

BEYOND LIMITS:  
THE MOBILIZATION OF A WILDCAT STRIKE IN TURKEY

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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## ABSTRACT

### Beyond Limits:

#### The Mobilization of a Wildcat Strike in Turkey

With the increasing poverty and rising social injustice in Turkey, the working class' grievances have recently become more visible in the public. In this sense, Turkish society witnessed one of the most disruptive and crowded labor strikes during the neoliberal capitalist era in 2015. During these strikes, metal workers mainly targeted the hegemonic partnership of employers and pro-employer trade union, Turkish Metal Union (TM). Both the rising poverty in the social and economic conditions of workers and the untenable forms of practices by the hegemonic partners led workers to rely on their own power and go on a wildcat strike. In this paper, I tried to search for possible answers to two basic questions about this strike wave. First, the nature of crisis which precipitated this mass action and the nature of these strikes were important issues to identify. Second, the influence of the metal workers' movement led me to think about what this contentious action might bring to social movement theories. For reaching these research intentions, I followed a qualitative method and heavily relied on semi-structured interviews conducted with defiant workers. In addition to those interviews, I also used media news, statistical data, and elite interviews with union officers, union representatives, and labor activists. Essentially, this research should be considered more than a case study to the extent that it tries to look at what the strike wave tell us for developing a more reliable and replicable social movement theory for the future studies.

## ÖZET

Sınırların Ötesinde:

Türkiye’de Denetimsiz Bir Grevin Mobilizasyonu

Türkiye’de artan yoksulluk ve sosyal adaletsizlik ile birlikte işçi sınıfının sorunları kamusal alanda son yıllarda daha görünür hale gelmiştir. Bu kapsamda 2015 yılında Türkiye toplumu neoliberal kapitalist dönem içindeki en yıkıcı ve kalabalık işçi grevlerinden bir tanesine tanıklık etmiştir. Bu grevlerde işçiler esas olarak işverenlerin ve işveren yanlısı Türk Metal Sendikası’nın hegemonik işbirliğini hedef almıştır. İşçilerin sosyoekonomik yaşantılarındaki artan yoksulluk ve hegemonik partnerlerin savunulamaz biçimdeki pratikleri işçileri kendi öz güçlerine yaslanmaya ve denetimsiz bir greve gitmeye yönlendirmiştir. Bu çalışmada bu grev dalgası hakkında iki temel soruya muhtemel cevaplar bulmaya çalıştım. Birincisi, greve sebep olan krizin ve yaşanan grevin türü tanımlanmak için önemliydi. İkincisi, metal işçilerinin hareketinin etkisi, beni hareketin sosyal hareketler teorilerine neler katabileceğine dair düşündürdü. Bu araştırma amaçlarına ulaşmak için niteliksel araştırma metodunu takip ettim ve direnişçi işçilerle yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlara yoğunlukla dayandım. Bu mülakatlara ek olarak medya haberlerini, istatistiksel verileri, sendika uzmanları, sendika temsilcileri ve emek aktivistleriyle yapılan mülakatları kullandım. Öz olarak bu çalışma gelecek çalışmalar için daha güvenilir ve uygulanabilir bir sosyal hareket teorisini geliştirme amacıyla olduğu için bir vaka çalışması olmanın ötesinde değerlendirilmelidir.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In the neoliberal era, it's been widely acknowledged that organized labor has been severely disrupted through various capital-oriented strategies and policies all over the world. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a strong tendency in the social science literature that labor movements were in a deep crisis. This tendency was supported by the numbers showing the declining strike rates, falling union density, shrinking real wages, and increasing job insecurity (cf. Silver, 2003, p.1). More strikingly, this literature foresaw a world-scale crisis merely focusing on the wealthy countries in North American and Western Europe. For some, the crisis was not just a temporary fact but pointing out the dissolution of 'working class' and thus, 'labor movements'. Among the ones who argued as such, Aristide Zolberg claimed that the last twentieth century transformations have caused the dissolution of working class. Moreover, for Zolberg, workers became 'residual engendered species' in the new global order (Zolberg, 1995, p. 28). On the other side, Manuel Castells similarly argued that the initiation of "information age" simultaneously changed the working mechanism of state sovereignty and the experience of work which, meanwhile, led to lose labor movements' privileged position as a major source of social cohesion and workers' representation (cf. Silver, 2003, p. 2). It also inhibited any possibility of working class becoming an emancipatory subject on the process of rebuilding social institutions and society. Instead of working class, Castells assumed that nonclass based identity movements were the only emancipatory subject in the information age (Castells, 1997, p. 354, 360).

On the other hand, there are other scholars who contradict with the idea that working class and working class movements are in a permanent crisis in the globalization period. For instance, Arrighi (1996, p. 336) argues that despite the harshness and destructiveness of the crisis by which the working class organizations are 'unmade' during the process of single market foundation in the world, there is still a hope for the revitalization of labor movement in twenty-first century. For Arrighi, this can happen if the world labor movement develops convenient strategies and structures for the new century different from the twentieth century. Similarly, Piven and Cloward (2000, p. 414) disagrees with the belief that supposes an irrevocable transformation from one epoch to another. For them, the power relations, arised out of capitalist and democratic relations, are persistent in the new global era. In particular, they claim that employers still need workers; politicians still depend on voters. What is more, the pessimistic views about the future of workers and labor movement are criticized due to its narrow scope. The supporters for the working class dissolution thesis are accused of not considering the middle and low income countries' labor relations in their analysis (Arrighi, 1996; Silver, 2003). In other words, it's been argued that the working class movements are being relocated towards new conflictual zones where capital goes within the history (Silver, 2003). Thus, assuming a permanent dissolution seemingly misses the move of capital from the high industrialized regions, including United States and Europe, to the developing and newly industrialized countries, including East Asian countries such as China and South Korea.

In line with the world developments, Turkey has also experienced a neoliberal restructuring period which was strongly detrimental to the interests of

working class both individually and collectively. In practice, it's been argued that neoliberal policies implemented by various governments since 1980 deradicalized the organized labor in a gradual phase (cf. Dogan, 2015). This gradual pacification of organized labor, in return, diminished the public visibility of class-based struggles during neoliberal period in Turkey. As a result, working class' collective power has formally seen one of the lowest ranks in terms of union density and collective bargaining coverages during the incumbent Justice and Development Party (JDP, AKP). Albeit the harsh dissolution of organized labor militancy in the neoliberal Turkey, there has recently been a modest positive trend that tends to challenge the long-lived norms, rules, and practices in the contemporary labor regime. One of the key examples for this positive attempts belongs to 2015.

### 1.1 Strike wave of metal workers in Turkey

In 2015, the metal sector experienced a turbulent period in which high level of working class activism was seen after a long period of time, and managed to disrupt the ongoing working relations in the sector. Historically, the metal workers had been pacified by some economic and political measures for a long time in the neoliberal period. Despite occasional protests seen before, the sector had been witnessing one of the most populous and defiant resistance ever seen in the near history of republic.

The class struggle in the metal sector grew during 1960s. At that time, there was Türkiye Maden-İş as the representative of metal workers against MESS. Some of the critical turning points for the labor activism in the metal sector was 1963 Kavel Strike and 1964 MESS Strikes. While the former was giving an opportunity to legalize the right of strike which was not given in the new constitution yet. After that,

1964 MESS Strikes, with the leading actor Türkiye Maden-İş, represented a struggle against the despotic production regime in the workplaces (Taştan, 2015, pp. 315). Indeed, Türkiye Maden-İş lost the 1964 struggle. Nevertheless, that key event was important for the history of class struggle in the sector due to emergence of strategy of MESS. According to MESS, there were three basic factors which cannot be given up. Those were 1) a group collective agreement at the sectoral level; 2) a wage system determined via work evaluation; and 3) the protection of administration capability of the capital owners (ibid, p. 316). Within the history, these strategic demands have become the core task of MESS during the collective bargaining processes.

After the ban of DİSK and its sectoral unions by the military junta in 1980, Türk-İş gained an important advantage and quickly increased its number of membership in 1980s. During this period, Turkish Metal Union also started to be recognized as the official union in the factories where Madeni-İş used to be so. This was directly related to the collaborative approach of TM both economic and political level at that period. The ex-president of Turkish Metal, Mustafa Özbek, had a speech in which he welcomed the military coup and legitimated it by claiming that the military coup enabled to enter a period of national unity in which the harmony between labor and capital can be sustained (Nichols, Sugur, and Demir; 2002, p. 35).

In light of this historical background, the balance of power between labor and capital has been moved from the former side to the latter in the neoliberal era. As a result, the collective bargaining processes in the neoliberal period were mostly very smooth processes from the side of employers. Despite occasional uprisings revealed by workers own initiatives, employers had a very advantageous position by virtue of

both the political structure which favors the capital interests over the laborers and the hegemonic yellow type of unionist practice by Turkish Metal Union. But, this smooth atmosphere was recently in danger in 2010s and seriously challenged by vast amount of workers who were members of Turkish Metal as well in May, 2015.

The year started by the completion of the 2014 group collective bargaining which had not satisfied the workers at all. Despite the complaints arising from the rank-and-file, the Turkish Metal Union and the Steel Workers Union voluntarily signed that agreement. In contrast, United Metal Workers Union, which is the successor of Türkiye Madeni-İş since 1993, decided to go on strike at January 29, 2015. But, the strike of United Metal Workers Union was delayed by JDP in January, 30.

After Turkish Metal's and Steel Workers Union's, which is the second biggest union in terms of membership, passive and pro-employer- behavior by signing the agreement without any discontent, it was not difficult for the government and employers to prevent the possible threats deriving from United Metal Workers Union, which was not as crowded as Turkish Metal, thereby, not decisive in determining the future of metal workers as a whole. Albeit these factors, United Metal Workers Union followed a different strategy and succeeded in getting extra benefits from the employers via the extra protocols signed due to workplace activism.

On the other hand, a second important development occurred in April, 2015. At Bosch, a collective agreement signed between Turkish Metal and employer after a four year period of time. This agreement was covering up 2012-2017. It was a five year contract because any collective agreement had not been signed for four years at

Bosch due to long-lived struggle of workers against the Turkish Metal<sup>2</sup>. By this new agreement, Bosch workers got better economic conditions than the other Turkish Metal automotive and white goods factories. This, in turn, rised up the level of discontent in a very short period and precipitated to a mass movement against the Turkish Metal.

In May, 2015, a series of events led to wildcat strikes in various factories in several cities in Turkey. The workers had three basic demands: 1) a new collective agreement as given to Bosch workers; 2) the exit of Turkish Metal from the factories; and 3) no layoffs after the protests due to participation. These demands, especially the first two, was very radical in the sense that workers were challenging the existing working regime, in other words 'status quo', by claiming a new collective agreement out of legal channels and by attempting to send out the very pro-employer union Turkish Metal from the strategic workplaces such as Renault, Tofaş, Ford, and several auto suppliers.

After a tumultuous struggle for couple weeks, workers went back to work when they were given some economic and extra-economic concessions. While workers got extra money but not a new collective agreement, Turkish Metal was gone out of the defiant factories (at least for a while). But, some of the employers were not so tolerant, thereby, fired off the leading figures of the strike aftermath of the strikes.

In retrospect, metal workers had a puzzling situation from the beginning to end in which both positive and negative factors can be found. During and after the wildcat strikes, many has paid attention to the developments occurring in the sector including social scientists. Hence, this research is designed to look at the behind of

the iceberg as well. While doing that there will be some critical questions to be asked: What is the nature of crisis? What does it bring to the social movement theory?

## 1.2 Research design and methodology

As it is explained in the previous section, metal storm has multi-dimensional characteristics to identify the nature of the systemic crisis which caused to such a mass movement in the recent years. In particular, the metal workers' movement has both defensive and offensive identities in itself. Deriving from the core demands of the movement, it can be argued that the movement has both reformist and revolutionary aspects to reflect during the resistance. While it exclusively relies on the demand for a similar collective agreement as Bosch workers got, it also challenges the authority of Turkish Metal Union in the sector. In this sense, this case illustrates a new phase in which the relationship between workers and their official organizations is critical rather than mutual in contemporary Turkey. In this sense, this research shares the arguments of Bugra et al. (2009) that workers are reluctant towards labor unions in contemporary Turkey.

In light of this critical attitude by workers towards labor unions, the question of what type a systemic crisis we witness becomes much more crucial to answer. For this purpose, Silver (2003) gives us a useful framework. Silver (2003, p. 19) distinguishes two different type of labor unrest respectively so-called Marx type and Polanyi type. The former refers to the struggles of newly emerging classes which are seen as unintended outcomes of historical capitalism whereas the latter signifies the 'backlash resistances' to the spread of globally self-regulating market, and

particularly directed by the working classes which are being unmade by the global economic transformations in addition to the ones by the workers, previously benefited from the establishment, that are being abandoned from above' (see also Lee, 2007; Karatasli et al. 2015; Silver, 2013). In short, Silver (2003, pp. 19-20) proposes that 'the crisis of profitability' occurs as a result out of an expansion in the capitalist production when the capital and the state is forced to give concessions to the strong labor movements. In turn, to restore the system, the capital will more likely to seek for an increase in profits, thereby, will commodify labor more and more. In this schema, another type of crisis –so called crisis of legitimacy- and backlash resistances are expected to be seen. In particular, when we look at the basic demands of the workers in 2015, two major demands pay our attention more than others: the redesign of 2015 group collective agreement in light of the fairly better content of the Bosch agreement and the exit of Turkish Metal from factories. In this schema, while the former signifies merely economic expectations of the workers, the latter also represents the belief of workers that Turkish Metal cannot be the correct agent to obtain their economic goals. In a more parsimonious way, the collective reaction of the workers can be summarized as 'dismissal of union for wage'. In other words, the crisis had two-folded nature, on the one hand, the workers were defiant against the rising income inequality occurring in the recent decades in the sector, on the other hand, they were trying to build up a new equilibrium on the table by sending Turkish Metal out of the picture. In sum, the nature of crisis and the multi-dimensional shape of the unrest provides us to observe both Marx type and Polanyi type resistance simultaneously.

Secondly, this research will also put an effort to contribute to the social movement literature by focusing on contingencies and irregularities that are observed with regard to the dynamics of metal workers' contention. Essentially, I argue that metal storm represents a different case in terms of classical norms, rules, and practices of social movement theories which are predominantly belong to the post-WWII era.

According to Olson (1965), rational people, acting upon their individual interest, may pick not to involve in an action if they see that other individuals behave vis-a-vis their own purposes. By this normative assumption, Olson's rational choice approach indicated that a free rider problem may occur in the formation of a collective action. But, ironically Olson's theory emerged while devastating contentious movement were developing throughout Europe and North American in the 1970s. In sum, Olson actually was trying to show us how a collective action is not likely to be initiated. To solve this paradoxical situation, two sociologists, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, attempted to instrumentalize the Olsonian approach by focusing on social movement organizations. In short, although they acknowledged the collective action problem as Olson had described, they pointed out the role of expanded personal resources, professionalization, and financial support given to the citizens in the advanced industrial societies gave them an opportunity to overcome with this dilemma (cf. McAdam et al. 2009, pp. 269-70; McCarthy and Zald; 1973, 1977). In sum, they emphasized the decisive role of professional movement organizations to bypass the free rider problem in action.

In response to resource mobilization theory, political process model has emerged. Conventionally, the predominant contribution of political process model

into social movement analyses were 1) the recognition of informal networks and organizations in the course of contentious political action and thus movement formation unlike from resource mobilization theories; and 2) the consideration of social movements as continuous processes. With regard to the latter, the political process model insisted on the analyses of different levels of processes throughout the social movements from emergence to the end (see McAdam, 1982 for the detailed discussion).

Despite the positive progress in recognizing the role of noninstitutional roots on the way to contentious action, Goodwin and Jasper (1999, pp. 36-9) proposed a radical critique of the political opportunity structure (POS) concept of the political process model (PPM) by criticizing the PPM being very rigid and objectivist in understanding the context. For them, the movement mobilization occurs out of many processes and events in historically complex combinations and sequences. Such opportunities are important not because of permanent factors but the situationally specified combinations and sequences of political processes, which do not have any determinate consequences as well.

Similarly, Tilly and Tarrow (2015, p. 72) indicate that the regime type and the nature of popular contention have a mutual relationship. By and large, a regime's relations, institutions, opportunities, threats, and repertoires naturally shape the form of popular contention and vice versa. In this regard, Tilly's (1978) and Goldstone and Tilly's (2001) mobilization models assert that there are two different paths for precipitating a collective action: 1) political opportunity and 2) threat. With regarding the plurality in collective action formation, Almeida argues that the concept of political opportunity is overemphasized in relation to the concept of threat

before. From the point of Almeida, the effort to adapt the political process model to the authoritarian contexts revealed that protest is not driven by responsive political institutions and respective governments in authoritarian systems (Almida, 2003, pp. 346-7).

In light of Almida's criticisms towards the social movement theories, this research project assumes that metal storm happened in a relatively authoritarian political context where the costs of movement participation will more likely put the individuals in a complex position with regard to whether it's secure to be part of a contentious action. Hence, this research argues that subjectivities matter in the course of individual participation to a contentious movements that are initiated under risky political and economic environments. Deriving from these two irregularities, I plan to contribute to the social movement literature by presenting a case study in which individual participation for a collective action cannot be such a simple process that is assumed by classical resource mobilization approach and the opportunities and threats are case specific unlike the earlier forms of political process models assume. For reaching these research ambitions, it was necessary to build intermediate theoretical bridges (McAdam, 1988, pp. 126-7) between macro and micro analyses of collective action. It's surely correct that the social, political, and economic environment which workers had been facing prior to mobilization structurally matters for understanding the logic of this collective action. But, it's also frequently observed that the structural factors leading to such a contentious mobilization are necessary but not sufficient. For this reason, this project will try to understand the structural factors precipitated this mass insurgency as well as the method of organizing and the motivations for the individual participation. For this purpose, the

method of this project is going to follow the qualitative track to reflect the interplay between the structure and agency levels.

To capture the micro-structural factors, it was necessary to do a field work. The role of agency was important in this contentious action because metal storm arised out of nonroutine channels without any institutional organizations' involvement. In this sense, the emerging dynamics and the subjective stories of the defiant workers deviate from the SMT. For instance, one of the pioneers of the movement from Ford car company, F, noted that he was blacklisted and forced out the metal sector. He said that he has been refused at one by a metal company although he was qualified to work there. According to him, this happened after they realized that he was one of the leaders of the Storm and holding an alternative attitude toward the existing system (Interview conducted by the author, 1.12.2017). In this example, the worker from Ford shows us that any social discontent, which ontologically challenges the existing system, includes vital risks for the participants. In terms of classical social movement theory, his participation despite the threat of being blacklisted might not make sense. For this reason, individual responses and stories of insurgency participants are very significant for understanding the micromobilizing factors transcending the existing threats and maximizing the benefit from the new opportunities revealed by the massive resistance.

In addition to these core research priorities, it is also crucial to remind two other methodological issues. First of all, it is not correct to generalize an experience of a country as if it happens everywhere. In other words, it needs to be acknowledged that a core country can experience a different historical and social trajectory in terms of social movements than a peripheral country. Second, the social science approaches

including social movement literature needs to go beyond the common perspective of taking frequently short and undynamic time horizon for the analysis (Silver and Karataşlı, 2015, p. 3). Accordingly, the analysis of metal storm is going to be a historical analysis of socio-economic struggles of workers, which is a defining character of the capitalist system.

In terms of the field work, this project is designed through in-depth interviews by the metal storm participants from different regions and factories (see the list in Appendix B). The snowball technique is generally followed in the selection process of the interviewees. The interviewees are selected according to their level of enrollment, role, and status during the resistance, and they are limited to five factories: Renault, Tofaş, Ford, Arçelik, and ZF Sachs. This limitation has several reasons. First, it was not feasible to trace all of the distinctive stories from every factory that experienced the massive resistance in 2015. This was mostly due to the limits of the field and the time limitations for the preparation of this project. In the factory selection procedure, the value of the companies within the sector, regional diversity, the location of the factories within the mass movement played a significant role. The questions that are discussed by the workers varied vis-a-vis the factories. Therefore, the research has not only included general questions to make sense of commonalities between the workers from different factories but also the distinctive stories that they witnessed both individually and at the factory level (see Appendix A).

