their narratives do not focus on regret, but instead, underline the fact that they had entered unionism voluntarily, and that their lifestyles are the result of their own choices:

> I mean, since I love it so much, I see it above everything else … Since I see it as my priority, my family … got used to it. My friends, my old acquaintances, or my neighbours and my relatives tell me that I have lost all my friends because of the union. Because I can only socialize with my co-workers or my friends from the union. Other relationships don't work. It's too hard … I mean you don't drift apart, but there is no opportunity, you can't create it, there is no time.[37]

An incident that Serap experienced can be a significant example to prioritising. She was at odds with the central office management of her union, because, according to her, their actions were against working class and socialist values; and the management was trying to push her to resignation through mobbing. Two men from the union accused Serap for beating them up, and the union started a disciplinary investigation. On the day of the disciplinary hearing, Serap's husband was about to go into a serious heart surgery, but she chose to go to the hearing, where she had to defend herself in order to clear her reputation. What is significant about this incident is Serap's way of telling it. Her narrative is not dramatic and does not include elements of hesitation or regret: "… choosing one or the other … if I don't go, they'll say 'she used her husband as an excuse' … I went, testified, and came back". This short and direct account shows how clearly she had defined her priorities in her mind:

> If we are determined on a struggle, we have to have the will to overcome anything that obstructs it … we have to get rid of every damaging thing. If my husband had been an obstacle, I would have ended that marriage, for that struggle. I would choose the movement. My priority is the struggle. That's how I made my choices.

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[36] Interview, 16 July 2013, Ankara

[37] Interview with Semra, 7 October 2013, Istanbul

I'm not, of course, calling for everyone to leave their husbands. If they love each other, they'll convince each other.[38]

The interviewees' lives include acts of prioritizing which had more permanent effects. For instance, Aysel and Serap, who are married, decided not to have children because of their belief in the incompatibility of an active life of unionism with childrearing, and their prioritization of unionism and activism over motherhood. Aysel, for instance, emphasized her struggle to be a unionist, and stated that she cannot throw it all away:

> Well, I got married when I was already a union officer, but I never thought of having children … And the position that I am in, the struggle, the fight, it's luck, not some luck that every woman can get, I worked so hard … I decided not to have children because I cannot be this productive in the same position … There is a choice here, not every woman can do this … Because, I argued with my family for this struggle, I took a stand, I mean I cannot have a child and then say 'mom, can you look after my child?' I mean I had to make a choice.[39]

In her study of the career development of successful women in management, White (1995) stated that women waited until their careers were well established before contemplating a family. A number of her interviewees, who were around 30s, were at the point of deciding whether to "have a child and to take minimum maternity leave, or to remain childless" (Ibid: 10). Among my interviewees, Meral, who is married, is also at the point of deciding either to continue her union career, or to have a child and distance herself from trade union activism by either taking on a lower position within the union, or taking a break:

> Now I'm 36, I don't have children … Either I'm going to have children, or I will continue the unionist movement in some way, and enter union management again, etc. This is a conflict and we have to decide … I can't be pregnant and have a child, and be a professional unionist at the same time. These two certainly don't go together … considering our working schedules. In the last 3 months I've been to 20 cities. I participated in protests and activities. You don't have the chance to have a child with this busy schedule. But it's so sad for a woman to be forced to make such a decision.[40]

It is possible for some women who had decided to remain childless to regret their decision, because of having "missed their opportunity to have children or to enjoy their children while they were young"; and, on the other hand, the women who had children in their early 30s may experience conflict between their careers and families (White, 1995: 10-2). Although the narratives of Serap and Aysel do not reflect regret over their choices, women should not feel that they are forced to make such hard and life-changing decisions,

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[38] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[39] Interview, 25 October 2013, Istanbul

[40] Interview, 15 July 2013, Ankara

especially when men can be both union officials and fathers without having the need to choose .

5.2.3.3 Strategy Three: Redefining and Transforming Unionism

Another strategy which stands out in the experiences of women as expressed in the interviews is redefining unionism. This means that the existing style of unionism, which has been constituted based on male experiences, is being questioned, challenged, and redefined by women. The definition of trade union issues is being widened by women unionists who state that it is the obligation of unions to develop policies for removing the obstacles that prevent women's equal participation; take a stand against violence against women; and actively interfere with the "private sphere" by supporting women to solve their home and family related problems. For instance, some of the interviewees criticized unions' attitude of simply calling women to union activities, and then, blaming them when women don't participate. They argued that, unions should take active steps to mobilize women by centralizing women's issues, and by being more active and visible at workplaces. Recruitment campaigns that are directed specifically towards women, such as going door to door and explaining unions' women policies, and distributing publications that are prepared specifically for women can be some of the methods that go beyond simply calling for women (Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 51-2). One of the interviewees, İpek argued that union representatives can use lunch breaks at workplaces to reach large numbers of women, or they can visit women in their homes.[41] The lack of childcare services is also caused by the fact that childcare has always been considered as a private non-union issue related to the family, and, thus, to women. The interviewees oppose this by first stating that the responsibility of child rearing should be shared equally by men and women; and secondly, that if this is an issue that affects women's participation negatively, then, it is also a trade union issue. This way, the women place the responsibility of eliminating gender inequality on unions, because they see the historical male domination of trade unions as responsible for the current inequality. Related to this issue, Defne argued that structural problems require equally systematic solutions:

> … when you start voicing these in management meetings as organizational problems … you bring it up for discussion in terms of organizational culture … my emphasis here is this, I don't take these as personal issues … I think these are structural problems that have to be discussed in the organization ... this way, the

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[41] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

culture starts changing … isn't the aim to change [the organizational culture]? How else can you change it?[42]

Defne's suggestion indicates the significance of raising gender discrimination as an organizational issue, instead of a private one, and discussing discrimination experiences in union meetings as problems which need to be solved by the union. The same approach is necessary for dealing with sexual harassment. According to the interviewees, the absence of a consistent stance against sexual harassment is caused by unions' view of sexual harassment being a personal issue between women and men, and by the desire to keep unions' names away from such controversies. Serap, who criticized her confederation's failure to recognize and publicly condemn an incident of sexual harassment, argued that trade unions are obliged to provide for their members safe environments where they can feel comfortable, which requires taking a stance against harassment and violence against women.[43] Thus, she redefined and widened the definition of unionism by arguing that unions have to interfere with factors that hinder women's equal participation, instead of reproducing the public-private distinction. This strategy obviously mirrors the feminist slogan of "the personal is political", which points to the inseparability of women's subordination in the family and gender inequality in the wider society (Davies & Thomas, 2004: 87-8). Feminists recognized the complex interactions between everyday life and public politics, and the central role that everyday life issues played in their lives, and brought them into the political domain (Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 24). Similarly, the women who argue for the necessity of trade unions to take action are actually suggesting that no solution is possible without adopting a perpective which sees that the private-public distinction is artificial, and that, everyday experiences are not outside the realm of politics.

Therefore, holding trade unions responsible for the perpetuation of gender inequality leads to the adoption of strategies which demand unions to take action for generating solutions. Pressurizing unions for adopting gender equality policies, such as quotas or the establishment of women's units, is a strategy that was underlined by the interviewees. The establishment of women's units, such as women's secretaries, committees, or more informal groups, is significant because separate organising could offer women unionists a space for alternative socialization which supports the development of transformational

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[42] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[43] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

practices by improving women's confidence and increasing their knowledge about unions (Briskin, 2006: 372-3). As Scott stated, autonomous spaces are necessary for oppressed groups to go beyond daily resistance strategies, and form a "counterideology" to challenge the ideology of subordination (1990: 118). Separate women's units might be those places where women unionists can realize, through consciousness raising, that unionism is not gender-neutral. The major role of women's units could be described as analysing existing policies, and developing new ones with gender sensitivity, which makes them crucial for the generation of substantial transformation in the male-dominated culture of unions. However, simply existence would not be effective; because power struggles among the men in the unions, who usually see women's issues as secondary, affect the direction and efficacy of women's policies. Related to this point, another interviewee, Nazan criticized the women's assembly, which was established at the confederation level, for being inactive and ineffective in voicing women's demands:

> There we suggested that LGBT individuals be recognized in the constitutions of unions. Women unionists congratulated us … but that suggestion was not even included in the final report … because they could not have included it in the unions' constitutions at that time. Maybe they wouldn't have been able to even suggest it to their mixed groups. Because there are groups that view homosexuality as a disease, even if they are small in number. So, because they didn't want to engage in such a dispute for such a 'trivial' issue at the time, it was left out of the report. And then, I didn't go to the next meeting.[44]

We can contend that separate units can be effective only if they are not marginalized within unions, and are linked with "mainstream" union structures, by union administrations that are "prepared to hear, engage with and respond to the issues raised by the previously marginalised constituencies" (Colgan & Ledwith, 2002a: 160). However, another important point emphasized by the interviewees was that, trade unions were reluctant to adopt gender equality policies. Instead, trade unions usually sided with women when they had to, meaning that, when they were forced by the women within the union, and by the feminist movement. Trade unions started to take action for the realization of gender equality, and the centralization of women's issues because of the pressure that they received from the feminist movement that problematized women's status in unions (Bradley, 1998: 164; Toksöz & Erdoğdu, 1998: 178; Toksöz & Sayılan, 1998: 297-9). The current status of the feminist movement in Turkey renders certain demands of women legitimate, and thus, forces union managements to at least consider these demands, especially if trade unions do

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[44] Interview, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

not wish to seem insensitive to women's issues. However, if the pressure coming from women is not that strong, unions can easily ignore them:

> They say that 'women will elect women's secretaries'; but later, some groups come up and say 'we let you choose your own women's secretaries.' I mean they really don't do this willingly. They still think that women aren't well equipped and powerful to become managers. Our confederation now has 40% quota for women; we, as feminists, suggested 50%, but our proposal wasn't even read at the meeting. Because 50% quota was out of question.[45]

The above statement by Nazan indicates that although the adoption of quotas for increasing women's representation has become a legitimate demand due to the continuous efforts of the feminist movement, the request for 50% equality is still considered as controversial by trade unions. This indicates that without the continuous voicing of women's demands, and the struggle to realize these demands through the strengthening of women's groups within unions, expecting for the current organizational culture to change on its own would be a vain hope (Urhan, 2009: 107). Then, in order to prevent the marginalization of their demands, women unionists must go beyond individual methods of overcoming gender discrimination, and adopt the collective strategy of networking, and form alliances within and across labor and social movements, with un-unionized women and across national boundaries (Briskin, 1999: 548; Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 3).