The in-depth interviews are triangulated by some participant observations, media news, statistical data, and interviews with union officers, union representatives, and labor activists. Since this research aims at understanding hidden

or informal aspects of the metal storm understood by protest participants, I was reluctant to overly depend on official explanations given by union officers, union representatives, and employers. Hence, I limited the number of interviews for this matter. To have an alternative idea from the point of nonparticipants, I've done couple interviews with labor activists who are not belong to the major labor unions in the sector. Over all, I've done 25 interviews in total. Among them, 17 of them were with workers who participated in the storm; 3 of them were labor union representatives, 2 of them were labor union officers, 2 of them were labor activists, and one of them was an officer from employer association, MESS. As you'll figure out that I did not use all of the interviewees as a direct reference. Indeed, this was not on purpose. I only had to choose the most interesting and clear expressions given by several topics that I discuss. I still shared the all list in the Appendix B. For privacy and security purposes, I did not use the real names of my interviewees. One final point is that there is no woman workers in my sampling. The only woman is the employer association officer P. This was due to the reason that metal sector is a very male dominated sector and most of the metal workers that I encountered was man.

This project has four parts. First, the major trends and approaches to the social movement studies and the historical debates within the labor scholarship is going to be presented in a critical way. In this part, the theoretical framework of this research will be given. Second, a brief overview of the historical moments and developments in the working relations in Turkey will be provided. The evolution of different classes in parallel with the historical developments in the Turkish political system will serve a crucial theme to discuss in this section. In the third part, the emerging dynamics and the trajectory of the case is going to be presented by the help

of theoretical and empirical tools that is shown in the previous parts. In the fourth part, the aftermath dynamics of contention will be presented and the theoretical and political lessons taken from the case study will be discussed with the help of research results.

## CHAPTER 2

### LABOR MOVEMENT AND LABOR STUDIES

With the maturation of capitalist mode of production, the struggle between workers, who only have its labor power to sell for the survival, and capitalists, who on the means of production and usurp a surplus value during the production process from propertyless class, have become more decisive. With respect to the actual struggles and historical scenes in which working class and the poor were having the primary role, the researchers have tried to interpret the logic and meaning of the new mode of production and the challenges against it. By and large, the idea of class struggle and the emancipation of the laborers have been investigated by the socialist left.

Historically, Marx and Lenin tried to establish a grand theory of proletarian revolution on behalf of historical and political mission of working class in capitalism. For sure, their political and theoretical effort on the global labor and communist movement have been applauded since the middle of 19th century. At the same time, the founding figures in the socialist left and their respective theories are critically evaluated and amplified by the subsequent figures in twentieth and twenty-first century. Among them, there are two important figures to here: Karl Polanyi and E.P. Thompson. To define the current crisis and the future trajectories of the labor movement in the world, Marx, Polanyi, and Thompson represents three distinctive cornerstones in the literature.

## 2.1 From Marx to Thompson: Beyond the structure

In terms of Marxian interpretation, the society is defined vis-a-vis the struggle over the ownership of means of production. In this sense, a class is defined vis-a-vis the relations of production. Thus, any group of people in the same position to the means of production reveals a class. Classes vary in internal structure and common consciousness. Moreover, shared aims and beliefs emerge from shared interests. Similarly, collective action occurs out of shared interests (Tilly, 1978, p. 43).

Marx and Engels were interpreted by some scholars as ‘classical structuralists’ (Tarrow, 2011, p. 17) who were accused of failing to identify subjective mechanisms in the course of class formation and class struggle and to see the interplay between base and superstructural levels in the society. From their point of view, people will engage with a collective action when their social class entered in an antagonistic relationship with the opponent class. For instance, proletariat will inherently act collectively when capitalism is organized into large scale factories and opened a new space for proletariat to act together (see Tarrow, 2011). Indeed, Marx and Engels foresaw the necessity of a voluntarist organization which will organize the grievances of the mass working class into a single unit against the power holders. But, they seemingly lacked of substantive analysis of that struggle in daily routine. Deriving from this fact their successors within Marxist tradition heavily questioned the role of agency and interpersonal relationships in the course of class struggle and class revolution.

Although Marx and Engels wrote extensively on the working logic of capitalism and the structural and historical factors leading to class struggle, they are criticized not to focus on subjectivities as much as movement laws of capitalism during their life. Despite these criticisms, their effort on defining the core functions of capitalist mode of production and its unequal ontological features precipitating to

discontent guided other prominent Marxists to strengthen the theory in terms of the definition of class and class struggle. For instance, Lenin represents a cornerstone within Marxist tradition. In light of the Western working classes' experiences, Lenin believed that workers on their own will more likely to pursue their narrow union (or economist) interests. Therefore, he proposed an other organization to substitute the role of working class leadership with the a group of revolutionary cadres organized in a vanguard party. In his formulation, a revolutionary vanguard party is a necessary and sufficient tool for the proletariat revolution (see Tarrow, 2011, p. 18).

Although the Leninist vanguard party formula was succeeded in making a proletariat revolution in Soviet Union,, the European working class and communist parties mostly defeated by the bourgeoisie and its fascist allies in the first half of 20th century. As a result of these political drawbacks, some questioned the ability of capitalist order to survive in the Western hemisphere unlike the Russian context. Among those people, Antonio Gramsci and Karl Polanyi serve two divergent but complementary benchmarks in Marxist theory. For Gramsci, the enrollment of a vanguard party was not a sufficient condition for the revolution. Thus, he focused on the creation of a workers movement whose primary object will be to establish 'working class culture' which will initiate a counter-hegemony within the society to transcend the boundaries of the hegemonic order of capitalism. In this sense, while he was in prison, he developed two important theories about party organization. First, the party should forge with the other layers and create a historical block of classes at the center of working class (Gramsci, 2000, p. 168). Second, this kind of block will only be successful if the party manages to develop 'organic intellectuals' from within

the working class to balance the 'traditional' intellectuals in the party (ibid, pp. 6-23)(see also Tarrow, 2011).

Actually, Gramsci's focus on culture and ideology was due to his serious emphasis about the concept of society. The concept of society has seriously been undertaken by Gramsci to make sense of the longevity of capitalist order and its persistence on not being collapsed by the laws of which Marx put forward earlier. For Gramsci, society is a civil society which is always located in a contradictory connection to the state. Civil society includes trade unions, political parties, and all sorts of voluntary associations that proliferated in Europe and United States towards the end of 19th century. Meanwhile, it simultaneously connected people one to another as well as to the state through the establishment of new transportation, communication, and regulation. More importantly, Gramsci acknowledged that civil society has a double nature. According to him, civil society collaborates with the state to pacify the class struggle as well as its autonomy leads to initiate class struggle (Burawoy2003, p. 198).

On the other hand, for Polanyi, society, what Burawoy (2003) calls 'active society', is always interpreted by its contradictory relationship with the market. On the one hand, market aims to destroy society; on the other hand, the society reacts to defend itself and to hegemonize the market (ibid, p. 198). Polanyi (2001, p. 80) basically argued that the society has an inherent ability to protect itself from the dangers within the self-regulating market, which is one of the most known feature of the history of the age (cf. Munck, 2006, p. 175). Particularly, for Polanyi, the increasing scope and scale of unregulated markets for labor and other fictitious

commodities naturally precipitates counter-movements for the protection of society what Polanyi calls it the ‘double movement’ (2001, p. 130).

Despite the rich theoretical expansion of the concept of society and double movement, Polanyi is criticized for neglecting the role of agency in the foundation of ‘embedded societies’. Burawoy (2003) indicates that Polanyi imagines a working class community which will be founded externally and not have an independent consciousness. For Burawoy, ‘the preexisting community that shaped the drama’ (Burawoy, 2003, p. 222) is neglected in Polanyi. Similarly, Bolton and Laaser (2013, p. 513) also argue that although Polanyi significantly contributes to the discussion of the relationship between markets and societies, it is limited due to his neglect of the individuals’ power to resist against the market domination without the intervention of state. In Polanyi, the unregulated market will expectedly be overturned from above even if the society lacks any effective power from below. It’s because Polanyi presumes that the project of founding a self-regulating market is ‘utopian’ (cf. Silver, 2003).

Thompson’s moral economy conception completes the missing parts in Polanyi. Thompson explores the agency aspects leading to moral and political struggle for the sake of society. In particular, E.P. Thompson (1971, 1993) proposes an attempt to rescue the history from below (Woods, 1982) by showing the struggle between English crowd and the ruling class in nineteenth century due to rising dominance of free market, its property law, and profit making principles (see Bolton and Laaser, 2013; Thompson, 1971). Thompson (1971) clearly illustrates that agency, particularly norms, values, motives, and cultures in general speaking, have a significant role in the massive insurgencies as it is seen in the food riots in England

in nineteenth century. For Thompson, it's true that the riots erupted via the increase in prices. But, there was a form of popular consensus which had the capacity to determine what is legitimate or illegitimate on the process of grievance operations. The enrollment of such a popular consensus, from the point of Thompson's view, was the sign for a traditional view of social norms and obligations of several groups within a community, which can also be named as 'the moral economy of poor' (1971, pp. 78-9).

In this regard, E.P. Thompson showed us the fact that class did not arise all of a sudden but was present in its making (Thompson, 1980; see also Barker, 2013, pp. 42-3). In general, Thompsonian definition of 'class' serves an influential side in the field. In particular, Thompson provides us a relational basis for the further analysis. He defines the class as a social and cultural formation which cannot be defined abstractly or in isolation; but in relation to other classes (Thompson, 1965, p. 357; see Barker, 2013, p. 43).

In parallel with his core arguments, Thompson also explains his methodological point of view regarding the class analysis. According to Thompson, class should be perceived as historical phenomenon in which bunch of disparate and unconnected events are unified in terms of both material experience and consciousness. In this sense, Thompson doesn't consider class as either a structure or category. Rather he conceives that it is something that can be happened in human relationship (Thompson, 1980; p. 7). Moreover, Wood (1982, p. 45) argues that Thompson had an aim to save the notion of class from social scientists and historians who deny the existance of class as well as to defend the nature of working class as a self-evident and historically relational phenomenon against the intellectual traditions

and political projects that particularly suppress human agency in their analysis. For Wood, Thompson's contribution can be labeled as an attempt to 'rescue history from below' (Wood, 1982).

With respect to this theoretical and methodological shift, the questions that researchers interrogate has been modified. In general speaking, the researchers have tried to understand the micro-dynamism in the labor movements and go beyond the formal boundaries of existing political system. In light of these questions, mobilization literature focused on particular conditions motivating and encouraging individuals to participate in collective actions (see e.g. Jenkins, 1983; Klandermans, 1984). While searching for the logic of structural causes of a social movement, it's been widely acknowledged that mobilization of workers and the oppressed groups in general requires a cognitive transformation (Piven and Cloward, 1977) among participants which can be described as the 'realization of self' for each individual. In parallel with the rising intellectual interest in agency, the basic research questions in labor movements and collective action literatures have been transformed. Labor scholars have more frequently concentrated on some research questions such as 1) how do individuals acquire a sense of collective as as opposed to individual grievances?; 2) how and under what conditions do individuals organize to solve their grievances; and 3) how and under what conditions do individuals take part in a collective action (Kelly, 1998, p. 24).

## 2.2 The realization of self: Movements from below

The evolution of Marxist class analysis –from structure to agency- simultaneously reflects the political history of the long twentieth century. After the second world

war, we have witnessed the great success of social and national movements in many countries. While the social democratic parties and the notion of welfare state had become more and more widespread in the West, the communist parties have seized the state power in many countries at the same period. Moreover, due to catastrophic results of the war and the new ideological and political atmosphere in the world, a massive decolonization process had begun. Nevertheless, by the 60s and 70s, there emerged a point of view which popularized the notion of ‘break up with the past’ with the rising of new antisystemic movements in diverse regions of the world including North America, Europe, and Asia (Arrighi et al. 1989). In this period, the system and structure was being questioned by the excluded minorities and oppressed groups. At the same time, the role of self and the concept of power from below in the contentious politics has become more visible. In parallel to these sociopolitical developments, the pluralist theories of ‘social movements’ have become questionable in the academic world.

Before underlying the post-WWII developments, it is worthy to look at how the social movements were perceived dominantly by the academics. For this purpose, McAdam (1982) serves a useful source for analytical comparison. Albeit the particularities within the classical theory of social movements, McAdam argues that each version treats social movements as ‘structural strains’ or ‘psychological disorder’. In concrete speaking, McAdam indicates that classical pluralism anticipates to see structural strain causing social movements via disrupted ‘states of mind’ (McAdam, 1982, p. 7). Over all, the classical pluralism has three major characteristics. First, all social movements are considered as a reaction to the disturbed system strain. Second, apart from the structural conditions referring to

system strain, social movements are reflections of individual discontents such as anxiety, alienation, and dissonance. Third and finally, movement participation for an individual is not pertaining to the desire of attaining certain political goals as much as the need for management of psychological tensions related to the specific social situations (see McAdam, 1982, p. 9).

Around 1960s, the classical pluralist theory faced a significant amount of critique. In return, two different version of social movement theories became more popular. Those are: 1. Resource mobilization theory, and 2. Political process theory of political opportunities. For understanding the dynamics of those theories, it will be helpful to look at the basic arguments them respectively. First, critiques found out the fact that the support for the social movements mostly came from the better organized and more cohesive parts of the society rather than dislocated and marginalized portions. Second, it is observed that most of activists in social movements were grown out of conventional politics in which they combined the protest and electoral politics. Third, challengers entered the political representation system through unruliness rather than peaceful forms of compromise as it is assumed by classical pluralism. Fourth and finally, liberal democracies were considered as imperfect pluralism in which opportunities are variable as well as the independence of powerless groups are depended on the interference of sponsors and political allies. While the first two critiques helped resource mobilization theory to be facilitated, the last two critiques were seen as contributing insights for the maturation of the political process theory of political opportunities (see Jenkins, 1995 for the detailed discussion).

In response to the pluralist understanding of social movements, one of the alternative approaches was so-called resource mobilization theory. Resource mobilization theorists have perceived social movements as the extension of institutionalized action and restricted their attention to the movements of institutional change (Jenkins, 1983) that attempt to alter ‘elements of social structure and/or the reward distribution of society’ (McCarthy and Zald, 1977, p. 1218), organize previously unorganized groups against institutional elites (Gamson, 1975, pp. 16-8), or represent the interests of groups that are dislocated from the polity (Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; Tilly, 1978, 1979). Moreover, Resource mobilization theorists have argued that social movements arise out of long-term changes in resources, organizations, and opportunities (Jenkins, 1983, p. 530). Unlike the traditional interpretations, grievances are seen as secondary in the process of social movements formation (see Tilly, 1978; Jenkins and Perrow, 1977; Aberschall, 1978).

For resource mobilization approach, mobilization is seen a process in which a group has a collective control over resources for social change (Jenkins, 1983, p. 532). Therefore, the basic issues are: 1. The collective control of resources before the mobilization, 2. The processes by which the resources are obtained and directed for social change; and 3. The pathways of the increase in the pool of resources by outsider effect. The mobilization capacity of a group is mostly determined by the level of preexisting group organization (Jenkins, 1983, p. 537). Groups carrying distinctive identities and dense interpersonal networks are more likely to be more organized, thereby, to get mobilized more easily (Tilly, 1978, pp. 62-3). In contrast, groups with weak identities, soft and insufficient intragroup networks, and strong links to the outsiders are less likely to mobilize (see Foster, 1974; Jenkins, 1982).

A general criticism of resource mobilization theory is related to the neglect of the role of grievances and ideology as the determinants of movement participation at the individual level. Klandermans (1984, p. 584) argues that this mainly reveals out of the confusion between the individual and societal analysis. In particular, for Klandermans, the fact that grievances and ideology are not decisive in the rise of social movements does not mean that they do not influence the decisions of individuals to participate in a movement.

Another alternative approach for the social movement analysis is known as political process model (PPM). PPM emerged as a critique of the tendency of resource mobilization theory (RMT) to extensively rely on the formal organizational networks, and suggested that there can be informal networks and social settings free from the state control to be effective in the movement mobilizing (see Beinen and Vairel, 2011; McAdam, 1988; Buechler, 1990). The name 'political process' points out two basic features of the model. First, social movements are perceived as political phenomena unlike the previous classical formulations. Second, a movement reflects a continuous process from the emergence to the decline, thereby, needs to be analyzed in a comprehensive and systemic manner. In this sense, each developmental stages should be assessed (McAdam, 1982, p. 34). Political process model prioritizes three sets of factors that are conceived of being crucial on the generation of social movements. Those factors are 1) the level of organization within the aggrieved population; 2) the collective assessment of the prospects for a successful insurgency within the same population; and 3) the political coalitions of groups within the larger political environment. In particular, the first refers to the level of readiness of an organization for the insurgency; second points out the level of consciousness for a

successful insurgency; and third emphasizes the structure of political opportunities convenient to insurgent groups (ibid, p. 38).

Both resource mobilization and political process models are criticized by creating a structural bias. In particular, It is argued that resource mobilization theory is incomplete in terms of the analyses of movement participation at the individual level as well as the interplay among individuals leading to mobilization process. In light of these problematic issues, some argues that social psychology may broaden the scale and scope of resource mobilization theory by revealing those neglected issues (Klandermans, 1984; Jenkins, 1983). In this regard, with respect to critiques focusing on the neglect of dynamic nature of contention and missing factors apart from the structural basis, some has changed its attitude towards the analyses of contentious politics. Among them, McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow pay attention to the ontological and epistemological shifts in their own research history. In their seminal work, *Dynamics of Contention*, they express that although they come structuralist tradition, it does not prevent them to take strategic interaction, consciousness, and historically accumulated culture into consideration. Moreover, they argue that they have changed their attitude on the fact that any social interaction, social ties, communications, and conversations may potentially act autonomously and actively on the social change process (McAdam et Al. 2001, p. 21).

Besides the structural bias of resource mobilization and political process theories, the 'formal' understanding of movement and the subordination of socio-cultural elements in the analysis are critically evaluated. In this regard, Piven and Cloward (1977, pp. 3-4) argued that the emergence of a protest movement necessitates a transformation not only of consciousness but also of behavior. In terms

of consciousness, three dynamics lead to transformation. Losing of legitimacy of existing system, giving up being fatalistic and demanding new rights implying social change, and realizing the capacity to change their destiny are the three sources of transformation in consciousness.

Similar to Piven and Cloward's critical attitude towards structural bias, the structural explanations tried to be balanced by more culturalist and dynamic forms. For instance, Fantasia's 'Cultures of Solidarity' (1988) serves an influential benchmark. The 'cultures of solidarity' concept is developed to make sense of emergent cultural formations that are constructed intersubjectively and in relation to opposition during critical industrial conflicts (Fantasia, 1995, pp. 279-80). By this method, an ideationally bound conception of 'class consciousness' is tried to be transcended. Moreover, Hodson (1993) argues that worker solidarity cannot be understood via survey methods or any quantitative forms because solidarity is a complex phenomenon that arises from specific situations and stories. Additionally, worker solidarity is a group phenomenon which cannot be totally captured via face-to-face interviews and telephone surveys (Hudson, 1993, p. 398). The basis of solidarity is 'shared experiences at work' and 'the sense of involvement and attachment' that is derived from these shared experiences (Goffee, 1981, pp. 475, 488). Solidarity emerge from interactions in which workers implement autonomous strategies to pursue for collective goals at work (Fantasia, 1988p. 47, 99). Group activities of solidarity give the workers opportunity to not only gain experiences and but also create conditions for transformation of labor process (Clawson and Fantasia 1983, p. 676). In concrete, workers can develop oppositional goals to resist the management (Wilensky, 1970, p. 431 as well as mundane tasks-oriented strategies

not directly challenging the management but still provide the basis for an alternative collective identity formation apart from the management control (Hudson, 1991).

The increasing focus on the cultural norms, values, and practices in the process of contentious mobilization carries more meaning with the emergence of new forms of struggle in the global world. For the analysis of those new struggles, the concept of network is very useful. According to Diani, considering social movements as networks reveals some peculiarities for the analysis. In particular, the conflictual form, informal nature, and organized around a collective identity differentiate the social movements from other collective actions (Diani, 2003, pp. 302-3).

Furthermore, Freeman (2015 (1973)) suggests that there are three prerequisites for the emergence of spontaneous action. First, there needs to occur communications network prior to any spontaneous form of action. Second, not all of the communications network are convenient for the initiation of such activity. The members of network must be co-optable, thereby, be the network to the new ideas and practices. Third and finally, given the existence of a co-optable communications network and the situation of discontent, some other prerequisites are necessary to exist. On the one hand, if there is a well-formed network, the only responsibility of the members is to galvanize the crisis in a certain direction. But, if the conditions are not well-established or at the rudimentary level, one or more cadres for the construction of network and action is necessary.

To exemplify the role of networks, John D'Emilio (2015) also links the success of gay liberation movement in 1960s and 1970s with the existing networks and co-optable cadres of the movement to the new ideas and practices of the new left at that time. Moreover, other example focusing on the pre-history and enduring

effects of Occupy Wall Street (OWS) is produced by Milkman et al. (2015). According to Milkman et al. (2015), OWS has enduring impacts in at least three ways. First, OWS, as a carefully planned action, effected numerous young activists who had not political experience of protesting before. Secondly, OWS has transformed the political discourse and debates in United States. In particular, the growing injustice between rich and poor and the role of social class in politics has become much more central in US political arena. Thirdly, OWS networks managed to survive and be disseminated in different contexts albeit the evictions by the police (Milkman et al. 2015). Furthermore, Manuel Castells (2015) demonstrated the role of networks on the Egyptian Revolution. According to him, internet networks, mobile networks, pre-existing social networks, street demonstrations and Friday gatherings around mosques precipitated the Egyptian Revolution.

While the US academia was predominantly turning its attention on the resource mobilization and political process theories, their European counterparts were mainly focusing on understanding emerging new social movements arised in 1960s and 1970s. According to new social movement (NSM) theorists, socio-economic development has involved in a process of transformation in the nature of production. One of the key figures of the NSMs theorists, Alain Touraine, argues that the new society, which is so-called post-industrial, must be defined by the technological production of symbolic goods which either shape or transform the representation of human nature or external world. Hence, research and development, information processing, biomedical science and techniques, and mass media are the four primary components of the new post-industrial society (Touraine, 1985, p. 781). What is more, Post-industrial society does not merely represent a shift in the nature

of production. For some scholars, it also signifies the dissolution of traditional class structures and class power. In the post-industrial society, traditional working class is replaced by a new growing service class. In other words, a sectoral shift is occurred from manufacturing to services, where manual employment jobs are changed by new white-collar and service job opportunities. As a result of this transformation, the balance of power in terms of class relations has been changed. In the new societal dynamics, growing middle class have become more influential. More specifically, the technocratic components of middle class became more valuable than before. This change, in return, reshaped the dynamics of class power. In the new society, the power of middle class is determined via information rather than their wealth or property (Touraine, 1971).

In addition to Touraine, there are some others who claim that the traditional working class structure is more drastically disappearing. In this group, Melucci views that with the shift from capitalist society to a more complex 'contemporary systems', the 'classes as real social groups' are perishing (Melucci, 1995, p. 177). Pakulski and Waters (1996) also indicates that 'downward redistribution of property' in parallel to the increasing social mobility and the spread of cultural capital blurred the class distinctions, thereby, make it harder to perceive a society which is divided into social classes. What is more, Beck's 'individualization thesis' (1992) points out the logic of new understanding of post-industrial society by this group of people. According to Beck, the new society, in Marxist terms, can be described as 'capitalism without classes' (pp. 88).

Related to these arguments, some others, pointing out the socio-economic progress, relied on the generalization of affluence claim, which is supported by

higher incomes, more welfare, and increased leisure time (cf. Barker and Dale, 1998). Barker and Dale (1998, pp. 67-8) summarize the effects of ‘affluence’ thesis in two ways. First, affluence thesis presupposes an increasing weakening in antagonism to capital. Second, it also precipitates a shift the primary concern from production to consumption. In the new post-industrial society, individuals are more keen on expressing their identities by their crafted and individualized lifestyles. Offe (1985, p. 852) informs that the leading actors of this shift are the middle class members, who are more educated, more inclined to the moral and aesthetic questions, and more ‘aware’. Similarly, Beck (1984, p. 489) argues that ‘individualization’ occurs only if the new order of the day is represented by economic prosperity and full employment, the shortening duration of work time, eventually, increasing opportunity of leisure time, institutionalization of trade union interests, and generally, a clearly visible affluence in all spheres of the society. Thus, the new social movements embodies the new mode of collective expression convenient to the ‘new form of being’. Likewise, Giddens defines this new form of contestations as ‘life politics’. With the greater level of autonomy for action, the new political life ‘concerns debates and contestations deriving from the reflexive project of the self’ (1991, pp. 214—15).

The form of socio-economic progress is not merely sufficient explanatory tool for the new social movements. It is also necessary to look at the characteristics and working logic of late modernity. In late modernity, the modernization involves in a domination of everyday life by processes of commodification and of state domination and surveillance, both of which have a peculiar form of rationality in themselves (cf. Barker and Dale, 1998, p. 69). Offe (1985, p. 845) summarizes the

new situation by three interrelated developments: a broadening weight of bureaucratic capitalist relations, a deepening negative impact of those as state intervenes into everyday life, and the rising irreversible nature of the 'new forms of domination'. In light of this irreversible transformation, Melucci (1980, p. 220) proposes the fact that new social movements are not pursuing for the conquest of political power, but only, the secure of individual autonomy vis-a-vis the system. The rationalization process, simultaneously, establishes corporatist relations, especially in the production relations between labor and capital. Habermas (1987, p. 349) argues that industrial relations are institutionalized and labor bureaucracies are absorbed in state policy formations. By this way, the capacity of labor movement to organize anti-systemic movements is reduced. Actually, the decline of labor movement is not understood as the decline of protests. Instead, Habermas notes that conflict is displaced, meaning that 'new conflicts are not ignited by distribution problems but by questions having to do with the grammar of forms of life' (1987, pp. 391-92).

In light of these general theoretical background, it is also argued that the new social movement theory has emerged as a reaction to Marxism. For the new social movement theorists, there are mainly two reductionisms in classical Marxist theory which causes to mislead the analysis of collective action. First of them is related to the economic reductionism within the theory. Marxist economic reductionism assumes that all of politically significant social actions are supposed to be derived from the economic logic of the capitalism. Therefore, the other social logics are subordinated to the economic one. Second, Marxist class reductionism proposes the expectation that all of social actors should be defined vis-a-vis the social

relationships in the relations of production. Therefore, the other social identities are perceived as secondary in this schema (Buechler, 1995, pp. 441-2).

Against the critiques of Marxism, in general, and particularly the terms ‘class’ and ‘class struggle’, there has emerged a significant body of literature that mainly aim to challenge the domination of NSM theories in the recent decades. According to Barker and Dale (1998, p. 73), NSM theorists are more likely to deploy a Weberian theory of class and class struggle. In this view, manual workers employed in industries represent the working class whereas white-collar employees and its service sector labeled as ‘middle class’. Class struggle comprises economic affairs and occurs if classes form communities. The agencies of class struggle are trade unions, left parties, the formal institutions of labor movement. Accordingly, this perspective presuppose ‘class struggle’ as a measurable phenomena via union membership, strike rates, and voting behavior. Furthermore, this conception of class is not ‘relational’ . In addition, class struggle is perceived as episodic rather than defining quality of the contemporary social relations.

In contrast, the Marxian definition of class and class struggle significantly differs from the Weberian counterparts. First and foremost, the Marxian conception of ‘class’ symbolizes a relationship that is a dynamic process of ‘exploitation’, which is absent in the Weberian schema. Eventually, this permanent exploitative relationship reveals a constant trend of resistance, which is the sole motivation for the class struggle. Therefore, class struggle is not something which workers sometimes engage in. Rather it is a defining feature of capitalist society to resist the permanent exploitation and domination of capitalists. At the same time, the definition of working class is not limited to the ‘manual and industrial labor’ but comprises all

of whom life existence depends on the employment by capital (Barker and Dale, 1998, p. 73).

In Marxian understanding, the terms ‘class’ and ‘class struggle’ do not signify purely economic concepts. Instead, they refer to the interrelated patterns of social relations which are as much political-legal, cultural, and psychological as economic in its nature (Barker and Dale, 1998, p. 74). Due to the fact that exploitation is sustained against regenerating form of human resistance, pumping surplus value requires multiple forms of labor control, repressive and ideological as well. In return, assuming the motor force of class struggle only deriving from material needs is an ill-conceived supposition. According to J.C. Scott (1990), resistance is derived not only from the material deprivation but also all forms of subordination and humiliation. In sum, the clash of classes occurs due to the differences in needs. In terms of the determination of workers’ needs and interests, NSM theorists and Marxists diverge. In opposition to the NSM theorists’ critique on the overemphasis of ‘economic concerns’, Marx’s classical works are capable of replying. Marx, himself, underscores the fact that workers needs are not only determined as if they are purely labor machines. In this sense, he gives some examples to the non-material needs and desires which are “the worker’s participation in the higher, even cultural satisfactions, the agitation for his own interests, newspaper subscriptions, attending lectures, educating his children, developing his taste and so on” (Marx, 1973, pp. 286—87). What Marx means that workers are not only the carriers of capital relations but also “living, changing, striving, enjoying, struggling and developing human beings” (Lebowitz, 1997). In this regard, the effort of limiting the workers’ needs in the boundaries of economic

life is only showing the interests of capitalists (Barker and Dale, 1998, p. 75).

In general, post-war era represented multifaceted developments in social movements research. On the one hand, US academy prominently witnessed a reformulation process in social movement research. Unlike the earlier pluralistic view, both the resource mobilization and the political process theorists no longer questioned the 'political' nature of social discontents. But, those new perspectives have been also accused of creating a structural bias later on. What is more, the political opportunity structure of PPM is seen very rigid and objectivist as well. On the other hand, European researchers prominently interrogated the new form of society, which is named as 'post-industrial', 'programmed', 'post-class', and so on, and modernization process, which has a peculiar rationality in itself. This corporate effort prepared the ground of NSM theories. NSM theories criticized Marxist understanding of class and class struggle. While doing that, they chose to retreat from 'class', and focus on the 'post-materialist' parts of the human life. However, their vision of 'capitalism without classes' is challenged in practice towards the beginning of 21st century.

### 2.3 Bringing back capitalism in the social movement analysis

With the rise of protests and revolutionary wave aftermath of the second world war, a significant amount of work on social events, movements, and revolutions was produced by influential scholars around 1970s. By this new trend, the psychological treatment of protests, that labeled the protests in negative sense, was no longer popular. Instead, a more positive focus on resources, power, solidarities, and opportunities became more attractive for the scholars. In this transformation, protests

were seen as a reflection of rational politics. What is more, this kind of analyses also attended to show the clear effects of capitalism on the movements (Hetland and Goodwin, 2013, p. 84). For these scholars, capitalism referred to a mode of production in which a class owning the means of production –capitalists- employs a class selling its labor in exchange of wage –workers-, and in which rivalry among capital holders contribute to the reinvestment of the surplus value on the production process (see *ibid*, pp. 85-6). This process is so-called the reproduction of capital or capital accumulation in general.

Unfortunately, more recent studies on social movements have been ignoring the role of capitalism on the movements. Instead of analyzing the deeper causes for collective action and effects of capitalism on the social change, recent scholarship prefers to focus on short-term issues such as ‘cultural framing’, ‘social networks’, and ‘political opportunities’. It’s obvious that these analytical frames are very important to conduct research about. The main problem arises from the method of analysis. While these dynamics are assessed, they are considered as independent variables discrete from capitalism (Hetland and Goodwin, 2013, p. 86). From the point of Silver and Karataşlı (2015, p. 2), there are multiple reasons for the disappearance of capitalism and class based unionism dating back to 60s and 70s. The new left was developing a harsh critique against old left which was to exclude the dispossessed, ethnically and genderly excluded. On the other hand, when we come to 80s and 90s, the dismissal of labor movement in social movement and generally social science literature was considered due to the inability of the class based movement in terms of structural power.

Since 1980s, social scientists predominantly had defended that labor and class-based mobilizations were belonged to past episodes. To support this argument, the inescapable decline of worker's power was used to show. This harsh dissolution and the dark picture of labor and labor movement expressed by race-to-the-bottom thesis (cf. Silver, 2013). Indeed, Hetland and Goodwin (2013, p. 91) argue that capitalism has at least four distinctive effects on the movements. First, capitalist dynamics are highly determinant on the creation of collective identities and solidarities –either class or non-class identities and solidarities. Therefore, capitalism is capable of shaping the preconditions for the existence of social movements. Second, the balance of class forces is strongly influential on the evolution of movements and powerfully determines what the movements might win for their participants. Third, the class divisions revealed by capitalism are also capable of manipulating and separating the movements. Thus, the balance of forces also determines the goals and strategies of social movements. Fourth and finally, ideologies and cultural idioms linked to capitalist system and practice may influence the goals and strategies of movements.

Primarily, this research disagrees with the belief that globalization reduces the possibility of resistance. As Fox Piven (2008) argues that neoliberalism precipitates new possibilities for the exercise of power from below. Instead of insisting on the claim that neoliberal globalization reduces opportunities for social change, it is more accurate to realize the fact that the new context provides ordinary people to actualize the practice of power for reformist and revolutionary transformations. In the new global structure, it is correct that old institutional paradigm for social transformation, which is based on electoral politics and the institutional strength of labor movement,

have been outmoded. But, Piven argues that globalization provides new chances for the exercise of power by ordinary people. But, a new conception of power from below is required in the new institutional context. In this sense, the new globalized era enforces the establishment of power which exclusively relies on the cooperative nature of social relations in workplaces and in societies. All people who contribute to this system of cooperation will potentially have a power over others who depend on them (Piven, 2008, p. 5; cf. Atzeni, 2013). What is more, this new conception of power signifies the force of transcending the institutional rules that confine societies and reflect inequalities.

With the turn of century and by the eruption of intense and massive class-based struggles all around the world including both developed and developing countries put those scholars in a search for making sense of these new upsurges. Among contemporary academics, there has been observed a resurgent trend in dealing with labor issues more than previous decades (Atzeni, 2013; Silver, 2003, 2013; Silver and Karataşlı, 2015). With respect to the recent developments in favor of labor politics and labor studies in the global worlds, there is also a modest increase in the labor studies which focus on the features and prospects of contemporary working relations and labor movement in Turkey. Before ending this chapter, I will try to summarize the issues and studies within that literature.

#### 2.4 Labor studies in Turkey

Before clustering the labor studies that are majorly assessing the Turkish labor movement in various aspects, I need to note that there is a serious problem that most of the studies can be considered merely descriptive rather than including the

combination of theoretical and descriptive explanations. Descriptive studies might be very useful as if we did not know enough about the features, limits, and opportunities about the trajectory of Turkish labor movement. But, the real scenario for the contemporary labor studies is not as such. Hence, it will be expected to produce more theoretical and substantive academic studies in contemporary era. Luckily, there is an increase in this effort. With regard to this normative expectation, I will divide the literature on labor movement in Turkey into two major parts. First, there are structural and mostly external explanatory studies which discusses the problems and opportunities of labor movement and labor unions in Turkey. Second, the case-oriented studies which aim at interpreting the dynamic nature of working relations and hegemonic insights of working life that is experienced in the daily practice are recently increasing.

There is a literature which discusses the structural problems and opportunities of labor movement in Turkey (e.g. Onder, 1998; Akan, 2011; Buğra et al. 2009; Çelik, 2012, 2015; Mello, 2007, 2010; Dogan, 2013, 2015, 2018; Gurkan and Mete, 2017; bozkurt Gungen, 2018). The purpose of these works is the analysis of external environment which laborers and labor organizations are living. Hence, rather than focusing on the particular cases this group of studies prioritize the external explanatory argumentations for the projection of Turkish labor movement's past, present, and future. In these studies, the relationship between state, bourgeoisie, and working class is widely discussed. In particular, the paternalist attitude of the state in the history of republic is a general conclusion that is observed for this group of works. While denoting such a corporatist behavior belonging to state apparatuses, these studies still need to put a more serious effort on reading of history which will

reflect the workers' norms, values, and practices from below and which will develop an agency-based explanatory framework during the discussions.

First and foremost, I have not encountered too many labor studies which are the applications of resource mobilization or political process theories. In this sense, Brian Mello's (2007) article about the political process of Turkish labor movement between 1945 and 1980 represents a distinct contribution which can be count in this structuralist group of studies. The predominant view of labor movement in Turkey foresees that labor movement in Turkey is relatively dependent on the development of state-society relations (cf. Mello, 2007). Staunched supporters of this view most likely refer to the notion of state-granted rights and freedoms given to the laboring classes without a protracted struggle, and also, the role of 1980 military coup which drastically crushed the labor movement in a very harsh manner during the military dictatorship period and aftermath (Mello, 2007, p. 207). In contrast to this view, Brian Mello shows that it is possible to trace the reasons behind the increase and subsequent decline in labor movement during 1960s and 1970s by applying certain insights from political process model (Mello, 2007). Mello's work is important not because the arguments he proposes regarding the historical evolution of labor movement but due to the theoretical application of himself for the future studies in labor movement discipline about the Turkish labor movement.

There is a second subgroup in the structuralist explanatory research camp. Aziz Çelik's (2012, 2015) and Dogan's (2013, 2015, 2018) and Bugra, Adaman, and Insel's (2009) works can be count in this subgroup. These works are generally attempting to describe what has happened to Turkish labor movement politically and socially. For instance, Çelik's (2015) conceptualization 'authoritarian flexibilization'

for the labor policies of JDP period is very enlightening. Authoritarian flexibilization refers to two spontaneous developments in JDP period. On the one hand, the regime institutionalizes its level of flexibilization in individual labor relations. On the other hand, the former development demonstrated authoritarian tendencies in collective labor relations (Çelik, 2015, p. 623). JDP institutionalizes the authoritarian flexibilization process through eradication of states' social role in practice. On the other hand, JDP takes care of the people who are the victims of market friendly society. The party relieves those people via charity and aim instead of institutional social rights policies. Çelik (2015) argues that those policies are clientalist and paternalist (2015, pp. 622-3). It is clientalist because a customer-based relationship is created through these channels by the governing party. The social aid taker is expected to repay it through voting the governing party. It is paternalistic because collective rights are restricted, organization is restrained, and obedience is prioritized.

For some of them (e.g. Çelik, 2012; Dogan, 2015), the internal problems and opportunities of trade unionism are also discussed and some possible solutions are suggested for the revitalization of labor movement. In the article where the deradicalization of organized labor is summarized in the recent decades, Dogan (2015) proposes a systematic summary of past and present situation of organized labor. His analytical periodization helps us to distinguish the contemporary era from the previous decades as well as compare and contrast the subperiods within the current JDP term. Dogan argues that neoliberal reform package concerning organized labor did not put in order as a shock therapy (2015, p. 189). Consequently, it was seen that the neoliberal assault over the labor movement did not seem to cross red

lines of labor movement for a long period of time in 1990s and 2000s. In this period, both the very unstable neoliberal governments in 1990s and the single party regime of JDP in 2000s persistently continued to institutionalize the neoliberal reforms step by step. For Dogan, 2007 serves a critical turning point regarding the JDP's attitude towards the institutional change in labor movement. After 2007, JDP started to be more aggressive on the implementation of institutional reforms targeting the power of organized labor in Turkey. For the analysis, Dogan considers the period between 1990s and the first 5 years of JDP as a transitional period for the structural changes in labor movement in Turkey. He does that because of the continuities between the former and the latter periods. First, the political divides in 1990s clearly helped to define the political opponents of JDP period. Second, JDP continued to implement the principles of standby agreement with IMF which is signed in the former period (Dogan, 2015, p. 189). Alongside this unique periodization, Dogan contributes to the internal reasons for the dissolution of the organized labor's power during the neoliberal period.