At this point, it is important to note that although the election of women to higher-level positions within trade unions is crucial; it is not sufficient for creating pressure over unions to influence their policies. Positional power can be used by women "to promote women's issues, to bring forward other women in the union and to promote equality bargaining", which is exactly what makes gaining access to union office essential (Bradley, 1998: 179-80). However, since women in such positions face a competitive and often hostile world where they have to fight even for acceptance, it is not likely for them to lead to transformation of union structures by themselves. If the emphasis remains only on getting women represented in higher level elected positions in proportion to their membership, without supporting this aim with other initiatives that target gender equality, it is likely for union hierarchies to remain intact (Colgan and Ledwith, 2002b: 172). Because of this, although almost all of the interviewees in this research support the introduction of quotas as significant elements of the establishment of equality in representation, they also believe that the adoption of gender quotas cannot be sufficient by itself:

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[45] Same interview

Quotas are a very good [starting] point. But, I think that as long as unions don't make up for their deficiencies with a woman's perspective, quotas won't go far. Because it only says 'we have women in management' … In an organization the women who question and criticize are really seen as damaged women, who should be excluded … you are radicalized … So, I believe that first of all trade unions should sincerely open their doors to women's organizations … feminists' relationship with trade unions should develop, but this is not something that only feminists can accomplish. Unions should also be willing. They don't even support women's groups within their own structures, let alone feminists.[46]

Additionally, regarding the election of women, some of the interviewees pointed to the fact that in order for elected women unionists to represent women members and workers, they should be nominated by women as "women's candidates":

Now for instance, a woman is elected as the general secretary of the confederation. I mean, there to have 'a women's candidate', or women voting for their candidate … no, we haven't arrived at that point yet. For us, surely all women are important, even if they don't possess gender consciousness. It is an achievement. But when we elect women's candidates through women's support, then we'll be successful.[47]

Networking, and forming alliances with other individuals or groups are essential collectivist strategies, which empower women; because overcoming the barriers that women encounter collectively requires a collective response (Healy & Kirton, 2002: 194). For instance, Semra, who is an amateur executive board member at the branch level, was not wanted by both her employer and union's branch president. When she was almost fired from both her job and her union post, the support and resistance of her coworkers and other union members prevented Semra's dismissal. She argued that without gaining this support, it was impossible to achieve anything within the union, from maintaining the members' continuous attendance to union activities, to preventing your own dismissal. But gaining this support requires one to work non-stop in order to successfully establish a relationship of trust among workers and union members:

… first of all we need to have good personal relations … you can't do just nothing and then say 'come to the education' … I have everyone's phone numbers, and lists, I call them periodically … 'When was the last time I called her? 15 days ago. Then I should call her and ask how she's doing. Ask her about her husband and kids if she's married, ask about her problems.' I need to establish this dialogue first, without that if I say 'there is an education, can you bring at least four workers?', she won't even bring herself![48]

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[46] Interview with Leyla, 23 October 2013, Istanbul,

[47] Interview with Serap, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[48] Interview with Semra, 7 October 2013, Istanbul

Bradley (1998: 182) argued that the union world is a small one, because of which, women unionists are likely to know and have links with each other. However, establishing a network of solidarity with feminists from outside unions can be problematic. Leyla stated that after her election as a professional unionist, she started to contact feminist women's organizations, and because of this, she received enormous reaction from the management. Men who were respected and considered as influential within the union intervened, "wagged their fingers" at her, and said "you're contacting feminists too often, be careful with yourself".[49] Serap also experienced a similar incident:

> For a long time I was in feminist platforms representing my confederation … because that's how it should be, women should be with other women. Then, the management said 'Serap leads the women away from revolutionaries, to chase the tail of feminists'. There was a change of assignments, they called someone else, and said 'we trust you, from now on you'll have the women walk with revolutionaries [during protests].' What does it mean 'with revolutionaries'? It means men and women together.[50]

These accounts show that women unionists who look for support outside trade unions through links with feminists, because of not being able to find that support within their unions, are often accused of favoring separatist and divisive methods. For instance, the demonstrations on the week of the International Women's Day (8 March) cause similar problems. According to the interviewees' accounts, there are usually two demonstrations held in Istanbul, one is women-only, and the other is open to both men and women. Nazan stated that during the last women-only demonstration, a mixed group of union members arrived, and tried to walk with Nazan's group. They opposed this by pointing to the fact that it was a women-only demonstration; but then, they were accused of dividing the working class. Later, at the mixed demonstration, a woman unionist from the same group came up to the stage, and made their accusations public by saying "instead of being here, feminists from within our confederation go to demonstrations with feminists and divide us".[51] Briskin (1999: 545-6) argued that, instead of a divisive strategy, separate organizing should be viewed as separate from the "bureaucratic, hierarchical, overly competitive and often undemocratic practices" of unions, along with male domination. However, these types of transformatory practices are often met with resistance from members who support

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[49] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

[50] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

[51] Interview with Nazan, 30 October 2013, Istanbul

traditional trade unionism; because traditionalism coexists with innovations and transformatory practices, and in order to overcome them, stronger alliances are necessary.

Based on Colgan and Ledwith's (2000; 1996) trajectory of gender consciousness, which was discussed in Chapter 3, two of the interviewees can be classified as "traditionalists"; four as "women in transition", and the remaining nine as "socialist-feminists". The narratives of the women who can be called traditionalists put the emphasis on "walking side by side as men and women". Since they emphasize traditional union solidarity, and identify attempts to transform the existing structures as attacks on the union, it is likely that these women interpret the formation of alliances with feminists as attempts to divide the working class. Traditionalists who either accept, or fail to formulate a systematic criticism of women's status in society, are likely to adopt only individual resistance strategies. They are the women who usually oppose gender equality policies and refuse to form any ties with women's units in order to emphasize the fact that their success have nothing to do with "special treatments" (Halford, 1992: 174). Their evaluation of women's unequal representation in trade unions often include the blaming of women for being disinterested in leaving the comfort of their homes and entering the unionist movement. Blaming the women exists, to a certain degree, in other interviewees' accounts too, whom I did not classify as traditionalists; because their arguments refer to the effects of socialization, which leads women to perceive politics as a men's profession, and thus influences women's motivation and "level of interest" to enter politics (Ayata & Aslan, 2004: 10).

Among the interviewees, an example to traditionalists is Mine, who is a branch women's secretary. However, initially, she was elected as the secretary of education, and another woman unionist was elected as women's secretary. Later, due to familial problems, the other woman had to resign, and thus, Mine was left as the only woman in management, because the reserve member was also a man, who refused to give his spot to the next woman in line. Due to the union's requirement for women's secretaries to be women, Mine was reassigned to fill in the vacancy against her will. She opposed this, but could not stop the reassignment, which in turn, led to her alienation from her duty:

> Just because I'm a woman, is being the women's secretary the only thing I can do in this union? I mean I could be the branch president, would you reassign me as women's secretary then, because I'm a woman? The union in this sense blocked me … They told me 'Stop, you're a woman, so the only thing you can be in this union

is women's secretary' … I don't do it very willingly, because the union's women policies and my ideas on the woman question don't really coincide.[52]

Her account indicates that she sees the position of women's secretary as inferior, marginal, and limiting; and her reassignment as being blocked. Regarding gender discrimination and sexual harassment, her statement of neither experiencing nor witnessing any such incident could be accounted by her lack of gender sensitivity, which prevents her from recognizing such situations. She also criticized the women-only demonstrations on 8th of March by arguing that men and women should be side by side within the struggle, because the system oppresses men too. These comments testify to the fact that since she was politicized within the unionist movement, she centralizes the class conflict as the primary conflict to be struggled with.

Among the nine socialist-feminists, four women identified themselves as feminists, even though I did not ask such a question; but I included the other five women in this category too, because they have feminist concerns, and their criticisms of patriarchy, and strategies of resistance were similar with the self-identified feminists. Colgan and Ledwith (2000) divided feminists into two subgroups as socialist-feminists and feminist-socialists. Based on this distinction, I called these nine women socialist-feminists, because none of them had entered trade unions from the wider women's movement. Their entrance into trade unions was not caused by feminist ideals, but through the recognition of women's problems that were either caused or ignored by male-led trade unions, these women have developed a feminist perspective:

> I actually began to identify as a feminist starting with the second year of my professional unionism, before that I used to say I was an anticapitalist, a socialist. But facing that sexism, seeing that state of oppression as a woman … it's something completely different. I started to believe that the way to fight this is feminism, and later I became an organized feminist, and entered that struggle.[53]

The crucial difference of feminist unionists is that, they are the women who are most likely to support and adopt collective resistance strategies. This is because, they view gender discrimination as a systemic problem, and as a result, look for collective methods that can reveal and overcome gender inequality. According to Colgan and Ledwith (2000: 244), "identifying strongly with the group, and perceiving the existing status hierarchy as illegitimate or unstable" are two factors that influence the tendency to adopt collective

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[52] Interview, 29 September 2013, Istanbul

[53] Interview with Leyla, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

strategies for changing the existing conditions. Unionist women who possess a feminist consciousness have two compatible political identities as women and unionists, because of which, it is likely for them to engage in collective action (Colgan and Ledwith, 1996: 35-6). This does not suggest that gender consciousness inevitably leads to action. For instance, a politically conscious woman may lack the time for being active, or a woman who is active in union politics might possess a passive gender consciousness (Kirton and Healy, 2004: 305). However, feminist consciousness is a prerequisite for the recognition of the necessity of collective action in resisting patriarchal power relations.

5.2.4 Women's Perceptions of Themselves

If we focus on the women's self-perceptions, it is important to note that they describe themselves and their experiences with a discourse that emphasizes hard work, achievement, and devotion. All of the women are proud of their accomplishments as activists and as unionists, especially because achievements in this area usually require women to fight on multiple fronts both within and outside their unions. Because of this, they also emphasize the emotional satisfaction that they experience whenever they contribute to the resolution of a problem. Toksöz and Erdoğdu (1998: 169) commented on the same issue by arguing that the emotional satisfaction which comes out of helping others to seek for their rights and to solve their problems are important factors that motivate women into entering unionism. Another element of their self-definition is being different from the image of a traditional woman. These women are proud of becoming something more than what patriarchy has defined for women. As Serap put it:

> The image of 'woman' in their minds is different, you know? They were looking for women like their mothers, I wasn't like that. I was never a woman like that. [What] the presence of a woman [means] for them is eating and drinking together, lighting her cigarette ... I wasn't like that.[54]

The women also interpret being an active member of a movement that has been male-dominated and considered inappropriate for women, as going beyond the restrictions of patriarchal gender roles. Proving that one's options are not limited by patriarchy makes them proud. Because of this, their narratives emphasize self-confidence, lack of fear, success and commitment. As White (1995: 12) argued, coping successfully with challenges is effective in raising women's self-confidence, and leading them to find further challenges. What make the women's devotion to unionism possible are their affiliation with politics,

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[54] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

and commitment to political ideals. The interviewees are politicized, they all believe in the necessity of being a part of political struggles as activists:

> I have been molded in the movement since I was 18, and had achievements. Now I know I have no other chance than the struggle. I mean what constituted my identity as a woman is actually this struggle. If I can fight for my rights as a woman, that's because of this struggle. If I can fight injustice anywhere, it's because of the power I get from the struggle … So, I've never been a passive scared woman … I've always stood on my own two feet. This is terrific … and I would never sacrifice this.[55]

Aysel's account shows how central for her life politics and the unionist movement is. She defined them as what constructed her personality in a way that made her a strong, resistant woman. The fact that these women derive their power from their commitment to trade unionism and politics also shows that they go beyond the image of a traditional woman, and that their fight is also meant for challenging and redefining the limits set by patriarchy in general:

> … our struggle for existence in trade unions is at the same time a struggle for establishing the refusal of this social structure, and the traditional roles imposed on us.[56]

According to Bilgin (2007: 57), union members are workers who, instead of quitting and finding another job in times of conflicts, stay and struggle to improve the conditions. Because of this, despite all the hardships that they experience, the women who organize in trade unions are not willing to quit their struggle against patriarchy within unions, which is caused and continued by their commitment to unionism.

5.3 Discussion

This chapter showed in detail that trade unionism, like everything else, is not gender-neutral; instead, women's unionism is being shaped by patriarchal power relations that privilege men over women. Since women are burdened with childcare and housework in the domestic sphere due to gender division of labor, and since trade unionism is an activity designed by and for men, who are free of these responsibilities, women have a hard time fitting their lives into unionism. They either work too hard to satisfy all the demands of the different spheres of their lives; or give up certain things in other areas of their lives to make

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[55] Interview with Aysel, 25 October 2013, Istanbul

[56] Interview with Defne, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

them more compatible with unionism; or cannot do both and remain behind men. Due to the gender stereotypes that tie women to the private sphere, women unionists are not considered as permanent members of union politics. In the power struggles for decision-making mechanisms, pressures of gender roles and stereotypes disadvantage women in relation to men. When women display the potential for coming to power positions, they face patriarchal attitudes and/or sexist attacks from those who perceive them as threats that should be eliminated. Patriarchal dynamics, which result from the asymmetrical power relations between women and men, lead women to experience unionism in a different, and most of the time, more difficult way than men.

Carefully planning every move is one of the ways of overcoming these obstructions, through which women unionists try to prevent any kind of sexist comment or act that might be used to discredit or eliminate them. The existence of this strategy testifies to the male-dominated environment of trade unions, and also, to women's understanding of gender relations, and organizational structures. Women unionists are aware of the existence of different standards in evaluating men's and women's actions, and thus, distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and act accordingly. Women unionists also plan and organize their lives thoroughly in order to reconcile work, home, and unionism. This reconciliation requires the prioritization of activities based on their importance and necessity according to the women. Identifying union related activities as their priorities sometimes negatively affect women's relationships with their families and friends; however, they emphasize that this is a choice that is made willingly.

These strategies are individual strategies that are adopted by women in order to survive within gendered trade union structures. They do not challenge the status quo, thus, do not have the potential for leading to organizational transformation. As Colgan and Ledwith (1996: 280) stated, individual strategies are not likely to lead to transformation even in the short term, if they remain as individual acts. However, the fact that they do not have transformatory aims does not indicate that these strategies are any less important. Scott (1985: 34-5) highlighted the importance of everyday forms of resistance by arguing that these are the "informal, individual, opportunistic" ways that are "concerned with immediate and practical de facto gains" which are used by subordinated groups in order to manipulate the conditions that are imposed on them. They can easily be ignored, because they are not visible unless the analysis of power relations focuses on the daily lives of individuals. But in fact, these strategies are in accordance with the literature of resistance, which counts

"action and opposition" as the two common elements of almost all definitions of resistance (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 538). Through carefully planning every move, women resist the possibility of being excluded from power positions, and from union politics in general. Similarly, through prioritizing and planning every moment, they resist the obstruction of their active unionism by gender stereotypes and sexual division of labor. Thus, although there is no direct confrontation, there is resistance. In fact, these strategies are essential for women's continuous existence within unions. In order for male-dominated structures of trade unions to be transformed, they have to be forced both from within and outside, which requires women to be there as permanent members, which is possible through the adoption of survival strategies.

On the other hand, redefining unionism is a distinct strategy both in its aims and methods. It has the purpose of transforming trade union structures and processes that are constructed by men in a way that fits men's life experiences. It is a strategy which includes the presuppositions that the existing conditions are not necessary, are changeable, and should be changed. This indicates that women unionists question the existing style of unionism, refuse and redefine it in a way that takes women's interests and issues into consideration. This shows that women apply the practices of refusal, curiosity, and innovation, which constitute Foucault's critique, through which, power relations can be navigated (Taylor, 2010: 173, 181-5). From a Foucauldian perspective, the uncritical acceptance of anything that is presented as natural and necessary is problematic; because it can lead "power relations to devolve into static states of domination, where only a very limited range of thought and behavior is deemed valid or acceptable", and others are considered unacceptable (Ibid: 4). The interviewees' interpretation of the existing model of trade unionism as men's way of unionism shows that they did not accept it as natural and given. They saw it as the result of the historical male-domination of trade unionism, as something that can be challenged. Regarding the transformation of union structures, Serap argued that women should create alternative methods, and find their own ways of doing unionism, by not using the methods and practices that are established by men:

> We should be curious … And in unions, we shouldn't be on men's side. We won't depend on men, lean on men … we won't ask their opinions. We should do everything on our own … let us make mistakes, nothing's wrong with that. Let's do wrong, so we can see what is wrong. Let the mistake slap us on the face, we'll surely find our truth.[57]

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[57] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

Since redefining unionism has transformatory aims, it easily turns into collective action, due to the realization that the systematic nature of gender discrimination cannot be fought individually. In order for reaching this end, for instance, trade unions can be influenced or forced to channel their resources into the adoption of gender equality policies through the formation of networks of solidarity among women. In my research, I realized that the women who adopt such collective strategies are the ones that I have classified as socialist-feminists. Among the interviewees, only women who have feminist concerns and aims are inclined towards taking collective action against gender discrimination; because they are the ones who interpret gender discrimination as a systematical problem, instead of a personal issue. However, in addition to all the hardships that women unionists experience, in trade unions, women's collective action against patriarchal power relations most of the time draws reactions and criticisms, and sometimes it may even lead to exclusion, because, as Leyla stated, "being a feminist is the biggest sin".[58] A possible response to such negative reactions might be refusing to play the game altogether, and leaving these structures; because women may eventually lack "the patience, the political skills or the will to stay" (Ledwith and Colgan, 1996) within such unwelcoming environments. However, all of the interviewees pointed to the significance of the unionist movement for all workers, and emphasized the importance of being and staying in mixed organizations:

> I'm in favor of women's deciding for themselves, of [women's] independent organizing. But you can form these organizations somewhere else. You can contact an independent women's organization outside the union, you can do politics there, and you should … But there should be meeting points … I see mixed organizations as suitable for this transition … If I create an isolated mechanism with women, how am I going to achieve that transformation and change in the organization? … [E]ven just being here is important, it forces them to consider you when planning activities … I mean I think it is very important to be in mixed organizations.[59]

Thus, it can be said that unionist women who have feminist concerns, prefer to practice politics in trade unions, instead of, or along with, independent women's organizations, because they see trade unions as essential elements of the labor movement. They want to stay and fight with sexism within trade unions, in order not to leave all the decision-making positions to men, and to create women-friendly environments. Because of this, in order to find the possibility to undertake collective action and successfully contribute to transformation towards gender equality, they tend to adopt a dual strategy of women's networking and organizing separately within trade unions through women's units,

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[58] Interview, 23 October 2013, Istanbul

[59] Interview with Meral, 15 July 2013, Ankara

conferences, education programmes, etc., while at the same time continuing to work within mainstream union structures. Briskin (1999) argued that the success of unionist women depends on maintaining a strategic balance between autonomy and integration. Autonomy enables them to revision union practices, to voice women's concerns, and to build alliances between union women and the wider women's movement. Integration into union structures, on the other hand, prevents marginalization, and enables separate groups to communicate with the entire membership, and creates the conditions for gendering union policy (Ibid: 549).