The third subgroup in the structuralist approaches includes the analyses of the corporatist relationship between state and labor unions. In these studies, political and ideological divergences among the major three labor confederations (e.g. Kaleagasi Blind, 2007; Çelik, 2010) are assessed. Moreover, the growing influence of Hak-İş confederation during JDP period is another popular research topic that can be found in the recent literature (e.g. Bugra, 2002; Duran and Yıldırım, 2005; Erdiñç, 2014). The corporatism debate within Turkish labor movement is also observed with reference to a single industry union in the literature. In this sense, the scholarly works analyzing the paternalist relationship between Turkish Metal, MESS, and the

state serves well known examples (e.g. Kocer, 2007; Nichols and Sugur, and Demir, 2002; Nichols and Sugur, 2012). These are also useful for this research purposes.

With the rise of political Islam in Turkish political arena, the scholarly interest on the working groups and organizations that are significantly shaped by religion has been increased. Among them, Bugra (2002) provides us a comparative analysis between Hak-İş and MÜSİAD which have both become more powerful in economic life after Islamic politics was more influential. In short, Bugra (2002, p. 188) suggested that the nature of social projects revealed by religious groups may differ according to class positions. In this sense, despite the shared Islamic origins of both organizations, Hak-İş and MÜSİAD differ in terms of rhetoric and practice on the issue of social exclusion and solidarity (2002, p. 190). In another article where Hak-İş confederation was introduced in detail, Duran and Yıldırım (2005) searched for the reasons why and how Hak-İş became a very popular labor organization in a very short period of time. The basic principle of Hak-İş was the belief in the commonality of employer and employee interests on the basis of Muslim brotherhood. About this principle, Hak-İş supported the idea that the conflict between labor and capital is artificial (Duran and Yıldırım, 2005, p. 231). Why did Hak-İş not become so attractive and active for the laborers before 1980? Duran and Yıldırım (2005, p. 232) answer this question by two different indicators. First, they argue that due to close contract between MSP and Hak-İş, the confederation was only able to get membership of workers who were also close to the party. Second, the most important parts of the working class were already organized. For this reason, Hak-İş was only eligible for organizing at either newly emerged state economic enterprises or the small- or medium-sized private establishments. Since it was more

difficult to organize in private sector, Hak-İş followed the former path and tried to get organized in the public sector more than in the private.

Indeed, the growing story of Hak-İş is not portrayed that much neutral for many scholars. Especially when the incredible membership increase of Memur-Sen, which is also widely known as a very staunch supporter of JDP in terms of disciplining and designing the public sector and the control of civil servants, there occurs an alternative explanatory framework for the rise of these labor organizations. For this purpose, the growth rates of Memur-Sen and Hak-İş during JDP period will give us a clear sign for the symbiotic/corporatist nature of labor unionism in the recent decades. Birelma (2018) shares that Memur-Sen increased its membership from 42,000 in 2003 to nearly more than 1 million in 2018 which equals to increase from 6 to 60 percent of union member civil servants. Furthermore, many scholars argue that Hak-İş's incredible growth during 2010s owes to the close ideological affiliations by the governing Justice and Development Party (Çelik, 2015; Doğan, 2013; Gürkan and Mete, 2017). Birelma (2018) notes that Hak-İş' share among all union workers reached from 17 percent in 2013 to 36 percent in 2018 which corresponds to nearly half million workers.

Similarly, the corporatist attitude of state and bourgeoisie can be defined in relation to a single industry union in the Turkish context. For this matter, the studies about Turkish Metal Union represents an inspirational issue for not only deepening the corporatism debate in the literature but also the specific research purposes of this project. Among the several scholarly works on Turkish Metal, Kocer's (2007) theoretical concept, namely partnership in coercion, successfully illustrates the existing labor regime in terms of power relations. According to Kocer, partnership in

coercion is a strategy that doesn't arise out of merely the need for survival but the pursuit of furtherance of their own interests which are different from those of their members (Kocer, 2007, p. 246). To put it differently, there is sometimes such a relationship between trade unions and employers where the survival of trade unions highly depends on the usefulness of them for employers or willingness of employers to tolerate them. Therefore, trade unions are expected to make concessions in favor of employers in such cases. In other words, trade unions are not seen as reluctant but willing to collaborate with the employers.

Kocer's formulation is also supported by some other researches (e.g. Nichols, Sugur, and Demir, 2002; Nichols and Sugur, 2012). By using survey method, Nichols and Sugur (2012, p. 201) concludes that Turkish Metal is a union that is most willing to cooperate with employers and governments and be more inclined to management policies at the workplaces. Moreover, in another survey-based study, Nichols, Sugur, and Demir (2002) finds out that the workers affiliated with Turkish Metal see their managements better than trade union officers (Nichols, Sugur, and Demir; 2002, pp. 27-8). In addition, it is also conducted that workers are prone to apply to the management rather than union officers or relatives and friends when they have grievances. The researchers explains this paradigmatic situation with the lack of responsiveness of Türk Metal (*ibid*, p. 29).

Apart from the structural explanatory works that discusses the problems and opportunities of labor movement, there is a recent increase in sociological works that prioritize to look at the daily practices and experiences of workers and the hegemonic power of bourgeoisie over the working class in daily routines (e.g. Yoruk, 2009; Isik, 2010; Durak, 2011; Türkmen, 2012; Birelma, 2014). In these studies, working and

life conditions of certain working groups which are selected vis-a-vis sector, space, ethnicity, or gender are portrayed through ethnographic methods. Not only the manifestations of individual and subjective parts of the working relations but also the collective expressions against the capitalist hegemony is given in these works.

More specifically, apart from the previously established classes and working regimes inherited from the old welfare regimes in Turkey, there is a rising scholarly attention which puts a scholarly effort to make sense of the newly emerging economic, social, and cultural relations in localities. These works commonly points out, the impacts of globalization over different social cleavages differs and thus the specific, mostly creative, labor relations within these localities are shaped and reshaped via the contingencies that is experienced in the relevant context. For instance, in the study where Yoruk ethnographically assesses the new form of workshop system in the textile sector in Turkey, he argues that although informalization and subsequent rise of subcontracting systems rendered the large industrial complexes to die away, it has simultaneously also revealed a new workshop system that can be called as ‘Urban Factory’ (Yoruk, 2009, p. 27).

This factory regime is regulated by specific rules and values that are determined by employers and workers. The working hours, the overtime payments, the rights and responsibilities of both employers and workers are definite. But, the puzzling fact is that this consensus is achieved through non-state mechanisms. In other words, the involvement of state or the incumbent governments is not required for sustaining this workshop system. In sum, Yoruk names this semi-formal collective bargaining system as ‘semi-formal professional code’ (Yoruk, 2009, pp. 27-8). This is a code by which capital-labor relations are regulated and controlled

and hence, vast amount of dispersed single workshops are absorbed into an ‘urban factory’ through a single governing mechanism (2009, p. 30).

Similar to Yoruk’s focus on informal norms and regulations in the course of building the new regulatory framework for the new order, Durak (2011) presents another influential study where he looks at the new cultural and ideological forms which serve as legitimization instruments for the new accumulation regimes in the local communities. In Turkey, Durak notes that local communities are serving more influential role than political parties on legitimating the new liberal accumulation regime. Those communities are sometimes eligible to determine the labor relations of their members and political preferences of their communities (2011, pp. 25-6). In retrospect, Durak argues that the new accumulation regime has transformed the previous superstructural basis of accumulation. In this sense, the legal-political framework has been replaced by ideological-cultural framework (2011, pp. 23-4).

In addition to insights from individual expressions of neoliberal hegemony in the daily practice, there is also a modest increase in the researches that predominantly focus the collective mobilizations against this hegemony (e.g. Turkmen, 2012; Birelma, 2014). Turkmen’s ethnographic study on TEKEL resistance can be considered a very enlightening contribution to labor studies. In her research, Nuray Turkmen utilizes the educational science literature on class studies and broadens the scope of labor studies in a very inspirational way. Another influential research belongs to Alpan Birelma. In general, Birelma contributes to the labor studies literature which does not explicitly refer to the classical Marxism and the idea of historical materialism (2014, p. 13). Birelma theoretically carries the goal of reflecting the collective struggles, subjectivities, and agency of working class

(2014, p. 23). For him, the daily practices and struggles of working class and other oppressed groups cumulate a culture by which the class-based cruelties can be reduced, eased, or cut off (2014, p. 25).

With regard to this theoretical attitude, Birelma focuses on three collective mobilizations of workers from Turkey. In his analysis, he uses the ethnographic method. While explaining the reasons for the choice of this research topic, he notes that he focused the exceptional situations of workers who display a significant form of agency, and the situations in which the workers were resistant and part of a collective movement (2014, p. 25). He argues that the analysis of collective labor mobilizations will potentially enlighten three important issues. First, the questions such as why the workers do not act upon their agency in a sufficient manner or why they do not struggle against the conditions that surround them. Second, these resistances partially threatens the cultural hegemony of the oppressors at least for a period of time and thus shows that capitalist hegemony over the working society can be temporarily eased and the hidden parts of class nature of the system can be revealed in these moments. Last but not least, these mobilizations might point out a potential in search of a more just, equal, and fraternal world (2014, pp. 26-7).

Lastly, it will be necessary to mention about several studies which focused on this research project's case study: metal storm (e.g. Taştan, 2015; Korkmaz, 2015; Çelik, 2016). Those studies were most likely descriptive in the sense that their common purpose was explaining the general reasons that precipitated the strike wave in 2015. However, among those studies, Aziz Çelik's (2016) seems very helpful in terms of defining the type of strikes. According to Çelik (2016), these strikes should be labeled in the category of 'wildcat' strikes' (Çelik, 2016; p. 21). Furthermore, the

role of Turkish Metal were disregarded. Thus, this strike wave was directed through workers own initiatives. In such labor protests, it is assumed that uncontrolled and wildcat protests will deactivate the formal mechanisms of industrial relations. In this regard, Aziz Çelik argues that the wave of resistances in the metal sector in 2015 represents a challenge for trade union status quo and the practice of mainstream trade unionism in Turkey (ibid, p. 22). Essentially, although these aforementioned studies about the metal storm reveal the basic reasons and results of the strike wave, they unfortunately fail to trace the trajectory of this contentious action in a theoretical manner.

## CHAPTER 3

### HISTORY OF LABOR MOVEMENT IN TURKEY

In this chapter, I will draw a general contextual framework by which my case study will be handled more easily. To draw a detailed picture about the history of labor movement requires to abide a core theoretical perspective for the elimination of critical events and turning points to point out a consistent and institutional shape of laboring classes. By virtue of acknowledging the class struggles as a defining feature of the capitalist system, this research will follow a class-based approach in which the selection of certain social, economic, and political developments within the Turkish history will try to reflect the evolution of class forces. Hence, the analysis will more likely start from the establishment of multi-party regime and subsequent era. This preference do not mean that there was no struggles related to socio-economic life of laborers. It is only chosen to underscore the critical maturation period of dominant classes in the public arena. In this sense, the establishment of multi-party regime and subsequent politicoeconomic developments in the 60s and 70s deserves a closer focus due to increase in the institutional level of bourgeoisie and working class (see also Dogan, 2018).

#### 3.1 The politicization of class struggle: From 1940s to 1970s

In general, class struggle has not been perceived as a desired phenomenon for the establishment in Turkey. Nevertheless, both the structural evolution of global order, particularly the effect of world war two in Turkey, and the national responses to the unintended consequences of the new order aftermath of the second world war

increased the legitimacy of laboring classes and their power respectively. Especially after the foundation of Democratic Party (DP), the political rivalry between Republican People's Party (RPP), and DP emphasized the need of workers votes for each of them in the mid-40s (Kalegasi Blind, 2007, pp. 290-1). This political competition brought the 'legalization' of labor associations by the initiation of Employer and Employee Associations Law in 1947. Despite the conformity of legality, the labor movement in that period had to face the neocorporatist policies of both RPP and DP. For controlling the labor associations, RPP founded an umbrella organization so-called Worker Bureaus (İşçi Büroları) which was instrumentalized to develop a nationalist labor movement (cf. Kalegasi Blind, 2007). At the same time, this organization trained the future union leaders for both Turkish Workers Unions Confederation (Türk-İş) and Revolutionary Workers Unions Confederation (Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu, DİSK) (Kalegasi Blind, 2007; Dogan, 2018).

During the DP era, the attitude towards workers and associated organizations did not change in a significant manner. Although DP leveraged the grievances of workers about RPP prior to its governance, it did not keep its promise about reforming the collective rights of workers legally. While the continuity between RPP and DP was dominating the political platform, the level of institutionalization of working class did not stop. In 1952, the first nation-based labor confederation, Turkish Workers Unions Confederation (Türk-İş) was founded. Similarly, the foundation of Türk-İş was an attempt to discipline 'militant unionism', which is potentially developing due to global fame of communism after the second world war. Shortly, it is necessary to note that the involvement of American unionists such as

Erwing Brown and the legal restrictions over the scope of trade union action illustrate the political logic behind this foundation process.

One of the active American unionists in the formation of Türk-İş, Irving Brown notes that Türk-İş has four main principles. First, Türk-İş will represent the freedom and democracy. Second, this union will be highly centralized with a body of patriotic members. Third, it will negate the partisanship to political parties. Finally, it will repudiate the type of unionism where the state and the business will cooperate each other (Kaleagasi Blind, 2007, p. 292). Hence, Türk-İş initiated a policy so-called party above politics (Partilerüstü Politika, PAP). Officially, this policy was suppose to get workers distanced from the partisanship. But, it was practiced in a different way. Quite the opposite, Türk-İş has become very compatible with the governing parties regardless of their ideologies and policies related to workers (Kaleagasi Blind, 2007, p. 292). As a result of Türk-İş's existence in the labor relations, the patronage over laborers rendered the labor movement to look for alternatives. In the history, alternative unionist practices became to be seen after 1960s.

The political turmoil as a result of 1960 military coup opened the door for extra legal gains for the working class in the 1961 constitution. In addition to national outlook, the global economic order was moving towards a welfare regime to reduce the threat of communism in the capitalist world. Turkey was not exception in this sense. Aftermath of military coup in 1960 and 1961 constitution, Turkey deeply shifted towards import substituting industrialization (ISI) economy. This major shift in the economic life prioritized the foundation of a welfare state regime which precipitated the laboring classes to develop their organizational power.

Accordingly, class conflict under this economic picture deepened in the 60s and 70s. This is also related to the level of institutionalization of classes. Both bourgeoisie and proletariat improved their level of institutionalization in this period. Firstly, in 1967, DİSK was founded. DİSK's foundation principles mainly included the complaints about Türk-İş. In contrast to Türk-İş, DİSK chose to concern both political and economic demands. Furthermore, DİSK rejected such a close relationship with the state as Türk-İş have preferred. Meanwhile, ideological polarization caused a negative fact that different political parties initiated different labor unions. For instance, Nationalist Action Party founded Nationalist Labor Unions' Confederation (MİSK) in 1970. In addition to this foundation, National Salvation Party initiated the Confederation of Righteous Workers' Union (Hak-İş) in 1976. On the other side, bourgeoisie also improved its level of autonomy. By the increasing autonomy of bourgeoisie from the state during ISI period, they managed to create their own organization, 'Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen' (TUSİAD), in 1971 (Ahmed, 1993, p. 125).

In 1960s and beginning of the 70s, Turkey managed to run the economic growth. But, the ISI policies were still giving critical errors about the future. In 1974, Turkey was highly affected from the oil crisis. Since Turkish politics was interested in favoring populist attempts to get the most amount of votes in elections in 70s, Turkey just conducted decent policies to be able to postpone the real effects of the crisis. Again, they could not achieve their goal at the end. Ecevit had to request IMF help for recovery in 1978-79 (Boratav, 2006, p. 128). Pamuk claimed that Turkey had witnessed one of the most severe "foreign exchange crisis" in the third world (Pamuk, 1981, p. 26). Pamuk noted that Turkey experienced more than 7 percent

economic growth in 60s and early 70s. Nevertheless, the positive Picture had drastically changed. The unemployment rate was estimated around 20 per cent. What is more, the inflation rate exceeded 100 per cent second year in a row in 1980. To recover the economic instability, a variety of economic reform tried to be implemented. Among them, January 24 Decisions in 1980 serves a critical weight to mention. This policy package included the interests of international economic institutions such as IMF and World Bank. But, the existing political structure was not providing a convenient space for implementing such a radical transformation (Önder, 1998, p. 48). For putting such a radical transformation, a political intervention came up from the military at September, 1980 which can be described as ‘counter attack of capital’.

### 3.2 Counter attack of capital: 1980s and afterwards

After the military coup in 1980, Turkey’s political, economic, and societal environment has been systematically changed. Prior to the January 1980 decisions, Turkey has transformed its regulated economy into unregulated one. Furthermore, society was more or less paralyzed by the oppressive character of junta between 1980 and 1983. Thus, the negative impacts of military governance at the beginning of 80s lasted more than its physical appearance in Turkey. As a result of neoliberal expansion in economic life, Turkish business headed towards more disorganized and flexible type of capitalism during the same decades (Buğra, Adaman, Insel, 2009, p.169). Therefore, labor unions were significantly in trouble to the extent that they were highly bureaucratic and disorganized in themselves. The increase of the mobility of capital in global also affected the labor union strategies. In short, labor

unions have to deal with organizational problems prior to the initiation of flexible and disorganized economic relations in the global market (ibid).

Similarly, according to Aziz Çelik (2015), there are two historical developments that occurred in 1980 leading to the new economic regime in Turkey. One of them is the 24 January Decisions which established the economic tensions of the new neoliberal regime in the country. The second one is 12 September 1980 military coup itself which basically served the political ground for the new labor regime in Turkey. In concrete, Aziz Çelik notes that 1980 military coup had more severe effects on labor relations because the new labor regime was not only army's preference but also big bourgeoisie's choice (ibid, p. 619). Moreover, Boratav argues that bourgeoisie had gained the most appropriate conditions for capital accumulation in the history of republic aftermath of the coup and January Decisions (Boratav, 1990). Another similar aspect to the capital-incentive developments in 70s and 80s is belonged to Brian Mello who argues that both the 1971 memorandum and 1980 military coup targeted the labor movement in Turkey (Mello, 2007, p. 223).

The main objectives of economic policies after coup were export oriented industrialization, integration with global capital, and liberalization of Turkish economy. Çelik summarizes this new model as creating the surplus value to be exported it to foreign market via decreasing the domestic demands in parallel to the reduction of real wages (2015, p. 620). In this sense, Cam (2002) provides some data to show the pivotal changes in the country. For instance, the ratio of imports to GDP increased 21.7 per cent by 1995 which was 7 per cent annual on average between 1960-1979 (see Cam, 2002). However, this data is not meaningful unless the data on trade deficit is examined. In that sense, it is given that trade partners of Turkey were

putting certain restrictions on the exports of Turkey. Thus, trade deficits are bound to be seen even at higher level than 1960-1979 average. In concrete, Cam notes that annual average ratio of trade deficit is equal to 4.5 per cent between 1990 and 1997 whereas it was 2 per cent in the period of ISI (see Cam, 2002, p. 92). In addition, neoliberal restructuring period has accelerated the industrialization. Yet, while industry's share in GDP increased from 26 per cent in 1979 to 32 per cent in 1997, agriculture's share declined from 23 per cent to 16 per cent in the same period. Moreover, it should be also noted that foreign capital played a crucial role in industrialization. In return, this fact increased the pressure on short-term external debts. In concrete, the ratio of short-term external debts to total external debts increased from 13 per cent to 25 per cent between 1980 and 1997 (see Cam, 2002). In the light of these numbers, it can easily be seen that although Turkey initiated a rapid industrialization process at the beginning of 80s, it did not change the dependent nature of the Turkish economy on foreign capital in the neoliberal period. This factor seems like to affect working class in a wilder manner in terms of both individual and collective labor relations.