Although all women unionists feel the need to use individual resistance strategies aimed at survival, the women who adopt both strategies are the ones with feminist consciousness. Traditionalists prefer to overcome roadblocks personally through individual resistance strategies, without referring to methods that might be associated with feminists. Then, following Scott (1990: 118), it can be said that the "counterideology" that is needed to systematically challenge the ideology of subordination, which is patriarchy here in this case, is feminism. Based on the interviews, one can contend that, a feminist perspective is the most crucial ingredient for the adoption of transformative collective resistance strategies. This is because feminism, which challenged the ideas of objectivity and neutrality, and the "Western-oriented/masculine-biased thought" (Farganis, 1994: 19, 24), makes it possible for women to recognize that the existing model of unionism is actually based on male life experiences. Feminism, arguing that women are systematically oppressed and dominated by men, targeted this systematic oppression, and revealed its operations. It has exposed all the factors that limit women's participation in politics, such as "the demands of the everyday life of home and family, and [the] widespread assumptions that public politics is a male domain" (Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 25). Therefore, women's increasing awareness of gender politics, together with a willingness to adopt collective action, is a key ingredient for the creation of change towards gender equality. In this context, then, separate women's units might be considered as the autonomous spaces where women unionists can both raise gender consciousness, develop gender policies, and influence the rest of the membership through integration into mainstream union structures. Equally important is the formation of close links and relationships of cooperation between workers, unionists and the feminist movement and independent women's groups. One of the interviewees, Serap, has an interesting suggestion regarding the formation of this connection:

Women's movement is visible, active, opponent … but it gets so narrow … I mean I think that we have to turn feminism into a lifestyle … We say that a feminist world is possible, then, how are we going to build it? … Women's movement must meet with women workers. There are women workers who don't have any idea about feminism, or who are anti-feminists … I criticize feminist friends on this respect. We must spread. We will enter trade unions as experts. We will change that male-dominated structure in unions … Or we will enter a workshop, or a textile factory, work there for one year, just one, you'll influence at least 100 women with a feminist consciousness.[60]

The creation of a consistent organized movement by trade unions is not possible without the establishment of a strong democratic culture in decision and policy making (Selamoğlu, 2004: 47). The creation of a democratic culture, on the other hand, requires trade unions to see women as equal and primary members as men, and to centralize women's problems and demands. Colgan and Ledwith (2002a: 22) count the existence of a vanguard of feminist women and activists pursuing strategies of transformation; autonomous and separate structures for women; links with civil and human rights and social movements as among the factors that create favourable conditions in terms of internal union democracy. The existence of these conditions provide members and unionists with an environment where it is easier to adopt strategies of social change, and realize them with higher chances of success. Their absence, however, leaves the possibility of approaching gender equality within trade unions to the initiative and mercy of male-dominated managements, who do not share women's experiences.

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[60] Interview, 30 September 2013, Istanbul

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine and understand women unionists' strategies of resistance to patriarchal power relations within trade unions. Feminist studies have examined patriarchy in numerous different areas, including organizations, in order to expose how this system of domination that transcends the private sphere operates. Likewise, in this thesis, which shares the same purpose, I aimed to explore unionist women's experiences of gender discrimination within trade unions, in order to answer the question, "how do women resist, survive, challenge, and overcome the manifestations of patriarchal power relations in trade unions?" Women unionists, who face certain obstructions that hinder their equal participation and representation in trade unions, develop individual and/or collective strategies of resistance that aim to survive within hostile union environments, and/or to transform those hostile environments. It is significant to make visible the operations of patriarchal power relations within Turkish trade unions, where there are only a few women in decision-making positions; because in order for the creation of change to be possible, first, the current conditions have to be identified and exposed clearly. In the same way, analyzing the nature of women's individual and collective resistance strategies is significant for providing ideas about the possible methods which have the potential for successfully leading to transformation towards gender equality within trade unions.

Kandiyoti (1988: 285) argued that analyses of women's strategies and coping mechanisms can be helpful in grasping "the nature of patriarchal systems in their cultural, class-specific, and temporal concreteness and reveal how men and women resist, accommodate, adapt, and conflict with each other over resources, rights, and responsibilities". However, if we think of resistance in terms of only massive scale and visible actions, then, a consideration of women's relationship with patriarchy is likely to depict most women as passive individuals. At this point, Foucault's framework of power relations widens the definition of resistance, and enables us to find it in the seemingly mundane activites of daily life. He argued that

92

power relations exist in all social interactions of individuals, whenever there are asymmetrical relations between free subjects. These relations involve resistance, which is possible through critique, which consists of the practices of refusal, curiosity, and innovation (Taylor, 2010: 173, 181-5). In accordance with this, patriarchal power relations that arise from the unbalanced relationship between men and women can be said to involve women's resistance, which is possible through their questioning, refusal, and negotiation of the norms of patriarchy, and creation of alternatives through the adoption of a critical perspective. This framework is crucial for both exposing the operation of patriarchal power relations within trade unions, and rendering women's resistance visible, which might otherwise go easily unnoticed.

Scott's (1990, 1985) examination of the resistance methods of subordinate groups is illuminating in recognizing everyday forms of resistance, which are indirect and covert forms of resistance that take place everyday without always being noticed. This concept shows that individuals can oppose and resist in numerous different ways, and that the nonexistence of organized and direct confrontation does not necessarily imply conformity and false consciousness. If only open and visible acts are considered as having political purposes, then, mistakenly, it may be thought that "subordinate groups essentially lack a political life or that what political life they do have is restricted to those exceptional moments of popular explosion" (Scott, 1990: 199). Everyday forms of resistance indicate an awareness of the existing conditions, a perception of oneself as the disadvantaged party in a relation of domination, and a critique of that domination. According to Kondo (1990; quoted in Davies and Thomas, 2004: 90), "practices which have usually been unnoticed or dismissed by grand theory as mere accommodations or false consciousness assume a new political weight" through which we recognize previously ignored forms of resistance. Therefore, if/when women do not openly and directly challenge patriarchy, it cannot be said that they do not resist. However, it is also imperative to distinguish this type of resistance from acts that directly challenge the ideology of domination, because the latter are the ones that may lead to the transformation of the system of domination, not the former. Everyday forms of resistance are essential especially as strategies of survival within relations of domination; but since they do not involve direct and collective challenges, they reproduce the relations of domination.

This thesis problematized women's unequal representation and participation in Turkish trade unions, and attempted to investigate the gender dynamics within union structures and

women's responses on the basis of interviews conducted with a selected group of women unionists. Trade unionism is still considered as a movement that is based on "the collective, overt actions of groups of male blue-collar workers" (Thomas, Mills & Mills, 2004: 3). Women develop strategies in order to continue to stay in trade unions, but, apparently, individual ways of overcoming roadblocks do not create an overall change in union structures. Carefully planning every move, and identifying priorities and planning each moment are such strategies that are adopted individually to be able to continue unionism within discriminative and competitive conditions. It can be said that the unionist women who adopt these survival strategies resist gender discrimination that they experience within trade unions without the purpose of transforming union structures. All of the interviewees adopt these strategies, regardless of their gender consciousness, because in order for not being thrown out of the competition for decision-making positions in male-dominated trade unions, women have to make an extra effort to overcome roadblocks that men do not face. Urhan (2009: 107) stated that in terms of institutional structure, number of members, and the potential for being independent, trade unions are still the most effective structures for the working class, including women workers, due to the possibility of effectively negotiating with employers and governmental bodies, and the continuity of resources. The interviewees make such an effort to carve out spaces for themselves in trade unions, because they share Urhan's view regarding trade unions. They are committed to politics, but more importantly, they believe in the necessity and importance of the union movement, which leads them to the adoption of such individual strategies of resistance, regardless of their level of gender consciousness.

On the other hand, some women go a step further, and instead of simply trying to stay within trade unions through survival strategies, they attempt to transform union structures, in order to approach gender equality. They do not simply resist gender discrimination within trade unions, but also aim to transform the existing male model of unionism. These women, who go beyond individualism and aim to achieve transformation through collective action, which I have identified as redefining and transforming unionism, are the ones with a level of feminist consciousness. This is because, the existence of such a consciousness is what pushes women to link experienced or witnessed incidents of gender discrimination with patriarchy, a system of domination that can be challenged only through collective action. Because of this, it can also be said that individual survival strategies are utilized more than transformative strategies, since all women adopt the former, but only women with a sensitivity to gender issues adopt the latter. Thus, it is concluded here that the

94

establishment of gender equality in trade unions requires feminism to become influential and widespread as an ideology among unionists and members. Nonetheless, these interviewees, who might be viewed as the intersection point of the feminist movement and the union movement, also criticized those women who practice politics only and exclusively in women's organizations without forming any ties with men. They argued that such a strategy might lead to the marginalization of women's issues; because social change requires the transformation of spaces where women and men exist together. Hence, while supporting the establishment of women's groups for building alliances, raising consciousness, and having autonomy in policy making, they also emphasized the integration of these units into mainstream union structures to prevent their marginalization.