Taking the issue from the aspect of laborers, neither 24 January Decisions nor 1980 military coup brought favorable developments. Particularly, flexibility was an important task for the new economic regime in the world as well as Turkey. Indeed, this new task is achieved via post-fordist policies. More concretely, post-fordism aimed to solve the problem of falling rate of profits that is inherited from import substituting industry (Birelma, 2007, p. 27). In the light of these core task, there emerge four results for working class in neoliberal era. These are the rise of temporary employment, the decline of trade unions, the growing exclusion from

working life, and the downfall of the employees' earnings (ibid, p. 28). Joblessness, informal employments, and recurrent unemployment has become permanent in neoliberal era (Buğra and Keyder, 2006). In retrospect, increasing unemployment, the growth of precarious jobs, temporary work and subcontracting, the increasingly flexible labor market, and the enlarged informal economy has created a structural segments within labor force under the umbrella of global rule. Indeed, this segmentation was a global goal framed as one of the core intentions of neoliberalism and global capitalism.

The negative effects of neoliberal restructuring period on laborers can be illustrated via some quantitative data. In this sense, Cam notes that the replacement of unionized workers with the temporary labor force has become the most important barrier in front of the labor solidarity in the neoliberal Turkey (Cam, 2002, p. 97). It is also not correct to assume that pro-market reforms created extensive amount of new job opportunities in Turkey. In general, total employment growth is limited to 2 per cent annual average between 1980 and 1997. This ratio was 2.6 per cent in the period between 1970 and 1979 (see Cam, 2002). More specifically, some segments of the labor force are excluded from the production relations. The most known group is women. According to Cam, the ratio of female labor force to the total femal population declined from 55 per cent in 1980 to 31 per cent in 1997. Indeed, Cam notes that female labor participation had been in an upward mobility due to its cheapness in the world. But, Turkey had witnessed an inverse process in this period. Indeed, exclusion from work is not exceptional for women. In general, although the working age population had been increasing from 1960s to 1997, the ratio of labor force to the working age population decreased in the same period (see Cam, 2002).

Besides the structural and socio-economic problems occurred in the neoliberal era, working class and its organizations were also in difficulties in getting organized due to several reasons. One of the most known obstacles for the labor movement in the neoliberal period was stemming from the legal area. Being a union member, for example, became expensive and cumbersome due to 1982 constitution. Additionally, it became more difficult to establish a labor union. The new legal framework diminished the independence of labor unions. For instance, the people who attempt to establish a new labor union is required to have worked in that sector over a year and have not accused of any crime including involving in a strike (Kaleagasi Blind, 2007, p. 295). Making the work activity in a particular sector restrains the scope of organizing for the workers. In other words, the organizational form of trade unions are designed to be sectoral unionism which basically serves to separate the power of labor in practice. Second, crime involvement is not an objective parameter of the criteria for union membership. The primary precondition for membership is supposed to be the class status of the candidates. However, this case represents a clear example of instrumentalization of law for mastering the oppositional workers. What is more, there was another way of controlling labor unions. This way of controlling is so-called “double threshold” requirement, according to which one is related to the working place whereas the other is related to the given sector. In terms of working place, a labor union should have at least 50 per cent plus 1 members. On the other hand, it should also at least one percent of the workers of the given sector. These borders are important because it labor union enable to be a part of the collective bargaining processes.

1980s represented the continuation trend of neoliberal restructuring of the Turkish political economy under the leadership of firstly, military junta from 1980 to 1983, and secondly, Turgut Özal and his Motherland Party (MP) from 1983 to 1991. In this period, although the transition from military to civilian rule happened, it did not manage to establish a full range of democracy in the country. Rather it was considered as an example of ‘restricted democracy’ (cf. Önder, 1998) or ‘authoritarian neoliberalism’ (cf. Bozkurt Gungen, 2018). Hence, the new labor regime was build upon the principles of international economic foundations and bourgeoisie. Social and protective measures are eradicated through the new constitution. Aziz Çelik calls this process as “authoritarian flexibilization” (Çelik, 2015) which refers to two spontaneous developments in neoliberal period. On the one hand, the regime institutionalizes its level of flexibilization in individual labor relations. On the other hand, the state demonstrates an authoritarian tendency in collective labor relations (2015, p. 623).

Despite the authoritarian tendencies limiting the democratic opposition against neoliberal restructuring process, end of the 80s, the establishment could not reach its goals in a satisfied form towards the end of 80s and the 90s. Towards the end of the 80s and the early 90s, the hegemonic project of MP was shaken by the collective mobilization of laboring classes. The eruption of wide range of official and unofficial strikes showed that workers not only demanded higher wages and better conditions but also pursued for democratization of the labor movement (Onder, 1998, p. 64). Due to a mass mobilization initiated by the workers, a significant number of workers mobilized against the severe conditions of the new labor regime. For instance, the Spring Strikes in 1989 was one of the most important mass protests of

working class in history of Turkey. According to Kaleagasi Blind (2007, pp. 299-300), these strikes have shown the power of rank-and-file to create a collective action. In other words, it is seen that heterogeneity of working class was not a decisive factor to hinder the labor mobilization. Additionally, the same strikes have two important peculiarities. First of all, these protests are held through informal networks and mobilized against the bureaucratic form of unionism by the workers. Second, and maybe more importantly, workers have improved new forms of resistances such as taking shipment request together and not shaving their beards to broaden the public support and sympathy (Turkmen, 2012, p. 26). As a result of Spring Strikes, Aziz Çelik argues that militant unionism became more popular and the state centric form of unionism had begun to lose its popularity in that period (2015, p. 621).

In addition to worker mobilizations, civil servants' grievances related to economic and social conditions became more poignant. Prior to the 1990s, being a civil servant meant to have both an economic and social leverage in comparison to the rest of the laboring community. In the neoliberal era, the decrease in income of the civil servants and changing social patterns for achieving high status within the society made civil servants more reactionary. Accordingly, civil servants chose to protest these negative developments via both individual and collective ways. They preferred to apply to some individualist reactions such as working less efficiently, slowing down the work, and so on. But, this kind of individualism questioned the prestige of them in the eyes of public. Besides the individualist reactions, civil servants started to found trade unions at the beginning of 1990s. At that time, civil servants were wanting from the right to collective bargaining and strike. In this

sense, they acted in concert to demonstrate those common demands through organizing couple general strikes during the mid-90s (Onder, 1998, pp. 64-5).

In general, 1990s represented a multilayered societal equation to explain the reasons behind the delay of the hegemonic establishment of the neoliberal agenda. Bozkurt Gungen (2018, p. 225) argues that the wave of labor mobilization during the end of 80s and the early 90s made the neoliberal reforms politically more risky. While these counter-mobilizing developments against the neoliberal agenda were actualized in a disruptive manner, the authoritarian legal framework for anti-labor reforms stayed in force. In addition, the expansion of subcontracting and the various practices of informality prepared the ground for post-2001 reforms to the detriment of laborers during Justice and Development Party (JDP) period.

### 3.3 Institutionalization of exploitation: JDP rule in Turkey

At the beginning of 2000s, Turkey has faced two major economic crisis one in 2000 and the other in 2001. The economic crisis in 2001 became a critical turning point for JDP rule in two ways. First of all, economic crises paved the wave of economic reforms and large amount of reforms helped JDP to create a broad range of political support from different classes in the first years of its single party governance. Second, the former coalition government which had ruled the country from 1999 to 2002 was considered the source of economic collapse. In return, the accusation of a domestic actor hindered the eruption of massive systemic protests, which simultaneously created a convenient political space for the IMF reforms. What is more, JDP's success in 2002 elections as a single party government secured itself to be faced with social and economic protests in the country.

Aziz Çelik (2012) argues that 2000s are not important because of the beginning of a new century, but, representing devastating political and economic changes in state-society relationships as well as a regime change in working relations. While JDP has been pursuing for the institutionalization of the neoliberal accumulation regime in the first decade of 2000s, it created immediate effects on the working class and labor activism. According to Çelik (2012, p. 126), JDP represented a continuation trend of neoliberal restructuring adjustments coming from the previous governments in Turkey. Moreover, JDP pursued for a hegemonic power in all spheres of the state and civil society in general. As a result, trade unionism and labor activism could not find a way to be motivated for the labor strikes and non-strike activities very much. In Aziz Çelik's terms, the ten years of JDP has created an "enforced working peace" in practice.

In the JDP period, many workers have been fired due to their union activities and labor actions against massive privatizations and working place closures. Despite large-scale privatizations, a central unionist policy could not be developed in a practical sense. It was more likely to be mobilizing the labor unions when they were threatened by a privatization act (Çelik, 2012, p. 122). Nevertheless, there were some powerful and intriguing strikes to hegemonize public sphere for a while in 2000s. In this regard, TEKEL (General Directorate of Tobacco, Tobacco Products, Salt, and Alcohol Enterprises) resistance, that lasted 78 days from 2009 to 2010 was one of the examples which managed to gain support from very different parts of the society and became a popular movement both nationally and internationally. Even though, the outcomes of TEKEL resistance were not satisfactory enough, it was still inspiring for the future struggles for laborers and labor unions. Nonetheless, Aziz Çelik criticizes

the labor unions in terms of incapability of understanding the new dynamics of working class and new forms of labor mobilization in TEKEL and elsewhere in contemporary Turkey (2012, p. 123). In retrospect, although the number of non-agriculture employment and the number of waged and covered workers have been increased in this period, unionization, collective bargaining, and strike tendency is in decline (ibid, p. 127).

Different from Aziz Çelik, some scholars also indicate that JDP has managed to establish democratic ideals in all spheres of political life including labor relations. For instance, Akan (2011) argues that JDP adapted the concept of conservative democracy to reconcile the ideological premises of the Just Order with the secular regime. By this effort, new rising Islamist strategy was including both Islamist and neoliberal premises under the name of conservative democracy. Regarding the new strategies in working relations, this mix also led to emerge of social democratic ideals as well (Akan, 2011, p. 318).

Indeed, Akan's perspective is problematic in the sense that the concrete impacts of the new institutional mechanisms that is implemented during JDP period differs from the expectations. In particular, Akan (2011, p. 335) identifies industrial relations policy of JDP in three basic principles. First of all, he notes that JDP adapted the determination of wage and salary levels irrespective of ex-post indexations and restricted the employment of civil servants so that the total personnel expenditure has lowered down to sustainable level for the government. Second, JDP pursued for equalization of public workers' wages and civil servants' salaries. Third and most importantly, JDP decreased the level of employment in the publicly owned enterprises. With respect to the first and third development, we can clearly see that

JDP has developed an anti-labor strategy in practice. First of all, determining the wage and salary levels regardless of ex-post indexations means that wage and salary levels will be depended on the market forces. Thus, any possible rapture or economic stagnation will be paid by the laborers. Second and more importantly, lowering down the level of public workers and civil servants in the publicly owned enterprises signifies the breaking path for mass privatization policies and thus, make the laborers face the problem of precariousness in the individual labor relations. In this sense, the core argument of Akan by saying that conservative democrats institutionalized social democratic ideals in the labor process conflicts with the practical results of industrial relations policy of JDP.

Akan concretizes his core argument by referring to the new institutional settings in the labor process during JDP rule. According to him, collective bargaining processes between the government and trade and civil servant unions, Economic and Social Council (ESC), and EU-Turkey Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) are some new institutional arrangements to revitalize the organized labor's role in the political era (2011, p. 335). Indeed, although Akan accepts the limited functionality of these new institutional settings, he still considers these developments as the means of "politicization" (2011, p. 335) of trade and civil servant unions in the JDP period. On the other hand, Yıldırım points out the disfunctioning character of those institutions in terms of the core demands of the organized labor. He argues that although JDP has used the Economic and Social Council more frequently than its predecessors, trade unions have not satisfied with the working mechanism in terms of nuanced ways belonging to each union. In this sense, trade unions were criticizing the JDP government for not discussing the enactment of new labor code and the changes in

the social security system (Yıldırım, 2006, p. 244). Moreover, although Recep Tayyip Erdogan and JDP considers the existence of ESC as a proof of JDP's interest of social dialogue, it doesn't erase the structural deficiencies in the ESC. Yıldırım indicates that labor representatives are limited to deliver their interests in this council (2006, p. 245). With respect to the alternative approach that is raised by Yıldırım, the problem of Akan's aspect seems like to raise a legal and institutional approach without the practical impacts and the neglect of the discussion of the capabilities of the new institutional settings. In this sense, a class-based approach seems like more useful to understand the JDP's perspective on labor relations.

It is correct that JDP was pursuing a liberal-conservative strategy similar to Motherland Party government in the 80s between 2002 and 2007. However, the conservative democratic character of JDP should not be understood as a single notion. Instead, as Aziz Çelik (2015) argues that the definition of conservative democracy is two-sided for JDP. First, the party is conservative in terms of socio-cultural issues. Second, it carries out neoliberal logic in the labor relations and all economic affairs (Çelik, 2015, p. 622). In this sense, 59th Government's one of the main attentions was to create market society and 61st Government was defining this goal by using the language of flexibilization of labor market (ibid, p. 622). In addition to the market-friendly policies that are documented in the government programs, according to Ozsel, Ozturk, and Ince (2013), JDP's liberal account was not reduced into economic sphere. Rather JDP was trying to enlarge its liberal policies with the political openings directing democratization and pluralism (ibid, pp. 555-6). As a result of a pluralist discourse and practice, different segments of the society was supporting JDP due to its anti-nationalist discourse on the Kurdish

question and the Cyprus issue. However, it is also argued that this kind of pluralism was a tactical point to challenge the Kemalist establishment. For this stance, some argued that JDP tried to make a popular front under its hegemonic leadership against the military and secular establishment at that period (cf. Ozsel et al. 2013).

It might be seen that the new way of politics in the Islamist movement by the emergence of JDP may still pursuing a balanced political agenda in terms of the relationship between capital and labor. Nonetheless, it is doubted that JDP in 2002 was favoring such a harmonious trajectory regarding the economic relations. To support this argument, we may look at the numbers of parliamentarians elected from the ranks of JDP. In 2002, there were only 2 representatives from the Islamic trade Union, Hak-İş, whereas 21 JDP parliamentarians were elected from the MUSIAD (Ozsel et al. 2013, p. 558). Even this data shows us the unbalanced weight of capital over labor on the economic policies of JDP from the beginning. Alongside this unequal representation capacities in the parliament, the extent of pro-employer stance of JDP also proved by some other issues. For instance, the labor law issued in 2003 was another signing point to show us that JDP pursued the continuity regarding the labor policies in Turkish political history in neoliberal era. More specifically, this labor law enabled the flexible working hours and temporary employment in economic affairs. Moreover, this law displaced the occupational safety regulations in the workplaces with fewer than 30 employers (Ozsel, Ozturk, and Ince; 2013, p. 558). With respect to the neoliberal mind-set, JDP privatized the public institutions. More importantly, public offices and officers served “strike breakers” in some strike cases during the JDP rule. On the other hand, JDP’s pro-employer stance is supported by the minimum wage and tax revenue issues. Between 2002 and 2006,

minimum wage rose faster than the inflation. However, when we compare the GDP growth rates and the rate of minimum wage increase, it can be seen that the former is faster than the latter. In addition to it, as in the previous periods before the JDP, the tax revenue was more likely coming from the middle class and the poor (Ozsel, Ozturk, and Ince; 2013, p. 558). After parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007, JDP started to pursue a more majoritarian policy in action. Economically speaking, the tension between Islamic, which is represented by MUSIAD, and non-Islamic, represented by TUSIAD, capital has been strengthened due to patronage relations between JDP and its devout bourgeoisie (Ozsel, Ozturk, and Ince; 2013, p. 561-2). Another aspect to show this contradictory positions of the two main fractions of Turkish bourgeoisie can be the change in the perspective of Islamic capital towards the state intervention. In this sense, Islamic capital was previously supporting the anti-statist stance in economic affairs to compete with the secular bourgeoisie in Turkey. After JDP has increased its popular support in 2007, they started to favor a more privileged economic position for national enterprises against the international opponents. This change was also related to the strengthening nature of the devout bourgeoisie in the previous decades in Turkey (Ozsel, Ozturk, and Ince; 2013, p. 562).

In retrospect, it seems like JDP has institutionalized the ways and the method of exploitation in the long period of single party governance from the beginning. First of all, it is understood that JDP government has adapted a rhetorical discourse regarding the “democratization” problem of labor process in Turkey. Even the new legal arrangements and the institutional settings are more likely not to satisfy the labor unions in nuanced aspects. Ironically, although the number of non-agriculture

employment and the number of waged and covered workers have been increased in this period, unionization, collective bargaining, and strike tendency is in decline (Çelik, 2012, p. 127). Hence, it would not be wrong to announce a deep crisis within the labor movement especially with the increase of JDP's repressive attitude in the second decade of 2000s. Despite this negative atmosphere for the working class, the grievances have not been diminished during the JDP governance. Instead, workers have occasionally showed their reaction to the rising injustice and exploitation in their daily lives. Among those demonstrations, the metal workers' wildcat strike experience pays our attention to discuss the contemporary shape of labor movement in Turkey.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RESISTANCE AGAINST STATUS QUO:

#### THE CASE OF METAL STORM IN TURKEY

##### 4.1 The nature of crisis: Dismissal of union for wage

To identify the defining characteristics of the metal storm, we need to distinguish its demands and discover the complex relationship between those in the process of movement formation. In the metal storm, both economic and extra-economic demands were raised by the workers. While the workers pointed to the collective agreement signed between Bosch employer and the authorized labor union, Turkish Metal in April, 2015, the repressive attitude of the Turkish Metal was exposed by the workers as well. Furthermore, the insurgency participants were emphasizing on their grievances and anxieties about the future of their work and life conditions as well as heavy working conditions. By and large, the reflections of the movement participants and secondary research show that the relationship between the economic and extra-economic demands are organized interrelatedly. That is, the authoritarian, bureaucratic, and exploitative structure of the current labor regime in Turkey, the deriving force in the process of establishing multi-dimensional resistance. In other words, the struggle in 2015 has multiple faces, linking to each other representing a totality. Thus, the determination of the identity of this mass insurgency entails the analysis of those different faces to make sense of the complexity within totality.

#### 4.1.1 A protest for wage increase: Disapproval of 2014 group collective agreement

One of the major reasons for the insurgency was the heavy economic conditions and the unequal distribution of the wealth between employers and employees. Most of the workers that is talked indicated the rising gap between the poor and the rich.

While the Turkish economy has been witnessing a fruitful path for employers,, the outcomes of labor policies are seemingly painful for the employees. This conflictual economic picture is also reflected in the metal sector.

In the sector, while the export share has been continuously increasing, the level of wages do not cope with it. For instance, even after the 2015 metal insurgency, employers attempted to offer very low level of wage increases (3.2% at first and 6.4% revised) during the 2017-2019 bargaining process (Metal İşçilerinin Gerçeği, 2018). By looking at these low level of wage increase offers for the 2017-2019 bargaining process, it should not be understood that capital owners in the sector have a problem of making enough surplus to share with laborers. In contrast, there has been a recent increase in income gap between employers and laborers in the metal sector. According to the report of United Metal Workers Union (2018), employers increased the level of export shares from %34 percent in January 2015 to %45 percent in November, 2017. Moreover, the cost of laborers is very low for the employers. According to Eurostat, the average cost of laborers in Europe was 25.40 euros in 2016. In this ranking, Denmark took the first place with 42 euros and Bulgaria took the last place with 4.40 euros. In the same parameter, Turkey represent a very low-cost country for capital owners because the cost of laborers was 2.58 euros in Turkey in 2016 (Metal İşçisinin Gerçeği, 2018, p. 2).

In these circumstances, it's observed that the wildcat strikes in 2015 should be understood as a reaction to rising heavy economic conditions in the country. In particular, workers are capable of legitimizing their action with reference to their economic disadvantages caused by insufficient wage levels. What is more, the research results show that the unresponsive attitudes of the both parties –employers and Turkish Metal- have accumulated the anger and precipitated to the emergence of a self-protective movement in opposition to economic exploitation by the employers. To illustrate the consciousness of workers about what they demand economically, an active worker from Ford car company, H, gives us a clear sense to understand the critical attitude of the workers prior to mobilization:

From the beginning, I supported my friends and their struggle. In any times, I haven't thought that I am doing something wrong. It's true that we stopped the production for a while. But, it's also fair for us to win because we administer the production process. The protests might be seen impairing the production, enervating the national economy. But, it should also be recognized that despite the incredible amount of surpluses that is made, the economic neglect of laborers is not just. (Interview conducted by the author, 22.11.2017)

As mentioned by worker from Ford, workers were clearly aware of the unequal income distribution between them and their employers before the protests. In addition to this general inequality, the daily experiences and rising difficulties that the workers face were influential in the mobilization process. In this sense, worker A from Ford tries to explain what kind of problems workers had to deal with before the resistance:

Working conditions were very harsh and the wages were very low. Workers were forced to do extra works such as selling lemon at the bazarres and whitewashing at the weekends. Indeed, the power of workers is very significant. We only wanted to do something collectively because neither employer nor trade union was capable of understanding our needs. (Interview conducted by the author, 26.11.2017)

Not only low level of wages but also the high level of wages of trade union officers and passive, or pro-employer, stance of the Turkish Metal is highly influential on the formation of discontent. For the practice of unionism and its effects on the metal storm, worker Z from Arçelik LG argues that the practice of unionism mostly mean to mislead the laborers and gain some personal benefits for union officers:

The reasons for our organizing was that we did not want any of existing labor unions because all of them, I think, is same. Most of our friends thinks like that. After deciding not to bribe a labor union, it would be illogical to become a member of another union. They all act for the same purposes. If you figure the level of wages that a branch secretary of a labor union takes, you will probably encounter with some ten thousand liras per month. Any worker can take those amounts. The unions just deceive workers with lie and malediction. They just waste people's times. For instance, we saw that unionism cannot be done via distributing soap twice a year (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019).

Although the rising income inequality and the unresponsive attitude of Turkish Metal about the economic conditions of workers were crucially important in the process of movement formation, there were also some critical turning points which turned the potential to the kinetic. For economic purposes, the critical turning point was the sign of Bosch agreement in April, 2015. By this agreement, Bosch workers got a better wage increase due to their long-lived struggle for three years. After this contract, other metal workers, prominently the workers in the automotive sector, increased their complaints about Turkish Metal and the previous group collective agreement, which had just signed by the MESS and Turkish Metal. The workers demanded a similar contract. For the workers, the Bosch agreement was very critical because by and large, the Bosch agreement showed the workers that it is possible to sign a better contract with the employers. In other words, as many

workers indicated in the interviews, they saw that if they get organized and struggled for their own benefits, they can reach their goals as Bosch workers did.

In retrospect, the rising inequality in terms of the low level of wages and the unresponsive attitude of Turkish Metal towards workers' economic demands identifies the economic dimension of the insurgency. But, the demand for a similar contract as it was done for Bosch workers serves the critical point to initiate the counter-movement against the rising income gap in the sector. In other words, the existence of Bosch agreement clearly opened new opportunities and showed the power of workers against the double domination of employers and Turkish Metal over the laborers for several decades as an alternative strategy to reach their goals. Obviously, economically different two collective agreements between MESS and Turkish Metal in a short period of time –one in December, 2014 and the other in April, 2015- helped workers to obtain a certain level of cognitive consciousness against their labor unions and employers respectively. In this sense, it can be inferred that the Bosch agreement in April, 2015 deepened the crisis of legitimacy (Polanyi, 2001; Silver, 2003) by which the long-lived partnership of MESS and Turkish Metal is reexamined in a clear way. Actually, workers were already aware of this historical coalition. But, at this time, several other factors paved the wave of active resistance to this historical status quo in the sector. But, it's also not accurate to define this mass movement merely as a backlash economic struggle. Instead, it includes extra-economic demands. The delegitimization of Turkish Metal and active denial of it basically represents a demand for change in existing labor regime that is implemented by extraordinary conditions right after the 1980 military coup.

#### 4.1.2 An attempt to break the status quo

Apart from the economic interests of the workers, the insurgency was capturing extra-economic aspects. In addition to the unsatisfying wage levels, workers were complaining about the heavy working conditions, unhealthy work environment, and the ill-treatment of the management. For instance, worker F from Ford summarizes the short history of a worker in Ford car company as such:

Today, most of the workers at Ford Otosan are facing with various health problems due to heavy working conditions such as cervical disk hernia and spinal disc herniation. A young man at his twenties starts working. After few years, he faces different types of chronic illnesses caused by the working conditions. Hence, those people prefer to take health reports about their problems. But, these reports are seen problematic for the management. I assume that approximately 60 percent of the whole workforce must be taken reports. To say that if someone works twenty days in a month, the rest, 10 days, of the month is passed by those reports. Normally, people like to work. But, the body does not let them to do so. I have worked with no reports for ten years so do most of the workers. After ten years, I went to doctor. They figured that I have both cervical disc hernia and spinal disc herniation. Workers have to combat with many health issues because this working regime wears out people. They expect us to stand upon this regime which robots are even having difficulty in doing so. After ten years, you, with a worn out body, are told that 'we no longer want to work with you'. You ask the reason. They tell that you take many reports. (Interview conducted by the author, 1.12.2017)

Despite these heavy conditions, it was not easy for workers to voice their discontents loudly for many times. It's because they are under the risk of getting fired with no rights. Actually, 'being unemployed' points out a fearful situation for the workers. As much higher as the ratio of layoffs and unemployed is the level of oppression and frequency of violation of workers' rights at workplaces. According to Turkish Statistical Institute, the unemployment ratios between 2000 and 2015 were mostly above 10 percent or slightly below it (cf. Bağımsız Sosyal Bilimciler, 2015). Particularly, when the high amount of unemployment rates are coupled by hegemony

of Turkish Metal to discipline workers at the workplaces, it becomes much more risky for workers to raise their grievances loudly. One of the leading figures from Arçelik LG, T, explains this situation as enforced tranquility (Interview conducted by the author, 25.1.2019). According to him, people were thinking if they complain, they might lose their job without getting any of their rights deriving from the legal rules. In such circumstances, he defines the situation like that people are clearly aware of what is going on at the workplaces. But, they are lack of enough resources to voice against that system (Interview conducted by the author, 25.1.2019).

To exemplify the repressive role of Turkish Metal Union over workers, it will be valuable to listen worker A's distinctive story. When I talked to worker A, he preferred to label himself as a member of TOMİS, which is the independent labor union founded after metal storm by some group of metal workers. But, he was legally member of Turkish Metal Union at that time. Since he was one of lucky ones that managed to continue working at the same workplaces after the strikes, he had to find the most convenient path for the survival. As a continuing worker of Ford car company, A explained his relationship between TOMİS and himself as such:

There is togetherness and unity in TOMİS. Thus, you can get together under the umbrella of the ideas of TOMİS. In this sense, they've never forced us to be the member of TOMİS legally. Actually, I know that workers will eventually manage to act in concert with the enrollment of TOMİS. (Interview conducted by the author, 26.11.2017)

When we think of worker A's distinctive situation and the other workers' feelings about the Turkish Metal Union, we need to figure that the continuing threat of Turkish Metal Union over workers plays a significant role as well as rising economic inequalities for the workers. However, workers were already critical towards the labor union, it was still not so possible from the point of workers to get

organized against Turkish Metal. For them, there needs to be a contagious effect to transform grievances into injustice in the eyes of them. After the December, 2014 group collective agreement signed by Turkish Metal and Steel Workers Union, both the Bosch agreement in April, 2015 and the violence of Turkish Metal over some workers in Bursa in May, 5. 2015 represent two important events for workers to gain an alternative consciousness on changing their lot. As a result of complaints about Bosch agreement, metal workers had already called Turkish Metal to sign a similar contract with MESS until 5th of May, 2015. Otherwise, they threatened the union to resign collectively. When the day came, a group of metal workers from different factories got together in the garden of a mosque which is located in the Industrial District of Bursa (Bursa Organize Sanayi Bölgesi). When they arrived there, they realized a significant amount of people, compromised of union representatives, branch officers, and undercover policemen, threatening the workers by claiming that there are terrorists and PKK supporters among them (BirGün Gazetesi, 5 Mayıs 2015). By this provocation, those people attacked on the workers, who came the mosque to resign from Turkish Metal, and hurt them in various ways.

With the brutal force that is carried out by the union and its supporters, workers had become much more motivated in terms of the active denial of the Turkish Metal's existence. In return, thousands of metal workers, prominently from Bursa, Kocaeli, and several other cities, had managed to resign from the Turkish Metal in couple days. For this contagious form of resignation process, it's been observed in this research that the violence of the union against the workers played a crucial role on the crystallization of the movement purposes. About this events' role

in insurgency formation, labor activist Y compares the 5 May event with the brutal force that is performed by the police against TEKEL workers:

The police attacked against the TEKEL workers at Abdi İpekçi Park. Workers were thrown into the pool at the middle of winter. This was a turning point for TEKEL workers. Similarly, the 5th of May gathering and the violence that the workers encountered played an important role in the metal storm. (Interview conducted by the author, 20.1.2019)

Due to rising economic complaints and brutal response of the Turkish Metal, metal workers in Bursa, and other regions such as Kocaeli and Ankara started to get mobilized to challenge the despotic hegemony of the Turkish Metal Union. For this purpose, a vast amount of workers resigned from Turkish Metal and demanded a wage increase besides the recognition of their own representatives at the workplaces.

The self-organization attitude of metal workers crystallized after the metal storm by the establishment of an independent labor union, TOMİS. Some group of metal workers from various factories chose to follow an independent path from the major labor union choices. Obviously, I do not argue that TOMİS represents the majority of workers belief about the existing labor union structure in the sector. But, with regard to my worker interviewees' own description of the case, the foundation of TOMİS helps us to illustrate the extra-economic dimension of the labor unrest. To understand the foundation principles of TOMİS and its position among the rest of the three major labor unions, we should listen to S who is a metal worker and representative of TOMİS as well. S differs from the typical union representatives to the extent that he doesn't live in luxury and do not have enormous amount of salary as some union representatives do. All in all, he has a simple life. In light of this short description of himself, it will be more meaningful to read S' description of the why the workers needed such an alternative organization like TOMİS:

Workers saw the need for a real union which will protect their rights and interests during metal storm. Previously, when workers go to Steel Workers Union, which is considered as a close ally of JDP; Turkish Metal, which has a nationalist discourse; and United Metal Workers Union, which has a leftist discourse, each of them holds a side but, they've been doing nothing for workers. Now, we need to have a real union, which works for workers own sake instead of having a religious, a nationalist, or a leftist union. We need a union in which bureaucratization is banned, workers democracy is implemented. Metal storm was giving this message to us. (Interview conducted by the author, 22.11.2017)

Deriving from S' and A' positive expressions about TOMİS, it's necessary to acknowledge that there is plurality within the movement in terms of interests. As a result of plurality, it is realized that TOMİS could not attract the majority of metal workers after the storm due to various reasons. I do not value this fact either positive or negative. I only try to emphasize that regardless of its influence over the twwhole metal workers, the existence of TOMİS forces us to think that metal storm means more than a double movement to the rising heavy economic conditions and is potentially considered as a challenge for the existing labor regime in the sector.

#### 4.1.3 What type of an unrest is this?

This mass insurgency in 2015 represents a historical event to the extent that metal workers clearly showed that the durability of despotic hegemony of capital and its ally, Turkish Metal, is fragile when suitable social and economic opportunities are emerged. Regardless from its material outcomes, this insurgency has two peculiar characteristics. First of all, when we look at the general profile of the movement, it's been conducted that most of the participants has not involved in a labor strike or such resistance before. This is also related to their age characteristics. According to most

interviewees, the participants were relatively young people whom were employed after 2000s.

Another peculiarity of this resistance is about the nature of insurgency. During JDP period, the class struggle against the coalition of capitalist class, JDP, and symbiotic unionism has been in a defensive mode. In this defensive atmosphere, legal reforms were mainly reflecting the interests of this coalition (Bağımsız Sosyal Bilimciler, 2015, p. 59). Apart from this general tendency, metal workers clearly showed that laborers can still raise offensive attitude against this coalition under convenient conditions. In particular, metal storm has both defensive and offensive characteristics in itself. In concrete, the defense of their economic rights with reference to legal and procedural processes such as collective agreements can be labeled as the defensive part of the resistance. On the other hand, the denial of Turkish Metal and the pursuit for a democratic form of unionism by the foundation of their own worker committees and selection of their own representatives symbolizes an attempt to break the status quo in the sector.

In this general picture, it is argued that metal storm is both Polanyi type and Marx type unrest although the literature mostly differs these two types of labor unrests from each other (e.g. Silver, 2003, 2013; Lee, 2007; Karatasli et al. 2015). In particular, the counter movement for the neglect of workers' economic interests in the market relations via the demand for a new collective agreement represents the Polanyi type character of the unrest whereas the challenge of existing production regime by the attempt to reshuffle the cards between the workers and the employers via the overthrow of Turkish Metal symbolizes an attempt to change the balances of power within the sector. To explain multi-dimensional character of the strikes, R

from ZF Sachs may help us. When I asked R in the interview about how they convinced their friends to initiate such a protest, he replied me as such:

We had nothing to lose at that time. This was because of Turkish Metal. We had no right. Turkish Metal was signing the agreement on its own and they were not informing us. They were appointing their men as worker representatives at the workplace. Agreement was so bad at that time. In addition, it was for 3 years at that time. We were not too many people and knew each other. At the beginning, we definitely thought what if we were blacklisted after the protests. But, we also knew that if we managed to be unified, we would do it because there were good examples for that. I also told my friends that we get a minimum wage here. What would happen if we lost our jobs at the end. We could find a similar job everywhere which is giving the same money. (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019)

Although the workers had a credo in changing their lot, they could not manage to reach their goals in full extent. Both the demand of new collective agreement was rejected by the MESS and only workers are given some extra payments to relieve the complaints temporarily, and the overthrow of Turkish Metal and the institutionalization of a newly democratic and participatory form of unionism could not be fully established. Nonetheless, the impacts of the protest wave in 2015 had a relatively long-lasting effect for the next bargaining period in which both the employers and the TM officers were aware of the continuing critical attitude of workers regarding the same problems that they raised during the protests. With the neglect of its outcomes, it will be very fruitful to analyze the dynamics of this contentious movement for the sake of testing certain attributions of existing social movement theories. For this purpose, in the next section, the dynamics of this mass contentious action will be assessed in relation to the question of what the case of metal storm brings to the social movement analyses.

#### 4.2 Challenging the status quo in an authoritarian context

One of the main arguments of this project is that Turkey represents an authoritarian regime in terms of labor relations in the course of neoliberal restructuring.

Accordingly, the metal workers' struggle in 2015 is supposed to be interpreted by this peculiar characteristics. Thus, analyzing the protest wave requires to adapt basic assumptions, analytical tools of resource mobilization theory (RMT) and political process model (PPM) into nondemocratic and authoritarian contexts such as Turkey.

The classical social movement theory (SMT) needed to be reinterpreted when it is experimented in authoritarian political contexts. By the analysis of Egyptian workers' movement, Beinín tried to modify SMT through determining various dimensions on the emergence and trajectory of a labor movement in a relatively authoritarian and resource-poor context. In particular, he argues that there are six major factors decisive in the course of labor mobilizations in Egyptian context: 1) the importance of threats as opposed to opportunities in the formation of a social movement and collective action; 2) the possibility of a collective action and a social movement in a resource-poor and an authoritarian context; 3) the role of local networks in the course of local mobilization but the inability of those structures to build up a national movement; 4) the distinctive effect of political change on urban intelligentsia compared to workers; 5) the continuing relevance of class; and 6) the determining role of workers in expanding the repertoire of contention (2011, pp. 181-2). Beinín's framework is helpful not only showing the fact that the case-specific and country-specific factors play a greater role in determining the roots for contentious activity than it's assumed but also illustrating the issue that the analysis of a social

movement which is grown up in a relatively resource-poor and threat-induced environment is more complex than is usually thought.

In particular, metal storm shows us that it's possible to witness a multi-dimensional protest making in which both opportunities and threats may act in the course of mobilization in a relatively resource-poor and an authoritarian political economic system. Second, the closed and corrupted nature of formal organizational structures within the sector is more likely to lean workers to search for alternative paths in the course of organization. In practice, workers were defiant against the incumbent labor union, Turkish Metal Union, and were more likely reluctant towards other two major labor unions prior to mobilization. Thus they were well aware of the need for building their own mechanisms for achieving their demands and goals at the end. Third, the irregularities that metal storm includes were very decisive in affecting the outcomes in different forms. In other words, the relativity of outcomes both individual and collective levels recalled for the complexity of configuring the emergence and evolution story of the movement. All in all, the eruption of such a mass movement entailed rethinking of basic assumptions of existing social movement theories.

#### 4.2.1 How did Metal Storm emerge?

As I mentioned above, the eruption of metal storm was both related to the opportunities and threats which are created by the shifts within the existing equilibria prior to mobilization. While noting the importance of threats in the mobilization process unlike the opportunity-focused cases, I should also add that the relationship between opportunities and threats are intertwined for most of the time. To put it

differently, as Goodwin and Jasper (see Chapter1) suggested, the mobilization of the wildcat strikes in 2015 necessitates to consider case-specific, actor-specific, and context-specific factors. In particular, while some of the prior developments were practically against the workers' interests, or threatens the rights of them, those disadvantaged situations were successfully transformed into new opportunities in action.

For instance, most of the protest participants were pointing out the unsatisfactory nature of the last group collective agreement signed in December, 2014 between Turkish Metal Union and MESS. About this collective agreement process, TM was mostly accused of being passive and even pro-employer to the extent that it did not oppose the attempt of MESS to extend the duration of collective agreement from two to three years. For most of the workers that participated in this research, the extension of group collective agreement's duration in 2014 pivotally served as a positive leverage despite its negative nature in the course of evolution of a collective consciousness against the trade union and MESS. To exemplify what workers think about this time extension, a worker H from Ford gives us a clear point of view:

We had a collective agreement signed in 2014. In that agreement, the time duration extended from two to three years and this caused a high level of discontent among workers at that time. I say this as if I remember it like yesterday because people were talking more about this issue than the low level of wage increase. People were saying to each other that we got a low level of wage increase and in addition to it, it is for three years. This definitely caused people to create some groups in the factory and go away from Turkish Metal at that time. I think that if the duration was not extended, we would possibly not see these protests. (Interview conducted by the author, 22.11.2017)

Similarly, despite the negative attitude of JDP, January 29th strike of United Metal Workers Union and subsequent developments seems like to be influential on

the labor union selection process of ZF Sachs workers. More specifically, the extra protocols that are signed between United Metal Workers Union and certain companies during that period looks like to be seen as a positive effort by the ZF workers. On this issue, Ğ summarizes the situation as such:

“We had been hearing the gains of United Metal Workers Union. They managed to get extra money in some agreements. And we told our friends that we’d been signing the same agreement but we were getting lesser than them. This was also effective for us.” (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019)

After the first days and months of the new year, another critical development came in April, 2018. In April, 2018, the Bosch workers got a new collective agreement after a prolonged process of struggle. Normally, Bosch company is also a member of MESS, thus, supposed to abide the group collective agreements being signed between trade unions and MESS. But, during the previous collective bargaining process in 2012, Bosch workers collectively attempted to change their unions and participated in United Metal Workers. This attempt was not welcomed by the Bosch employer and workers were forced to go back to Turkish Metal Union. In this process, a collective agreement corresponding to the period between 2012 and 2014 could not be signed. Therefore, the Bosch company and Turkish Metal Union preferred to sign a special agreement for the period between 2012 and 2017. After this special contract, other workers, predominantly from Renault and Tofaş, started to raise the demand of a similar contract as Bosch workers got since the conditions of Bosch agreement seemed fairly better than the former one signed in December, 2014.