Several trade union managements are increasingly trying to "ensure that women's issues are taken up in negotiation, training courses are developed to suit their needs, and that unions are made more hospitable for women and men" (Colgan and Ledwith, 1996: 154). In fact, Briskin (2006: 375-6) argued that, "unions have taken far more equity initiatives than any other social institutions". However, male union leaders should not receive credit for these positive developments; because these are the results of the pressure created by union women and the political weight and influence of the feminist movement. As Bradley (1998: 164) argued, in the past decades, feminism has challenged the marginalization of women in trade unions, and also, unions have grasped the importance of women as members, in order for the labor movement to maintain its power in a context of industrial decline. But since trade unions' interest in women is based on their aim to increase membership and representational power, the continuous implementation of gender equality policies requires monitoring at all levels, because they may not be implemented thoroughly due to a lack of commitment. Cranford (2007) argued that, "an informal sisterhood among women staff and women members, combined with women members' critical engagement with men members, brought about change". What promoted transformation towards gender equality in this union was "a combination of top-down changes initiated by women staffers and bottom-up changes initiated by women members" (Ibid: 434). The cooperation of women unionists and members seems essential in order for the attempts of each party to be embraced and adopted by the other. Simultaneously, forming connections with men, and when possible, working with them are necessary methods to make male unionists and members willing partners in the process of transforming union structures. Equality movement should be conducted in the leadership of women, together with men. In order to prevent the instrumentalization of gender equality policies, women should be present in

policy making mechanisms, because they are the ones who know what hinders women's equal representation, and what types of practical results the equality measures have on women's lives. Therefore, an overall strategy that is initiated by women unionists and members who establish links with women's groups and feminists, but also that includes men, by either forcing or convincing, with the aim of transforming them, is necessary in trade unions.

Then, what can be the suggestions for the creation of environments that women can feel more comfortable and equal in trade unions? First of all, not only for women, but for the benefit of all members, the democratization of union structures is necessary. Unions are often the site of intense ideological struggle between different groups of activists about the definition of member interests (Kelly, 1998; quoted in Colgan and Ledwith, 2002b: 186). The determination of union agendas and activities by central managements, who have their own ideas of member interests, do not allow the inclusion of members' inputs; however, union members and officials should be able to participate in decision-making processes. This can be possible if trade unions become active at workplaces through the initiatives of representatives who decide and organize union activities together with members, instead of waiting for unions or branches to pay attention to them. Trade unions should not act in the name of workers, which eventually turns them into passive disinterested members; but should act with them, in order to prevent their alienation. What traditional trade unions can learn from the women's movement is the adoption of more horizontal structures, instead of hierarchical ones, where women can express their problems and participate in decision-making (Urhan, 2009: 107). Separate women's units within trade unions are those places where women can build up a sense of identity, political consciousness, confidence and solidarity, and develop and practice activist skills. For many women, these are places where women actively participate in the union for the first time, a place where they feel safe, and thus articulate and share common concerns (Colgan and Ledwith, 2002b: 178). Surely, there is no guarantee for these groups to be successful in their aims, because they do not operate in a vacuum, but they exist "in a state of almost permanent challenge from mainstream traditionalists and institutionalised norms" (Mann et al., 1997; quoted in Colgan and Ledwith, 2002b: 173). Their success and strength depends on their links with women across trade unions, and activists of other social movements. These connections that women form with each other, which include both formal and informal networks, enable them to find the support that they cannot find within trade unions.

The most important thing to do for trade unions is to acknowledge the fact that women face problems and barriers that men do not, that these problems are not women's personal issues, and that, their solutions require the intervening of unions. Thus, trade unions should recognize their responsibility in establishing women's equal participation and representation in unions, and welcome and embrace any support that come from the women's movement, and other social movements. Cobble (1993) stated that trade unions are not being dismissed as male-dominated organizations that are antagonistic of women's interests, but instead, they are being reconceived as "more flexible institutions that can be more or less open to women's concerns" (quoted in Colgan and Ledwith, 2002b: 170). Similarly, Conley (2005) argued that feminists who focus on work issues, "recognize the political opportunities available in the trade union movement", or rather they "seek to create political opportunities and spaces out of what is at hand in trade unions" (quoted in Franzway and Fonow, 2011: 37). In order for the approach of the women's movement towards trade unions to benefit union women, instead of closing their doors to feminists, trade unions should face the current gender inequality, and make use of the connections that are being formed among women by centralizing their arguments and demands.

This study attempted to describe and illuminate, to a degree, women unionists' ways of practising unionism by focusing on their strategies of resisting and overcoming patriarchal barriers. The lack of a large number of comprehensive resources on the unionist movement in Turkey that focus on women is both a deficiency, and a difficulty for doing research in this area. On the other hand, the conformity of the research findings with the world literature on trade unions and women rendered the process of analysis easier, and also showed that women's experiences within mixed and male-dominated organizations are more or less universal. The increase in studies that approach the issue from women's point of view will reveal the effects on women of the patriarchal power relations that exist in male-dominated organizations like trade unions. The acknowledgement of the fact that trade unions are responsible in eliminating the causes of women's unequal participation and representation in unions should lead them to intervene and take responsibility for solving these issues. Gender inequality is a widespread phenomenon that cannot be handled solely by trade unions; however, in terms or organizing women and increasing their participation in trade unions, a more "holistic type of organizing" should be adopted, which would take into consideration women's position "in their homes, at the workplace and in their communities as an integral whole" (Martens, 1994: 201).

As the primary source of this thesis, I chose the narratives of women. I believe in the necessity of conducting interviews with women as a research method, because the amount of studies that reveal women's point of view are still not sufficient. However, a suggestion for further research may be an evaluation of the same situation from men's point of view, in order to see the effects of women's resistance strategies on male unionists. It is important to learn how the efforts of women, who struggle both to stay within trade unions, and to lead to transformation towards gender equality, as long as they are not blocked, are perceived by men. Are they aware of the existence of women's strategies? How are they affected by the adoption of such strategies? Also, the clarification of men's methods of hindering women's equal representation in trade unions may enable women to overcome these barriers more effectively. Such a research would also present the gendered nature of trade union structures and processes in a more detailed way. All in all, more comprehensive studies that focus on different aspects of the issue need to be conducted in order to shed further light on this subject in the future.

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APPENDIX A

NAME	TRADE UNION	CONF.	POSITION	DURATION OF UNION INVOLVEMENT
Gülten	ESM	KESK	Executive Board Member	18
Dilek	TÜRK SAĞLIK-SEN	KAMUSEN	Branch President	23
Nilüfer	BTS	KESK	Central Women's Secretary	15
Meral	EĞİTİM-SEN	KESK	Central Women's Secretary	13
Derya	BASİSEN	TÜRK-İŞ	Branch President	34
Mine	EĞİTİM-SEN	KESK	Branch Women's Secretary	10
İpek	SES	KESK	Branch Women's Secretary	17
Defne	SOSYAL-İŞ	DİSK	Executive Board Member	13
Aysel	GENEL-İŞ	DİSK	Branch President	18
Leyla	HAVA-İŞ	TÜRK-İŞ	Retired (Executive Board Member)	23
Aysel	TEZ KOOP-İŞ	TÜRK-İŞ	Retired (Branch President)	20
Nazan	EĞİTİM-SEN	KESK	Branch Women's Secretary	4
Semra	TEZ KOOP-İŞ	TÜRK-İŞ	Executive Board Member	23
Hazal	HAVA-İŞ	TÜRK-İŞ	Executive Board Member	25
Aslı	DEV SAĞLIK-İŞ	DİSK	Executive Board Member	10

TURKISH SUMMARY

Bu tez çalışmasında kadınların sendikal yapılar içerisinde cinsiyet ayrımcılığı şeklinde görünürleşen ataerkil iktidar ilişkileriyle baş etme yöntemlerini incelemeyi amaçladım. Kadın sendikacıların istedikleri gibi sendikacılık yapmalarını engelleyen faktörleri değerlendirdikten sonra, seçilmiş kadın sendika yöneticileriyle yaptığım mülakatlar aracılığıyla, kadınların bu faktörlere dair algıları ve bu engellerin üstesinden gelmek için geliştirdikleri direniş stratejilerini inceleyerek sendikal yapılar içerisindeki ataerkil iktidar ilişkilerinin işleyişini görünürleştirmeyi hedefledim. Bu sayede sendikacı kadınların cinsiyetler arası dengesiz ilişkilerden nasıl etkilendiklerini göstermek, ve daha genelde, kadınların patriarka ile olan etkileşimlerini bir parça aydınlatmak mümkün olabilir.

Sendikalar tüm çalışanların haklarını korumak ve temsil etmek amaçlı örgütler olsalar da, kuruldukları ilk zamanlardan itibaren sendikalar erkek egemen yapılara sahip olmuştur. Kadınların sonradan dahil oldukları sendikalardaki katılım ve özellikle yönetim kademelerindeki temsil oranları hiçbir zaman erkeklerle eşit olmamıştır. Karar alma mekanizma ve pozisyonları daima erkeklerin elinde olmuş, kadınların çabalarıyla sendikalarda kurulan kadın birimleri birçok örnekte marjinalleştirilmiş, cinsel taciz ve mobbing ise son derece yaygın görülen ve cezasız kalan bir sorun haline gelmiş, ve bunların sonucunda var olan kadın üye ve yöneticiler de örgütlerine yabancılaşmıştır. Tüm bu etmenler halen sendikal hareketin içerisinde yer alan kadınlar tarafından deneyimlenmektedir; ancak kadınlar da bunlara geliştirdikleri çeşitli direniş stratejileri ile karşılık veriyorlar. Bu stratejiler amaç ve yöntemlerine göre birbirlerinden farklılaşabiliyorlar; çünkü kadınların toplumsal cinsiyete dair bilinçleri, sendikanın siyasi gündemi, kişinin deneyimlediği duruma ve eylemlerinin olası sonuçlarına dair algıları, harekete geçme isteği, sendikadaki diğer grupların tavırları, vs. gibi birçok faktörden etkileniyorlar. Bu yüzden kadınların stratejilerine bakıldığında, kadın sendikaları kurmaktan karma sendikalar içinde kadın birimleri kurmaya, kadınlar için eğitim seminerleri ve konferanslar düzenlemekten sendika içinde ve dışında çeşitli grup ve örgütlerle iletişim ve

destek ağları kurmaya, kadınlar lehine politikalar uygulamaktan bırakıp gitmeye, birçok farklı eylem biçimi görülebilir.

Sendikalardaki ataerkil iktidar ilişkilerini incelemeyi amaçlayan bu çalışmanın kavramsal çerçevesi Foucault'nun iktidar ve direniş ilişkileri kavramlarına dayanıyor. İktidar ilişkilerinin bireylerin tüm sosyal ilişkilerinde var olduğunu, ve iktidar ilişkilerinin mevcut olduğu her an ve yerde direnişin de mümkün olduğunu söyleyen Foucault, bu sayede hem direnişi günlük hayata taşıyor, hem de onun tanımını genişletiyor. Sahip oldukları birçok farklı toplumsal kimlik nedeniyle bireylerin birbirleriyle olan her etkileşiminde dengesiz ilişkiler ortaya çıkar, ve bunlar bireylerin birbirlerinin eylemlerini etkileyip yönlendirebildiği iktidar ilişkilerini meydana getirir. Ancak burada önemli olan nokta şudur ki, direniş bu ilişkilerin içkin bir parçası olduğu için, iktidar ilişkileri hiçbir zaman statik ve değişmez değildir, her zaman dönüştürülebilirler. Direniş ile ilgili önemli bir nokta da şudur: direniş eylemleri doğrudan meydan okuma ve/veya karşı çıkış ile sınırlı değildir. İçinde bulunulan durumun şartları kişiyi doğrudan ve açık metotlar yerine, daha dolaylı ve kapalı yöntemlerle direnmeye itebilir. Bu tip direniş eylemleri gündelik hayatın önemli bir parçasıdır; çünkü gündelik hayatta bireyler arasındaki her sosyal etkileşim karşılıklı sınırların test edildiği bir mücadeledir.

Foucault iktidarın daima ve yalnızca kısıtlayıcı ve yasaklar koyucu negatif bir güç şeklinde tanımlanmasına karşı çıkar, ve onun üretici yönüne dikkat çeker. İktidar normlar belirleyip dayatarak, belirli davranış standartları yaratıp bireylerin bunlara uyup uymadıklarını izleyip uymayanları da cezalandırarak, belirli şekillerde davranan bireyler inşa eder. Bu sürecin sonunda hem kendi davranışlarını, hem de başkalarının davranışlarını izleyip takip eden, ve artık dışardan bir zorlama olmasa dahi normlara uyan bireyler yaratılır. Dayatılan normları içselleştiren bu kişiler böylece kendi tabi kılınışlarında aktif bir rol oynamış olurlar. Bu durum aslında bireylere içinde oldukları hakimiyet ilişkisini dönüştürme imkanını da tanır, çünkü dayatılan normlara uymayı reddedip bu hakimiyet ilişkisini manipüle edebilirler, ki Foucault'ya göre iktidar ilişkilerini manipüle etmek, onları dönüştürmek özgürlüktür. Bu dönüşüm ise ancak bireylerin var olan ve deneyimledikleri düzenin mecburi olmadığının farkına varmaları ile mümkündür. Dayatılan normları reddedip yeniden değerlendirerek, ve yeni düşünme ve var olma biçimleri geliştirerek var olan sistemin mecburi olmadığını açığa çıkarılabilirler. Foucault'nun kavramsal çerçevesine göre bu eylemler direniştir; direniş bu eylemlerle mümkündür.

Gündelik hayattaki sıradan eylemlerin de aslında direniş içerebileceğini gösteren bir kavram olan "gündelik direniş formları" görünür, organize, kolektif eylemler olmadığında direniş de olmadığı sonucunun çıkarılamayacağını kanıtlarlar. Toplumsal ilişkilerde ezilen gruplara mensup bireyler kendilerine dayatılan düşünce sistemleri ile kendi yaşam deneyimleri arasındaki çelişkileri görebilir, hakimiyet sistemini sorgulayabilir, ve farklı şekillerde yorumlayabilirler. Bu kişiler içinde bulundukları sisteme direnmiyor gibi görünebilirler, çünkü dolaylı ve görünür olmayan biçimlerde direnmeyi tercih edebilirler. Ancak unutulmaması gereken bir nokta şudur ki, sistemi doğrudan zorlamayan, ona açık, görünür ve direkt olarak meydan okumayan gündelik direniş eylemleri var olan hakimiyet sisteminin sürmesini durduramazlar. Bu tip eylemler daha ziyade hayatta kalmaya, var olmayı sürdürmeye yönelik hedefleri olan, daha pratik amaçlarla uygulanan stratejilerdir; dönüşüm amaçlamazlar. Ancak bu eylemlerin incelenmesi ezilen gruplar ve bireylerin iktidar ilişkileri bağlamında pasif kalmadıklarını, aksine, aktif şekilde karşı koyduklarını ve deneyimledikleri iktidar ilişkilerini manipüle ettiklerini gösterir.

Bu bağlamda, eğer her hakimiyet biçimi bir çeşit direnişle karşılaşıyorsa, kadınları ikincilleştiren ve hayatlarını çeşitli biçimlerde yönlendiren, kısıtlayan ataerkil sistem de kadınların direnişiyle karşılaşır. Kadınların patriarkaya direnmeleri de onun pratiklerini sorgulamaları, reddetmeleri, yeni düşünme ve var olma biçimleri geliştirmeleri ile mümkündür denilebilir. Cinsiyetlerin farklı özelliklere sahip olduklarına dair toplumlarda süregelen inanışlar, cinsiyetlere atfettikleri özellikler arasında bir hiyerarşi yaratarak toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliğine yol açarlar. Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin kadınları ikincilleştirecek şekilde inşa edilmesi kadınların hayattaki seçeneklerini kısıtlar; ancak toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin dayatmaları biyolojik nedenlere dayanmadıkları için aslında mecburiyet içermezler, ve cinsiyetler arasında eşitlik sağlayacak şekilde dönüştürülebilirler.

Hem dünyada hem Türkiye'de çok benzer sebeplerden dolayı kadınlar sendikal süreçlere erkeklerle eşit oranda katılamamakta, yönetim kademelerinde de eşit temsil edilmemektedirler. Bu sebepler kadınların sendikalarla ilişkilerini inceleyen dünya ve Türkiye literatüründe, kadınların seçeneklerini kısıtlayan ataerkil tavır ve davranışlar, sendikaların katılımcılığa olanak vermeyen hiyerarşik yapıları, sendikal yapılar içinde süregelen iktidar mücadeleleri, kadınların vakit ve enerjilerinin büyük bir bölümünü alan ev içinde cinsiyetler arası eşitsiz iş bölümü, sendikacılığın erkek işi olarak görülmesi, kadın rol modellerin olmaması, sendikacılığın erkek yaşam ve deneyimlerine göre inşa edilmiş bir pratik olması sebebiyle kadınların yaşamlarıyla uyuşmayan yönlerinin olması, vs. olarak yer

almıştır. Bunların karşısında sendikacı kadınlar sendikal siyasetteki varlıklarını ikincilleştiren ve onları yabancılaştıran bu faktörlerin üstesinden gelmek için kendi yöntemlerini geliştiriyorlar. Bu çalışmada benim iddiam şudur ki, çoğu zaman kendileri için düşmanca sayılabilecek ortamlarda çalışmak zorunda olan kadın sendikacıların direniş stratejileri çoğunlukla buralarda kendi varlıklarını sürdürmeyi hedefliyor. Kadınlar sendikalarda kalmaya devam edebilmek, iktidar mücadelelerinin dışına atılmamak için pratik etkileri olan bireysel direniş stratejileri geliştiriyorlar; ancak bu stratejiler sisteme doğrudan bir meydan okuma ve kolektif eylem içermedikleri için var olan cinsiyet eşitsizliğini yeniden üreterek sürdürüyorlar. Fakat bu bireysel stratejilerin uygulanması kadınlar tarafından sendikal yapılar içinde kalmaya devam etmeleri için önemli görülüyor. Diğer taraftan, sendikal yapı ve süreçlerin şu anki hallerini dönüştürmeyi ve kadınların kendilerini yabancı hissetmeyecekleri ortamlar oluşturmayı amaçlayan, ve bu nedenle kolektif eyleme dönüşme ihtimali çok daha yüksek olan stratejiler de uygulanılıyor. Ancak dönüşüm hedefleyen kolektif stratejileri kullanan kadınlar yalnızca feminist duyarlılığa ve toplumsal cinsiyet bilincine sahip olan kadınlardır. Bu kadınlar, sendikal siyaset içinde kadın olmak sebebiyle deneyimledikleri cinsiyetçi olay ve durumları bireysel tecrübeler olarak görmekten ziyade, sebepleri ataerkil ideolojinin yarattığı sistemde arayan kadınlardır. Dolayısıyla, yaşadıkları sorunların çözümlerini de bireysel stratejilerden ziyade, daha uzun vadeli etkileri olan ve dönüşüm yaratma amacı taşıyan kolektif stratejilerde arıyorlar. Elbette kadınların hangi stratejileri uygulayacakları, şartlara dair algıları, sahip oldukları kaynaklar, toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkilerine dair farkındalıkları, örgütün politik yapısı gibi birçok farklı etmen tarafından etkileniyor ve belirleniyor. Ancak toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkilerine dair sahip olunan bilinç düzeyi bir belirleyici olarak çok önemlidir, çünkü bir kadının deneyimlediği durumun nedenlerine dair algısı aldığı tavrı doğrudan etkileyen bir faktördür.