At the same time, the sign of Bosch agreement in a different manner caused a sense of erosion of rights among workers. The sense of erosion of rights is increased when the TM’s repressive nature was violently crystallized at May, 5, 2015. At that

day, some group of workers from different factories met at the garden of a mosque in Bursa Industrial Zone to resign collectively from Turkish Metal to show their determination. Immediately after the workers got together, according to the news and the reflections of workers, some people, including TM officials and police, attacked on the workers and hurt some of them. After this violent reaction of TM, the protest formation process had been accelerated by the mass resignations from TM centrally in Bursa and other regions. In sum, the perception of protest participants were mainly leaning towards the idea that the existing labor regime has been heavily taking their rights away from them even sometimes in a repressive manner.

In retrospect, the emergence story of metal storm is composed of new opportunities and threats which are created in the existing labor regime. Moreover, those new openings and risks are more likely to be valued vis-a-vis how they are framed by the workers. Finally, this form of cognitive capacity of workers are seemingly as a result of the resource-poor environment of which the metal storm arised out. In this resource-poor environment, the positive perception of opportunities and threats were much more significant than it was perceived by the earlier social movement scholars. In addition to it, a relative success in framing the threats as a leverage at the same time forced the workers to search for the most convenient organizing strategies for the mobilization.

#### 4.2.2 The mobilization of Metal Storm: Informal networks and limits

To make the new opportunities viable for the resistance, it was also necessary to find a way to express the needs and necessities in the best form. For this purpose, the informal ties of the workers played a crucial role in the course of mobilization. The

informal networks were almost the only choice for a sustainable protest making process for the workers due to belief among them that existing trade unions or any counterparts do not have neither ability nor credo to represent and defend their interests and rights. In this regard, the metal storm organizationally differed from the classical assumptions of RMT.

Unlike the McCarthy and Zald's observations, the case of metal storm does not rely on the movement entrepreneurs, professional movement organizations, or previously existing bases. As it is depicted by the research participants, the protests were mainly against the hegemonic, even despotic for some cases, practice of Turkish Metal Union (TM). Therefore, for most of them, the capacity of TM to represent the workers' rights and interests were questionable. Furthermore, a significant portion of the workers were also reluctant to participate in other existing unions –prominently Steel Workers Union and United Metal Workers Union- for various reasons. In these circumstances, the worker protests were mostly lack of any formal or professional movement organization and movement entrepreneurship. Instead workers relied on their friendship, local networks, and social relations coming from their daily experiences at the workplaces.

Regarding the role of interpersonal networks at the workplaces, ZF Sachs workers argue that their close friendship and seniority played an important role in the resistance against Turkish Metal and in protecting their advantages later on from potential assaults of both employer and the TM. In concrete, worker D from ZF Sachs pointed out that they were 450 people at the beginning of strikes and the youngest worker among them was at least 4-5 year old worker at that workplace (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019). To put it differently, worker D

believes that their smallness and seniority helped themselves to build trusty relations during the protests. In addition to it, worker R from ZF Sachs focuses on the irony about Turkish Metal's anti-labor position. According to him, Turkish Metal Union deserves the biggest piece of pie to the extent that workers were simultaneously getting closer via the increasing delegitimization of Turkish Metal (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019).

Despite the different level of organizing capacities among factories, it is generally observed that workers at the factory level managed to create alternative representative committees to the existing trade union structure. For some factories, these committees were more than a single central committee. Renault workers were one of those who managed to found more than a central committee and went further to organize unit-based committees at the factory level. According to a pioneering figure from Renault, İ, workers were organized as such:

At the beginning, there was a group consisting of 8 to 10 people in the factory, where approximately 5000 people are working. Moreover, there were couple more groups with the similar sizes around the factory. None of those groups was linked to each other. Everybody was trying to do something. But, we were not experienced. Thus, we learned on the way. After a while, we learned that it is necessary to have a representative per a department. By this way, we intended to immobilize some people. At the beginning, we were fumbling. When we decided to select a person per each department, we went further and decided to select representatives from each shift, each team within the shifts. At that time, I also participated in the committee. (...) With the foundation of more than a hundred subcommittees and general committee, there occurred a mechanism which represented 70 percent of the workers at least. (Interview conducted by the author, 24.1.2019)

There were also limits in founding an organized movement for the workers within the protest wave. The coordination across and within the factories were not satisfying for some participants. This was due to lack of experience and a clear

leadership governing the mass action. For those who argued that the communication among the metal workers were not as high as it was assumed, the protests arose out of a spontaneous action which made them unprepared in the sense that there were chaos in terms of sustaining the collectivity among workers. To illustrate the deorganism between different branches of protests, it will be useful to analyze the relationship between Tofaş and Renault workers which are considered as the epicenter of the protests at the beginning. From the point of worker B from Tofaş, there was not a single unity within Tofaş workers during the protests. What is more, the selection of Steel Workers Union by Tofaş workers and the United Metal Union by Renault workers signifies the limited coordination between two of them:

In fact, we had only three options to select: one, the existing union Turkish Metal Union; second, Steel Workers Union; and third, United Metal Workers Union. At that time, there were few other small unions which were not allowed to be authorized in a company due to constitutional restrictions. TOMİS had not been founded yet. We chose the Steel Workers Union. Actually, DİSK was perceived as ‘communist’, ‘terrorist’, ‘PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) supporter’. This was about Tofaş. In addition, Renault workers picked United Metal Workers Union. Indeed, it shows the lack of communication and unity between Tofaş and Renault workers. If both of them chose the same union, either one of the existing ones or a newly independent union, it would be different now. (Interview conducted by the author, 20.1.2019)

In this sense, it is more accurate to trace a more reluctant approach about the intentionality and cognizance of movement participants as Gamson and Meyer (1996) suggested. They argue that activists are generally not calculating the likely prospects for a successful mobilizing or a broader policy reform. They only try and sometimes manage to involve in a broader public (cf. Meyer and Minkoff, 2004). Essentially, the leaders within the movement were approximately consisting of 10 to 15 year-workers. Despite this youngness, the leading cadre seemed like very adaptive

to the foundation of new informal networks during and after the protests. For instance, worker T from Arçelik LG describes the whole process with regard to very political references which are actually limited in the rank-and-file:

Our attention was obviously changing the existing trade union, Turkish Metal. But, first of all, we needed to sustain the organization and consciousness between us. After that, we were aware the fact that the selection of trade union would not be that much important as long as we keep unified, conscious, and organized. In this sense, it's not true to simplify the process as releasing from Turkish Metal Union to participate in United Metal Workers Union. (Interview conducted by the author, 25.1.2019)

This positive cognitive consciousness was even seen in the rank and file members of protests in several cases such as ZF Sachs. This was probably due to ZF Sachs' peculiarity in the sense that ZF Sachs workers was the only group which managed to send out Turkish Metal Union and replaced it by another labor union for the sake of their interests. With regard to this successful transition, worker Ğ from ZF Sachs explains his transformation after the new union came to factory as such:

I was not used to involve in activities such as struggling for justice, law, rights, solidarity etc. Now, I even quarrel my shift supervisor. These are not corresponding to bullying. I tell that 'just a second, you tell something but, let me ask my union representative if it's written in law as you tell'. I only show my consciousness about my rights and interests if necessary. (Interview conducted by the author, 8.1.2019)

But, it is also indicated that a credible amount of workers did not develop a clearly distinctive intentionality or cognizance towards the protests and thus, blamed by some of the movement participants not putting sufficient effort on building the solidarity among themselves. For understanding the tension between leaders and rank-and-file and different levels of cognition among workers, I want to highlight one of the leading figure's expression from Renault. Worker N, with a sad mood, explained one of his memories belonging to post-storm era at his new workplace:

We changed other people's lives. But, our lives were difficult. I started working at another company after a while. Somebody came and thanked me. He told me that 'may God bless you. By your effort, we got a significant amount of money'. In return, I quipped him and told that 'you got extra money. At the same time, you left us alone'. At that time, many of the factories started working and we (meaning Renault workers) were left alone. They justified me. Indeed, there were very difficult days for us. Some of us were closed to get divorced. Some of us had psychological problems. Some of us had economic difficulties. If you ask whether I am regretful, I can say maybe. But, if it happens again, I will reinvolve in. There were some leaders at Renault, who would participate such things even if it was not beneficial for them. Because, people knew that they were used like slaves. In many workplaces, the unions are taking advantage of workers unawareness about what is happening around them. All of the unions are pro-employer unions. Is there any union who defends workers' rights? We thought that United Metal Workers would do so. But, we realized that it is also not different. (Interview conducted by the author, 24.1.2019)

In sum, while it's certainly true to say that metal workers were aware of the need for alternative paths for organizing before, during, and after protests, it's still not correct to assume that there is a coherent, consistent, and systematic form of cognizance for building it. This is mainly related to their youngness and the limits in building cross-factory bridges among workers. As a result of these limits, the outcomes of that wildcat strikes varied at the factory level. In the next section, I will try to dive into the question why and how it varied.

#### 4.2.3 What is the result? Success? Failure? Or what?

As mentioned above, it's been acknowledged by the workers that there was no single framework and trajectory of the insurgency. Therefore, the influence of metal storm varied at the factory level. For instance, while ZF Sachs workers at least achieved the goal of sending TM out of the factory and replaced it by the United Metal Workers Union successfully, the rest did not manage to do it in a smooth and successful

manner after the protests. What does this variety tell us? Why does the metal storm vary in terms of movement outcomes and influence from factory to factory? For answering such questions, it will be helpful to draw the movement's trajectory in a cross-factory level.

While defining the strike wave in 2015, we have already argued that it's a counter-hegemonic movement to break up with the long-lived story of commodification of labor and the coercive nature of hegemonic partnership between MESS and TM. To trace the movement success in terms of its influence, Polanyi's (2001) theory of counter-movement may give the architecture of our analysis. But, as Burawoy (2003, p. 231) argues that although Polanyi gives us a general outlook to the concept of counter-hegemony in theory, he lacks the acknowledgment of the obstacles it must face. In this sense, it is necessary to draw a more political approach to the counter-hegemonic movements. To have a more parsimonious account, it is better to delimit the reasons either related to the internal structure of the movement and the external factors affecting the movement.

#### 4.2.3.1 Internal dynamics of contention

According to social movement theorists, there are three critical processes playing influential role in the process of movement formation and protest making: attribution, social identification, and leadership (Kelly, 1998, pp. 29-30). First, it is indispensable for workers to accuse an agency for their problems instead of valuing them as uncontrollable and irrevocable forces or events. Second, the aggrieved individuals need to identify themselves as a distinct group who has different interests and values from the agency that is blamed as the sources of their problems. Third, it

is also helpful to remind the fact that both attributions and social identities are socially shaped by the activists and leaders (Fantasia, 1988; Gamson, 1995; Klandermans, 1997).

When we look at these processes, it is possible to encounter with some uncertainties. Although the protests were sharing common demands emphasizing a wage increase (or a new collective agreement) and the dismissal of TM from the factories, attempts to build a centralized movement were not welcomed enthusiastically. This was due to the differences in interest definition and identification of themselves as social power and the outgroup that they are challenging. In particular, while some of them put TM as the main actor which defected the existing labor relations, some other was trying to emphasize the prolonged partnership between TM and MESS. Similarly, for some workers, the economic recovery of their conditions are mostly sufficient to demand whereas the redefinition and restructuring the ongoing labor regime is necessary to protect their interests and rights in the future. For instance, Metal Workers Association (MİB) was trying to get all workers together and coordinated to pursue for a more centralized and unified movement against TM and MESS. But, most of the workers were reluctant for that project due to various reasons. In concrete, İ from Renault argues that this was also due to MİB's negative image on conservative and nationalist workers:

“Metal Workers Association (MİB) was organizing the cross-factory networks in Bursa. But, workers were also having their own networks apart from MİB's involvement. Actually, workers were not fully favor of walking with MİB and but they were getting together by its help. This was due to the fact that MİB was followed up by the police and workers were reluctant about the top of MİB. As you (me) know that we have a lot of nationalist workers and these workers are usually admiring the police and give importance to what they say. In practice,

all workers were more inclined to care about their own factories.”  
(Interview conducted by the author, 24.1.2019)

Workers were not only different in pursuit of common goals but also had quite different and interesting stories in terms of individual participation. One of the most interesting stories within my worker interviewees was belonged to İ from Renault. As I mentioned previously, İ was one of the leading figures at Renault. For such a leading figure, we would assume a more conscious or more planned participation story to the protests. But, it was not like that. In short, İ explained that his participation was more about the unintended consequences of his career plan at the factory:

For example, I was not there at the beginning. I came after. Some people went away when the protests were getting bigger. They believed that it's too much for what they are doing. Meanwhile, some other people disagreed with them and said that 'No, if we are doing it, we should do it in this way or that way.' Then some people replaced by the new ones.(...) I was not at there at the beginning because I was planning to be a white-color worker at the factory. If you have a college diploma and have worked for at least five years, you are allowed to take an exam for being a white-color worker. And I took it and were waiting for its results. I was fighting with my chief and said to him that it was my right to be selected as white-color but you did take somebody else. Since I was waiting for the new appointment, I was not even aware of how the workers organized at the beginning. Later, when friends came me and said that if somebody is supposed to represent us in our department, that person should be you. In return, I could not reject it and participate in the committee. (Interview conducted by the author, 24.1.2019)

As I quoted from İ, workers were mainly differing in terms of individual expectations and collective purposes. Hence, a single or corporate form of attribution and social identification is not something which can be expected from those people in practice. In addition to the uncertainties in attribution and social identification among among the workers, the protests were lack of a single and unified leadership both at the factory and cross-factory level. Normally, the role of leadership in the

course of mobilization is documented by the social movement scholars as that the leaders –either formal or informal- are supposed to raise the sense of injustice about the certain problems among the workers and increase the level of group cohesion in the process of social identity building (Fantasia, 1988; Kelly, 1998). But, in the case of metal storm, it's widely observed that the movement leaders were frequently disagreeing on some vital issues such as the determination of the strategy and tactics of the protests. For instance, leader cadres of the protests were having different point of view about the future of movement in terms of under which organizational form the workers will continue to work. At this point, an active member of the protests from Ford, worker E, explains the lack of single leadership at the workplace level as such:

At the factory, there were different groups who were prone to continue working with non union or a newly independent one as well as replacing the existing union with other major alternatives (either Steel Workers Union or United Metal Workers Union). Most of us preferred to participate in United Metal Workers Union at the beginning. We knew that United Metal Workers Union was not the best but better than the others. At least, it has the capacity to take benefits for workers when they bargain at the table. There were also a group thinking of Steel Workers Union. We told them if it came, it would likely be a shadow of TM. The idea of founding an independent union was also on the table. Just think that there are long-lived unions which have a difficulty in surviving due to threats driving from the system. In this circumstances, it is not guaranteed that workers will believe you. Look! How many members does TOMIS have now? (Interview conducted by the author, 19.3.2019)

In retrospect, the metal storm was composed of workers who were plural in the course of attribution, social identification, and determination of leadership processes. For some cases, this kind of plurality may seem to be positive. But, it seemingly served as a negative factor during the protests. More specifically, the uncertainties in the course of mobilization look like to impede the transition of the

movement from insurgent moment to the institutional moment. Obviously, the internal factors were not only ones which prevented a such change. External factors related to the balance of power in the sector and state attributed issues were also critical in the conflict resolution process.

#### 4.2.3.2 Balances of power in the sector and state-attributed issues

To configure the balances of power in the sector, it is necessary to draw a macro-historical and political economic approach. In the metal sector, there are two basic motivations for the investors to convince in entering the Turkish market. On the one hand, the level of wages are lower than the standards in the advanced capitalist countries. On the other side, the production relations are also determined via political factors. It's been argued that there is an autocratic unionist practice in the sector by the institutionalization of the new regime in 1980s by military dictatorship (Nichols, Sugur, and Demir; 2002; p. 43).

In general, it should be seen that Turkish Metal is not only supported by MESS but also individual employers. In this regard, it can be argued that Turkish Metal and MESS has a partnership in coercion (Kocer, 2007, p. 262) relation at both sectoral and workplace level. In sum, partnership in coercion represents the interests of employers and trade unions while neglecting the interests of workers. Such a relationship may occur in an environment where there is a job insecurity and anti-union attitude. Moreover, employers demands due to their market position, the lack of internal democracy of unions, and the competition among the labor unions in the sector help to establish a partnership in coercion relation between employers and trade unions (ibid, p. 266).

State attributed issues also served a negative factor from the point of laborers. We have already presented the neoliberal, anti-labor, and authoritarian tendencies of Justice and Development Party in labor relations. To specify the role of JDP and the state in the resolution process of the crisis in favor of capital owners in 2015, we can look at the traditional perception of JDP over the strike actions. During JDP period, 16 labor strikes have been postponed. Among them, 7 of 16 strikes happened in the state of emergency period (Evrensel, 12.1.2019). What is more, Erdogan declared that they had been pursuing for the welfare of capitalists over workers during the state of emergency period recently by preventing workers going on strike against capitalists (Cumhuriyet, 12.7.2017). In those 16 strikes, 4 of them was belonged to metal sector. In addition to general anti-labor tendency of JDP, it is clearly seen that JDP has no tolerance when an uncontrolled class-based collective action occurs in the landscape during its entire rule between 2002 and 2019.

In parallel to this attitude, JDP firstly involved in the conflict prior to metal storm in January, 2015. When United Metal Workers Union went on strike not to accept the three-year contract that is enforced by MESS, the council of ministers delayed the union's strike the day after the strike started due to the classical reason that the strike may disrupt the national security. In Turkish context, delaying a strike means to ban it. Moreover, when the metal storm erupted, some of the cabinet members including Ali Babacan and Faruk Çelik argued that the timing of the strikes was 'meaningful' and the purpose of it to damage the national economy (Bianet, 20.5.2015; T24, 20.5.2015). The most revealing stance against the labor mobilization came from the president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2016. At the Women Workers Convention of Turkish Metal Union, Erdoğan explicitly claimed that some people

provocated the workers in Bursa. When we think of the place where Erdogan made this speech and the meaning of his claim, it is not difficult to predict that Erdogan not only showed his support to Turkish Metal Union by participating its convention but also delegitimated its rivals as well as dissenting laborers.

Essentially, JDP served a continuation trend in dismantaling the workers' power in favor of the capital before, during, and after the metal storm by various techniques ranging from banning the metal workers' strike to ideological and political support giving to existing establishment forces in the sector. If it is legitimate to speculate about the future of protests, it can at least be said that the uncertainties within the workers despite the formation of common demands seem like to prevent the movement from challenging the ideological, political, and legal attacks of the employers, Turkish Metal, and the state. However, the dynamism and spontaneity of the protests forced the hegemonic coalition to mediate the accumulation anger through controlled and appropriated forms of reforms in the subsequent years. In the concluding chapter, the contemporary situation in the sector and the lessons taken from this strike wave will be presented in light of previous discussions.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE POST-METAL STORM AND LESSONS LEARNED

#### 5.1 The aftermath of metal insurgency

Although we deduced that the protest waves in 2015 could not reach the institutional moment and be impeded at the insurgent moment, it has not stopped the hegemonic partners thinking of securing and renewing traditional working regime through controlled and selective mediations. The establishment were well aware of the fact that the system had no credit in the eyes of workers although their protests were more or less pacified in 2015. On the other side, workers who were still working at the factories were pointing out the fact that despite the fact that they stepped back and accepted the reentrance of TM into the factories, they could be much more aggressive and resistant if TM and employers did not satisfy their interests in the next collective bargaining process. In sum, when the next group collective bargaining period for 2017-2019/20 came up, both parties –workers and the hegemonic partners– had two different purposes. The former’s aim was to raise their economic well-being and social conditions via the threat of collective power of itself whereas the latter focused on preventing any disruption in the economy to cause further problems more than that is experienced couple years ago.

While the meetings continue, MESS General Secretary, Özgür Barut, announced their ‘red lines’. According to Barut, the three-year contract, the principle of equal pay for equal work, and the principle of continuity on the determinance of premium amounts (Hürriyet, 28.11.2017). According to a union officer from MESS, MESS have already been pursuing for the principle of continuity in determinance of

premiums. In addition, she points out that the previous contract was signed for three years. For her, the equal pay for equal work principle is also crucial to sustain the equality within the sector (Interview conducted by the author, 17.5.2018). In accordance with the 'red lines', MESS offered 3.2 per cent wage increase for the first six months. Due to wide range of difference between MESS and the labor unions, bargaining process could not be finished up during the first 60 days. Therefore, an arbitration process started. Although MESS increased its offer for twice, labor unions did not find those offers enough for the workers. Then, each union announced to go on strike at the beginning of February, 2018. Meanwhile, MESS announced a lockout in the workplaces. In light of these developments, JDP government banned both strike and lockout for 60 days due to the claim that national security of the country is going to be threatened if metal workers go on strike (Evrensel, 26.1.2018).

In this atmosphere, a last attempt from MESS came up. After a very tough bargaining process, MESS offered a new wage increase. According to the last and accepted offer, workers got 24 per cent wage increase for the first six months. This increase did not cover the increase in social aids. In this sense, workers also got extra increases in social aids. Moreover, the contract was signed for two years (Evrensel, 30.1.2018). About this positive result, statistical data shows that workers' insistence on the struggle for their demands is more likely to change MESS' attitude during this process. For instance, United Metal and Turkish Metal are seen as the champions of organizing worker protest in 2017 (Emek Çalışmaları Topluluğu, 2018). In a similar sense, a union officer from United Metal Workers Union interpreted the active attitude of Turkish Metal and Steel Workers Union as a reaction to the results of metal storm in 2015. According to him, if they did not listen to deep wave, the whole

system would be collapsing (Interview with Interview conducted by the author, 25.5.2018).

In general speaking, when we think of the unique characteristics of this bargaining process, we need to recognize that this collective bargaining process seems like to represent more than a collective contract. First, the active behavior of workers during the bargaining process has shown the fact that MESS can step back from a gained right for itself. In this sense, the new contract was two-year length. Second, it is also shown that any attempt for the violation of right to strike cannot provide an advantaged position to employers. Third, it is also proved that the militant behavior of workers may potentially enforce trade union leadership to listen rank-and-file. In this regard, Turkish Metal's high rate of protests during this process should be interpreted as an outcome of the positive behavior of its members. Overall, 2018 group collective agreement is more likely to reflect the impacts of metal storm over the employers, Turkish Metal, and the state.

## 5.2 What do the strike waves tell us?

In this research, I want to emphasize that a labor mobilization need to capture both revolutionary and reformist aspects in action to make itself flexible and persistent in the process of achieving its goals. To put it in a different way, I argue that the diminishing legitimacy of global neoliberalism should necessarily be countered by both economic and extra-economic aspects for the laborers and others. Fortunately, it is pleasure to configure that the case of metal storm contributes this theoretical view and has multi-dimensional aspects in itself. In this sense, I argue that the nature of strike waves in 2015 can be categorized as both Marx type and Polanyi type that both

offensive and defensive aspects are intertwined within the protest making and unmaking process.

While posing the identity of labor mobilization in such abstracted and general sense, the contingencies in the course of mobilization and influence process are also acknowledged. In the case of metal storm, we have shown that despite the unity in core demands which are an incredible wage increase through a new labor contract and sending TM out of the factories to represent workers on their own, strike participants differed in terms of attribution, social identification process. Hence, these uncertainties caused leadership to be fragmented and even polarized for some instances. As a result, the protests had resulted in various ways for different factories.

For that, Eli Friedman (2013) provides us a helpful framework to deconstruct the counter-hegemonic movements into two different moments: insurgent moment and institutional moment. According to Friedman (2013, p. 296), the insurgent moment refers to the stage when the workers and others are negatively affected by the marketization process and engage in non-regularized contention whereas the institutional phase starts when the decommodification of labor is institutionally actualized at the social level and the working class is politically recognized by the state authority. By using Friedman's conceptualization, we reach the general argument about the success of metal storm like that the strike wave in 2015 failed to gain institutional benefits and by and large, the employers did not fully recognize the wave coming from below. In other words, the protests were stopped at the insurgent moment and could not fully be translated to the institutional moment.

In light of these peculiarities, this project allows us to draw some instructive remarks on the future applications of social movement theory. After the first

founding works of resource mobilization and political process theories are given during 1970s and 1980s, both approaches have been reformulated via the critical contributions to the theory by various scholars. The main focus of the critiques were questioning how the regime change will affect the structures of political opportunities and constraints for political process model, and the role of informal organizational frameworks in the course of mobilization for resource mobilization theory. In this sense, it will not be accurate to anticipate to find an 'invariant model' applicable to all social protests and movement in the globe.

Moving in line with this general argument, it should be said that posing the general aspects of structure of political opportunities in the formation of metal storm does not really answer issue-specific, constituency-specific, and historically specific questions. In the process of determining the sets of factors leading a protest, it is necessary to consider the issue- or constituency-specific factors (cf. Meyer and Minkoff, 2004) besides drawing the general elements of political systems. This is important because it will eventually give the analysts an opportunity to widen the scope of political opportunity model and adapt it into other contexts than advanced industrial societies. In concrete, the specification of the question, "political opportunities (or threats) for whom and what will enable to build a more parsimonious, more applicable, and more concrete conception of political opportunities. What is more, siding POS as a historically specific, case-dependent thing refers to not only the contingency of movement's own political program, demands, and the type of struggle (Bourdreau, 1996) but also the nature of opportunity being shaped in relation to the sources of common grievances, discontent, and threat experienced by challenging group (Alimi, 2009).

In particular, the metal insurgency arised out of a discontent against the pro-employer stance of Turkish Metal Union. Thus, unlike the classical labor mobilizations the laborers had to challenge both trade union and employer which made them search for alternative solidarity channels for organizing. In addition to it, the role of threats were also influential both motivating and deterring the individuals to participate in the protests. Under these relatively resource-poor environment, workers chose to facilitate their organizational capacity through informal and interpersonal networks which are centrally based on the practice of solidarity and trusty relationships. In light of this fact, the case of metal storm shared the critiques to the resource mobilization theory to the extent that the existence of a formal organization, movement entrepreneurship or a credible financial support backed by a formal agency is not the necessary ingredient of contentious protest making process.

But, the pursuit of building alternative solidarity channels through informal organizational frameworks such as worker committees does not seem sufficient to transcend the existing institutional and normative barriers put by the capitalist hegemony. For that purpose, as Piven and Cloward (1977) indicate, workers needed to have a cognitive transformation both in consciousness and in behavior. From the whole research experience, it seems more accurate to deduce that the cognitive liberation of the protest participants varies. While some of them, predominantly leaders, values the protests as both economic and extra-economic phenomenon, there is a significant number of people in the rank-and-file prone to delimit the scope of metal storm in the economic sphere. This, in turn, may also cause some workers to act upon their self-interests rather than raising collective interests as the primary goal of the movement. Theoretically speaking, the workers were moving towards

founding 'cultures of solidarity' (Fantasia, 1988) to build a counter-hegemonic movement against the hegemonic, capitalist, and authoritarian establishment in the sector. But, they could not complete this transformative action and could not overthrow the status quo at the end.

As it is mentioned previously, this protest making process was a learning experience for the workers at the same time. During the protests, the durability of worker committees, and other organizational frameworks, necessitated a cognitive transformation embraced by the workers as described by Piven and Clowards (1977) before. Due to the relatively inexperienced group of workers whom are oppressed by the hegemonic partnership of MESS and TM for several decades aftermath of 1980 military coup, it is not easy to conclude that the attribution process of changing political opportunities by the strike participants was a fully cognizant process as some scholars ascribes for social movement activists (Tarrow, 1996, 1998). Instead it seems like that both employers and workers were not well-prepared for this open fight at that time. In other words, the relatively positive content of Bosch agreement, and consequently brutal reaction of TM to some metal workers in May 5 gathering in Bursa provides us to think that certain events naturally caused a certain form of perception among the workers about the opportunities and threats prior to mobilization.

In general, It is going to be hyperbolic assumption that workers insurgency in the spring and summer of 2015 is a disruptive challenge to the existing powers –the presidency of Erdogan and the rule of JDP, the continuing and pernicious effects of national and international economic organizations such as IMF and World Bank. By and large, the workers mainly raised their bread-and-butter demands and attempted

to redesign the existing structure in the sector in favor of their rights and interests. But, it will be also not correct to narrow down the scope of this massive riots into merely bread-and-butter level. Workers clearly showed that they can become a more decisive and effective political actor if they manage to get organized in a more professional and experienced way for the future.

In this sense, it is seen that despite the critical attitude of workers against the existing political economic framework in the metal sector, they were more likely to behave in a relatively deorganized form in the course of achieving their goals. In this process, it is not correct to accuse of the workers by merely acting their economic interests. Instead it is more accurate to acknowledge the ‘double pressure’ of the bourgeoisie and the state. While workers had been threatened by getting laid off via MESS, the ruling government JDP openly intervened in the conflict resolution process in favor of the bourgeoisie. In addition to these external factors, workers were also not experienced in terms of governing such chaotic situations and lack of any clear leadership and economic program. In sum, both the repressive external factors and insufficient maturity of the workers internally limited the success of movement.

However, the workers gained some leverages in various cases. For instance, ZF Sachs workers managed to dismiss TM and redesign their working relations at the workplace in a more positive way. Not only they sustained the foundation of worker committees and chose to participate in other labor union –United Metal Workers Union, BMİS- after a year than the protests in 2015. Another gaining came after two and a half year later than the emerging date of the protests in January, 2018. In January, 2018, MESS signed a relatively high level of collective contract with the

unions and stepped back from the insistence of three-year contract. By this contract, metal workers significantly increased their wages by 26 percent and managed to shorten the length of the contract from 3 year to 2 year. To sum up, it is neither objective nor correct to side the experience and impacts of metal insurgency either successful or unsuccessful collective action. Instead we should not forget that the transition from insurgent to institutional moment –especially in nondemocratic states- is occurring by the accumulation of countless, anonymous, and seemingly apolitical instances of social struggle.

## APPENDIX A

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Explanatory Note: In this research, in-depth interview questions varied with regard to different stories at the factory level. In this sense, I will share general questions that are asked for each worker participant as well as nuanced ones that are relevant to their distinctive cases.

General Questions For All Workers:

1. Can you tell me about yourself? (*Kendinizden bahsedebilir misiniz?*)
2. How long have/had you been working in the metal sector? (*Ne kadardır metal sektöründe çalışıyorsunuz/çalışıyordunuz?*)
3. Have you ever worked in a factory where a labor union is authorized? (*Daha önce bir işçi sendikasının yetkili olduğu bir fabrikada çalıştınız mı?*)
4. Did you participate in metal storm? (*Metal fırtınaya katıldınız mı?*)
5. (If the answer is yes to the previous question) What were the individual motivations for you to get involved in such a protest? (*Öyle bir protestoda yer almanızda ne gibi kişisel motivasyonlar vardı?*)
6. What were the basic reasons which precipitated metal storm for you? (*Size göre metal fırtınayı doğuran sebepler nelerdi?*)
7. What were the general demands of the metal workers at that time? (*O dönem işçilerin genel talepleri nelerdi?*)

8. What were basic gainings of the workers after protests? (*Protestolar sonrası işçilerin temel kazanımları nelerdi?*)
9. What were the losses of workers after protests? (*Protestolar sonrası işçilerin kayıpları nelerdi?*)
10. During the protests, there were no organization behind of you as a support. How did you manage to organize yourself in practice? (*Protestolar sırasında arkanızda sizi destekleyecek herhangi bir kurum yoktu. Kendinizi örgütlemeyi nasıl başardınız?*)
11. I know that you tried to found worker committees during the protests. What were the basic functions of those committees? (*Protestolar esnasında işçi komiteleri kurmaya çalıştığınızı biliyorum. Bu komitelerin temel fonksiyonları nelerdi?*)
12. What were the basic difficulties of running these worker committees? (*Bu komiteleri sürdürmenin temel zorlukları nelerdi?*)
13. What were the basic topics that were being discussed in these committees and what was your decision-making procedure? (*Bu komitelerde tartışılan temel konular nelerdi ve komitelerde karar alma prosedürünüz neydi?*)
14. During the protests, did you try to establish cross-factory committees? If so, what were the difficulties of that building process? And what were the advantages of it? (*Protestolar sırasında fabrikalararası komiteler kurmayı denediniz mi? Eğer denediyseniz bu kuruluş sürecinin zorlukları nelerdi? Ve o sürecin avantajları nelerdi?*)
15. What has changed in the sector after the metal storm? (*Metal fırtına sonrası sektörde neler değişti?*)

16. What has changed in your life after the metal storm? (*Metal fırtına sonrası sizin hayatınızda neler deđiřti?*)
17. Do you have something else to add? (*Eklemeđ istediđiniz bařka bir řey var mı?*)

Factory Related Questions for workers:

1. Was there any factory-based reasons leading to that protest wave? If yes, what were they? (*Direniře yol ačan fabrika bazlı sebepler var mıydı? Varsa, nelerdi?*)
2. Prior to protests, how were you solving your problems related to workplace? (*Protestolar öncesinde iř yeriyle ilgili yařadığınız problemleri nasıl çözüyordunuz?*)
3. How was the relationship between Turkish Metal and the workers at the workplace before the protests? (*Protestolar öncesinde iř yerinde Türk Metal ve iřçiler arasındaki iliřki nasıldı?*)
4. How was the relationship between Turkish Metal and employer at the workplace? (*İř yerinde iřveren ve Türk Metal arasındaki iliřki nasıldı?*)
5. What kind of difficulties did you encounter while sending Turkish Metal out of the factory? (*Türk Metal'i fabrikadan gönderme sürecinde ne gibi güçlüklerle karřılařtınız?*)
6. After sending Turkish Metal out of the factory, what was the motivation for the workers to choose staying nonunionized at Arçelik LG? (*Türk Metal'i fabrikadan gönderdikten sonra Arçelik LG'de iřçilerin sendikasız kalmayı seçmesindeki temel motivasyon neydi?*)

7. What was your plan after sending the union out? (*Sendikayı gönderdikten sonra planınız neydi?*)
8. What was the response of the employer against your demands and movements? (*Sizin taleplerinize ve hareketlerinize karşı işverenin tepkisi nasıldı?*)
9. After the protests, what has changed at the workplace? (*Protestoların ardından iş yerinde neler değişti?*)

Questions for Union Representatives and Union Officers:

Note: The interviews with union representatives and union officers were done right after signing of the 2017/2018 group collective agreement and thus the questions were not only related to that protest and but also searching for any indicators showing if there is any relationship between that process and metal storm.

Questions for Labor Union Representatives and Officers:

1. Can you introduce yourself? (*Kendinizi tanıtabilir misiniz?*)
2. What is your job and how long have you been doing that? (*Mesleğiniz nedir ve ne kadar süredir o mesleği yapıyorsunuz?*)
3. How did you run the agreement process? (*Sözleşme sürecini nasıl yürüttünüz?*)
4. How did your members contribute to this process? (*Üyeleriniz bu sürece nasıl katkıda bulundu?*)
5. How was MESS' behaviour in this process? (*MESS'in bu süreçteki tavrı nasıldı?*)

6. In group collective agreement processes, MESS is always bargaining with three major labor unions respectively. What do you think about this bargaining system? (*Grup toplu iş sözleşmesi süreçlerinde MESS her zaman üç büyük sendikayla sırasıyla pazarlık yapar. Bu pazarlık sistemi hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?*)
7. How do you value this process from the point of your union? (*Sendikanız açısından bu süreci nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?*)
8. By which aspects is this process distinguished from the previous ones? (*Bu süreç eskilerinden hangi açılardan farklılık gösteriyor?*)
9. What kind of things did you do to solve blockages during the bargaining process? (*Bu süreçte tıkanıklıkları çözmek için ne tür şeyler yaptınız?*)
10. How do you value other labor unions' attitudes in this process? (*Bu süreçte diğer işçi sendikalarının tavırlarını nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?*)
11. What kind of factors were effective to lead you to sign the agreement at the last moment? What was the motivation for you to sit on the table again? (*Sözleşmenin son anda imzalanmasında ne gibi faktörler etkiliydi? Sizi tekrar masaya oturtan motivasyon neydi?*)
12. In 2015, metal workers went on a series of strikes due to complaints about the previous collective bargaining agreement. Was there any impact of those protests on this last bargaining process? (*2015'te metal işçileri toplu iş sözleşmesi hakkındaki şikayetlerinden dolayı bir dizi grev gerçekleştirmişti. Bu süreçte o protestoların etkisi oldu mu?*)

13. How would you evaluate this bargaining process for the future bargaining processes? (*Gelecek pazarlık süreçleri açısından bu süreci nasıl değerlendirirdiniz?*)
14. Do you have something else to add? (*Ekleme istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?*)

Questions for Employer Association Officers:

1. Can you introduce yourself? (*Kendinizi tanıtabilir misiniz?*)
2. What is your job and how long have you been doing that? (*Mesleğiniz nedir ve ne kadar süredir o mesleği yapıyorsunuz?*)
3. How did you run the agreement process? (*Sözleşme sürecini nasıl yürüttünüz?*)
4. How did your members contribute to this process? (*Üyeleriniz bu sürece nasıl katkıda bulundu?*)
5. How was labor unions' behaviour in this process? (*İşçi sendikalarının bu süreçteki tavrı nasıldı?*)
6. In group collective agreement processes, MESS is always bargaining with three major labor unions respectively. What do you think about this bargaining system? (*Grup toplu iş sözleşmesi süreçlerinde MESS her zaman üç büyük sendikayla sırasıyla pazarlık yapar. Bu pazarlık sistemi hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?*)
7. How do you value this process from the point of employers? (*İşverenler açısından bu süreci nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?*)

8. By which aspects is this process distinguished from the previous ones? (*Bu süreç eskilerinden hangi açılardan farklılık gösteriyor?*)
9. What kind of things did you do to solve blockages during the bargaining process? (*Bu süreçte tıkanıklıkları çözmek için ne tür şeyler yaptınız?*)
10. What kind of factors were effective to lead you to sign the agreement at the last moment? What was the motivation for you to sit on the table again? (*Sözleşmenin son anda imzalanmasında ne gibi faktörler etkiliydi? Sizi tekrar masaya oturtan motivasyon neydi?*)
11. In 2015, metal workers went on a series of strikes due to complaints about the previous collective bargaining agreement. Was there any impact of those protests on this last bargaining process? (*2015'te metal işçileri toplu iş sözleşmesi hakkındaki şikayetlerinden dolayı bir dizi grev gerçekleştirmişti. Bu süreçte o protestoların etkisi oldu mu?*)
12. How would you evaluate this bargaining process for the future bargaining processes? (*Gelecek pazarlık süreçleri açısından bu süreci nasıl değerlendirirdiniz?*)
13. Do you have something else to add? (*Ekleme istediğiniz başka bir şey var mı?*)

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEWEE LIST

Explanatory Note: The names of interviewees are not real to protect their privacy and security. For worker interviewees, the companies which they were working for during the metal storm is noted how they noted. For the rest of the interviewees, the current positions, jobs, or statuses are given as they explained to me.

- 1- A, worker, Ford Otosan
- 2- B, worker, Tofaş
- 3- C, union representative, Steel Workers Union
- 4- D, worker, ZF Sachs
- 5- E, worker, Ford Otosan
- 6- F, worker, Ford Otosan
- 7- G, worker, Tofaş,
- 8- Ğ, worker, ZF Sachs
- 9- H, worker, Ford Otosan
- 10- I, worker, Renault
- 11- İ, worker, Renault
- 12- J, labor union officer, United Metal Workers Union
- 13- K, worker, Ford Otosan
- 14- L, labor union representative, Turkish Metal Union
- 15- M, labor activist
- 16- N, worker, Renault

- 17- O, worker, ZF Sachs
- 18- Ö, worker, Tofaş,
- 19- P, employer association officer, MESS
- 20- R, worker, ZF Sachs
- 21- S, worker and labor union representative, TOMİS
- 22- T, worker, Arçelik LG
- 23- Ü, labor union officer, United Metal Workers Union
- 24- Y, labor activist
- 25- Z, worker, Arçelik LG

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