1980 darbesi sonrası dönemde Türkiye'de sendikaların gücü ve sahip oldukları kitlesel destek hem siyasete ve sendikalaşmaya getirilen kısıtlamalar, hem de uygulanmaya başlanan neoliberal ekonomik politikalar nedeniyle oldukça azalmıştır. Sendikalı işçi ve memur sayıları şu anda Türkiye'de oldukça düşüktür, ancak kadın sendikalıların oranları erkeklerden de daha düşüktür. Bu duruma kadınların emek piyasasındaki konumları, daha ziyade düşük maaşlı, düşük statülü, güvencesiz işlerde yoğunlaşmaları, özellikle enformel sektörde çalışmaları gibi faktörler neden olmaktadır. Ayrıca kadınlar evdeki eşitsiz iş bölümü sebebiyle sendika gibi ev ve iş yaşamlarına ek olan üçüncü bir alana vakit ve enerjilerini ayıramamaktadırlar. Sendika yönetim kadrolarının erkeklerden oluşması

sendikacılığın erkek işi olduğu algısını sürdürmekte ve kadınların bu kadrolara gelmesini zorlaştırmaktadır. Yönetim kadrolarındaki erkekler deneyimlemedikleri için kadınları ilgilendiren konuları ve sorunları sendika gündemlerine taşımamakta, bu durum ise kadın üyelerde sendikanın kadınların özel sorunlarına çare olamayacağı fikrini yaratmakta, ve onları sendikalardan uzaklaştırmaktadır. Ayrıca kadın üyeler sendikaların üst kadrolarında benzer deneyimleri paylaştıkları kadın yöneticiler de bulamadıkları için sendikaların birer erkek alanı olma imajları sürmektedir. Son zamanlarda ise, neoliberal ekonomi politikalarının uygulanması nedeniyle tüm dünyada eski güçlerini ve etkilerini kaybeden sendikalar güç kazanmak için ise önceden göz ardı ettikleri potansiyel üyeleri ve onların sorunlarını dikkate almaya başlamışlardır. Bu anlamda kadınları sendikalara çekmek önemli bir hedef haline geldiği için, gittikçe daha fazla sendika kadınların katılımını arttırmaya yönelik politikalar uygulamaya başladılar. Bu politikaların uygulanmalarında çoğu zaman görülen problemler ve devamsızlık bir yana, alınan iyi sonuçların müsebbibinin sendika yönetimleri değil, sendika üyesi ve/veya yöneticisi kadınlar, ve bağlantı kurup iş birliği yaptıkları feminist hareket olduğu unutulmamalıdır; çünkü sendikaların kadın politikaları uygulama sebepleri feminist hareketin geldiği nokta itibariyle kadınların bazı taleplerinin artık meşrulaşmış olması, ve sendikacı kadınlarla feministlerin işbirliğinin yarattığı baskıdır.

Bu çalışmada ben farklı sendikalarda ve farklı pozisyonlarda çalışan 15 kadın sendika yöneticisiyle mülakat yaptım. Görüştüğüm kadınlar toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri ve ataerkil tavırları, sendika içinde yönetim pozisyonları uğruna yaşanan iktidar mücadelelerini, ve ev içi eşitsiz iş bölümünü sendikal katılım ve temsillerini etkileyen en önemli nedenler olarak saydılar. Sendikal pozisyonlar için yaşanan iktidar mücadelelerinin kadınları etkileyen bir ortak noktası, erkeklerin rekabeti azaltmak için kadınları ekarte etmek istediklerinde cinsiyetçiliği bir yöntem olarak kullanmalarıdır. Yönetim kadrolarına seçilmek için kendisine destek verecek gerekli çevreyi edinmek gibi konularda ataerkil ideoloji ve sistemin kendilerine sağladığı avantajlı konumdan faydalanan erkekler, buna rağmen toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin koyduğu sınırların dışına çıkarak sendikal siyasette aktifleşen ve bu şekilde dikkat çeken kadınları tehdit olarak görüyorlar. Böyle durumlarda kadınlara kadınlıkları üzerinden saldırılıyor, kadın oldukları için işi beceremeyecekleri, sorumluluk alamayacakları, pozisyon için yetersiz veya uygunsuz oldukları söyleniyor. Görüşmecilerin yorumlarına göre erkek sendikacılar kadınları ancak kendilerine rakip olmayacaklarından emin olduklarında destekliyorlar. Benzer şekilde kadınlar gündelik hayatta sendikal pratik içinde sürekli olarak altında kadınların sendikacı olamayacağı düşüncesi yatan ataerkil tavır

ve davranışlarla karşılaşıyorlar. Kadınlara kendileri istemese de sendikanın vitrini olma görevi biçiliyor, ve daha fazlasını isteyenler uzaklaştırılıyor, sorumlulukları azaltılıyor. Sıklıkla yaşanan cnsel taciz olaylarının üzeri ise, sendikaların taciz olaylarında yapılması gerekenlere dair sistematik kuralları olmaması nedeniyle genellikle kadınların sendikalardan uzaklaştırılması ve erkeğin cezasız kalmasıyla örtülüyor.

Sendikacı kadınlar ise bu durumlarla baş etmek ve üstesinden gelmek için çeşitli bireysel/kolektif direniş stratejileri geliştiriyorlar. Görüşmecilerin anlatılarına dayanarak sendika yöneticisi kadınların bireysel stratejilerini "her hareketini dikkatle planlamak", ve "öncelikleri belirleyip her dakikayı planlamak" olarak aldandırdım. Bu iki strateji tüm görüşmecilerin anlatılarında rastlanan ortak bir yöntemdir. Sendikacı kadınlar her hareketlerine dikkat etmek gereği duyuyorlar, çünkü en önemsiz gibi görülen davranışlarının dahi mercek altında olduğunu hissediyorlar. Dış görünüşlerine, kıyafetlerine, makyajlarına, davranışlarına, tavırlarına, konuşmalarına, kiminle nerede görüşüp konuştuklarına, vs. dikkat ediyorlar. Böylece erkekler tarafından aleyhlerine kullanılabilecek herhangi bir duruma mahal vermemeye çalışıyorlar. Kendilerini kanıtlamak ve hata yapmamak için iki kat fazla çalışıyorlar. Çünkü yapacakları en küçük hatanın önlerine çok daha farklı şekillerde çıkartılacağını, ve kendilerini sendikal pozisyonlar için yaşanan iktidar mücadelelerinin dışına atmakta kullanılacağını biliyorlar. Böyle bir strateji, kadınlar ve erkeklerin davranışlarının farklı strandartlara göre değerlendirildiğini ve kadınların da bu ölçütlerin farkında olduklarını, bilinçli olarak onları dikkate aldıklarını gösterir. Ancak aynı zamanda kadınların kendi hareketlerini bu iki yüzlü standartlara uydurmaya gayret ediyor olmaları, bu duruma yol açan ataerkil sisteme herhangi bir meydan okuma getirmediği için onu sürdürmektedir.

Diğer bir bireysel strateji olan "öncelikleri belirlemek ve her dakikayı planlamak" ise, hem eylemlere hem zamana ilişkin bir planlamayı işaret ediyor. Sendika yöneticisi kadınlar kendi vakit ve enerjilerinin büyük çoğunluğunu alan ev ve iş alanlarına ek olarak bir de sendikal siyasete hayatlarında yer açmaya çalışan kadınlar oldukları için, bütün bu farklı alanları bir arada yürütebilmek önem sırasına göre öncelikleri belirlemeyi gerektiriyor. Ev işi ve çocuk bakımına dair işleri, eğer sendikada tam zamanlı çalışan değillerse iş hayatının gerekliliklerini ve sendikal eylemleri önceliklerine göre sıralıyorlar. Sendika ve sendikal siyasetle alakalı aktiviteleri hayatlarının diğer alanlarındaki işlerinden daha öncelikli bir sıraya oturtan kadınlar, daha az önemli gördükleri işlerle vakit kaybetmemeye çalışıyorlar, ve dolayısıyla diğer alanlardan feragat ediyorlar. Günlerinin neredeyse hiçbir dakikasını

boşa harcamadan, her anı planlayıp organize ederek, ve her anı verimli kullanmaya gayret ederek vakit sıkıntısının üstesinden geliyorlar. Sendika aktivistliğine engel olarak gördükleri işleri ve/veya ilişkileri ise azaltıp hayatlarından çıkartarak vakit yaratma yoluna gidiyorlar. Birçok kadının sendikal aktivitelere verdikleri öncelik aile, akraba, ve arkadaşlık ilişkilerinde problemler yaratmış olmasına rağmen kadınlar bu önem ve öncelik sırasının kendi bilinçli seçimleri olduğunu özellikle vurgulayarak iradelerini öne çıkarıyorlar. Böylece sendikal hareketin, ve daha genel olarak ise siyaset yapıyor olmanın hayatlarının ne kadar önemli bir parçası olduğunun altını çizmiş oluyorlar.

Bu iki bireysel stratejiden daha farklı bir strateji ise "sendikacılığı yeniden tanımlamak ve dönüştürmek" adını verdiğim dönüşüm hedefi olan kolektif stratejidir. Bu yöntem var olan sendikacılık yapma biçiminin erkek deneyimlerine göre şekillendiği ön kabulüyle hareket eden kadınların, sendikal siyasetin tanımını ve alanını genişlettikleri bir stratejidir. Sadece kadınları ilgilendirdiği düşünülen ve bu yüzden özel problemler olarak görülen birçok konunun sendika gündemine getirilmesi, bu konuların aslında sendikalar tarafından ele alınması gerektiğini söyleyen görüşmeciler, bu davranışlarıyla dar bir çerçeveyle sınırlanmış sendikal sorumlulukları yeniden tanımlayarak genişletmiş oluyorlar. Örneğin sendikaların kadına yönelik şiddet konusunda söz söylemek ve taraf olmak mecburiyetinde olduğunu dile getirmek, aynı zamanda sendikanın üyesi olan kadınların ev hayatlarına ve aile ilişkilerine de müdahil olması gerektiği fikrine yol açar. Görüşmecilere göre tam da bu şekilde, üyesi olan kadınların sendikal katılım ve temsilini etkileyen sebepler ne olursa olsun, nerede olursa olsun sendika bunlara müdahil olmakla yükümlüdür. Bu sorunların çözümünü kadınların sorumlu oldukları bireysel bir mevzu olarak görmektense, sendikaları çözümden mesul tutmak bu stratejinin itici gücüdür. Kadınların kadın olmak sebebiyle yaşadıkları sorunların özel sorunlar olmadığını, kadın-erkek arasındaki hiyerarşiyi yaratan ataerkil ideoloji tarafından yaratılmış toplumsal sorunlar olduğu kabulüyle hareket eden kadınlar, feminizmin "özel olan politiktir" şiarına uygun şekilde, sendikaları bu durumdan sorumlu tutmakta ve onlardan kadın kotaları uygulanması, kadın birimleri kurulması, kadınları ilgilendiren konuların sendika gündemine alınması ve toplu iş sözleşmelerine dahil edilmesi gibi kurumsal politikalar talep etmektedir. Bu taleplerin dikkate alındığı durumlarla ilgili önemli bir nokta, bir süredir sendikalar, daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, kadınları kitleselliğe ulaşmalarına fayda sağlayacak potansiyel üyeler olarak görmeleri sebebiyle kadınlar lehine politikalar uygulamaya başladılarsa da, bu türden uygulamaların aslında sendika üyesi ve/veya yöneticisi kadınların çoğu zaman diğer sendikalardaki, ve feminist hareketteki kadınlarla işbirliği yaparak kurdukları baskı sonucu mümkün

116

olduğudur. Dahası, bu politikaların uygulanmasında etkinlik ve devamlılık sağlanması da yine ancak bu baskının sürekli olmasıyla mümkündür.

Kadın sendikacıların uyguladıkları stratejilerin incelenmesindeki önemli bir nokta, daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, kadınların toplumsal cinsiyete dair sahip oldukları bilinç düzeyleridir; çünkü farklı bilinç düzeylerine sahip kadınlar benzer durumlara farklı şekillerde tepki veriyorlar. Toplumsal cinsiyete dair bir bilinç veya duyarlılıkları olmayan "gelenekselci" kadınlar ataerkil iktidar ilişkilerine sistematik bir eleştiri getirmedikleri, ve yaşadıkları cinsiyet ayrımcılığını sistematik değil, bireysel olaylar olarak değerlendirme eğiliminde oldukları için, bunlarla baş etmekte de bireysel yöntemleri tercih ediyorlar. Sendikal siyaset içinde erkeklerle birlikte hareket ederek yanyana ve yoldaş olarak yürümeyi önemseyen bu kadınlar, feministlerle bağlantı ve iş birliği kurmayı ise sınıfı ve sendikal bütünlüğü bölen bir eylem olarak görüyorlar. Kadın konularına ve toplumsal cinsiyete dair duyarlılığı ve bilinci olan kadınlar ise sendikaya feminist hareketten dahil olmamış olsalar dahi, kolektif direniş stratejileri uygulamaya daha meyilli oluyorlar; çünkü cinsiyetler arası eşitsizliği sistematik bir sorun olarak görmeleri, onları çözümün de bireysel olamayacağı fikrine yöneltiyor. Her ne kadar feminist bilincin varlığı muhakkak eyleme yol açmasa da, sendikal yapıların daha kadın dostu ortamlara dönüştürülmesine yönelik kolektif eylemlerin önkoşulu, bu bilincin ve duyarlılığın varlığıdır denilebilir.

Kadınların sendikalardaki varlıklarını sürdürmeleri amacını taşıyan bireysel stratejiler ve sendikal yapılarda dönüşüm amaçlayan kolektif stratejiler, amaç, yöntem, ve etkilerindeki farklılıklara rağmen aynı oranda öneme sahip direniş stratejileridir. Bireysel direniş stratejilerinin, hedef aldıkları sorunları yaratan ataerkil sisteme doğrudan ve açıkça bir karşı çıkış içermemeleri onları sendikacılığı dönüştürmeyi hedefleyen kolektif stratejilerden daha az politik yapmaz; çünkü direniş yalnızca kitlesel ve doğrudan eylemlerden ibaret değildir. Sendikacı kadınlar bu bireysel stratejiler aracılığıyla sendikaların yönetim kadrolarından ve bu kadrolara gelebilme sürecinde meydana gelen rekabetten dışlanma ihtimallerine direniyorlar; ve böylece sendikal siyasetin içinde kalmaya devam edebiliyorlar. Sendikalara, emek hareketine, ve genel olarak siyasete çok önem veren, ve bunların bir parçası olmayı hayatlarının önemli öğelerinden biri olarak gören kadınların sendikal yapılar içindeki varlıklarını sürdürmeyi istemeleri, onları bu türden stratejileri uygulamaya itiyor; çünkü aynı zamanda bu yapıların kadınlar ve erkeklerden farklı beklentileri olduğunu da görüyorlar.

Diğer taraftan, sendikacılığı yeniden tanımlama ve dönüştürme stratejisi ise, var olan sendikal siyaset yapma biçiminin kadınlar tarafından sorgulandığına ve mecburi olmadığının görüldüğüne işaret eder, ki bu da Foucault'nun kavramsal çerçevesinde direnişi mümkün kılan eleştiri eyleminin ta kendisidir. Görüştüğüm kadınlarla yaptığım mülakatlara dayanarak bu tip stratejileri uygulayanların yalnızca kadın bilincine sahip kadınlar olduklarını söyleyebilirim. Bireysel direniş stratejilerini tüm kadınlar uyguladığı halde, sendikal yapı ve siyaset yapma biçimlerinde dönüşüm hedefleyen kolektif stratejileri yalnızca feminist bilince sahip kadınlar uyguluyor. Bu kadınlar hem sendikal yapılar içindeki varlıklarını sürdürmeyi, hem de bir adım öteye geçip, bu yapıları kadınların kendilerini ait hissedebilecekleri ortamlar haline getirmeyi amaçlıyorlar. Tüm görüşmeciler sendikaları emek hareketinin en önemli bileşeni olarak görüyorlar ve bu yüzden buraları tamamen terketmek istemiyorlar; ancak kolektif stratejileri uygulayan kadınlar buna ek olarak bir de sendikalarda toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğine ulaşmak için çabalıyorlar.

Bu bağlamda, görüşmecilerin anlatılarından çıkarılanlara dayanarak vurgulanması gereken son nokta şudur ki, sendikal yapıların kadınların eşit katılım ve temsiline olanak verecek şekilde dönüştürülmesinin ön koşulu feminist ideolojinin üye ve yöneticiler arasında yaygınlaşması, ve sendikal politikalara her düzeyde entegre edilmesidir. Aynı oranda önemli olan bir diğer nokta ise, kadınların taleplerinin ve kuracakları baskının etkili ve sürekli olabilmesi için, kadın sendika üye ve yöneticilerinin başka sendikaların kadın üyeleriyle, diğer toplumsal hareketlerin kadın üyeleriyle, ve özellikle feminist kadınlarla hem ulusal hem uluslararası düzeyde, sendikalararası ve dışı bağlar kurmasıdır. Çünkü bu türden işbirliklerinin varlığı ve sendika yönetimleri üzerinde yaratacağı baskının büyüklüğü ve sürekliliği, sendikaların kadınların taleplerine karşı tavırlarını ve uygulayacakları kadın politikalarının etkinliğini doğrudan etkileyecek en önemli etmendir.

APPENDIX C

THESIS PHOTOCOPYING PERMISSION FORM

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ☒ X

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü ☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü ☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : DAMARLI
Adı   : NİHAN
Bölümü : KADIN ÇALIŞMALARI

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS:
PARTICIPATION AND RESISTANCE IN PATRIARCHAL ORGANIZATIONS

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans   X   Doktora   ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.   ☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir
   bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.   ☐

3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.   X

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: