WORKER RESISTANCE AND MOBILIZATION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO FEMALE-DOMINATED TEXTILE FACTORIES

by

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

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ABSTRACT

This study is based on fieldwork conducted in two female-dominated textile factories located in Izmir, Turkey. These factories are similar in many aspects: size of the enterprise, composition of the workforce, technical division of labor, export orientation, annual revenue, location and working conditions. The only apparent difference is that one has recently developed resistance through collective mobilization while the other has not displayed any visible acts of resistance yet. In an effort to explore the processes leading to this difference, my main question is how and why different resistance patterns emerge among women working in similar workplace settings. This question is particularly important in understanding the diversity and contradictions in women's experiences of resistance, with a comparative framework and revisiting the links between female labor and neoliberal restructuring. I make two arguments: First, I argue that absence or presence of managerial discourse of family, and the relations based on gender, kinship, ethnicity, and neighborhood may have contradictory roles in the emergence or non-emergence of collective resistance. The contradiction is that what becomes an obstacle for one group of workers emerges as a resource for the other group. Second, I explore the links between worker dependence and increased debt for the low-income groups and argue that workers 'different perceptions of fairness in their working conditions can both allow or diminish the emergence of collective action. This discussion draws on a three-level analysis that consists of workers' particular experiences, wage structure in the textile industry, and the recent political economic context marked by financialization and neoliberal populism. Therefore, this study incorporates as well as contributes to a variety of literatures which include worker mobilization, organization and workplace studies, social movements, and feminist political economy.

Keywords: worker resistance, worker mobilization, neoliberalism, gender, kinship, ethnicity, family discourse, cynicism, household debt, financialization, neoliberal populism

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, İzmir'de bulunan ve kadınların yoğunlukta olduğu iki tekstil fabrikasında yapılan saha araştırmasına dayanmaktadır. Bu fabrikalar birçok açıdan birbirine benzerlik göstermektedir: işletmenin büyüklüğü, işgücünün yapısı, teknik iş bölümü, ihracata yönelik üretim, yıllık ihracat gelirleri, faaliyet alanları ve çalışma koşulları. Görünürdeki tek fark ise bu fabrikalardan birinde işçiler sendikal örgütlenme yoluyla direniş göstermişken diğerinde gözle görülür direniş biçimlerine rastlanılmamasıdır. Bu farka yol açan süreçleri incelemek amacıyla, bu çalışmanın temel sorusu şu şekildedir: Benzer koşullarda çalışan kadın işçilerde nasıl ve neden farklı direniş biçimleri ortaya çıkmaktadır? Bu soru, kadın emeği ve neoliberalism tartışmalarının kıyaslamalı bir analizle yeniden değerlendirilmesi ve aynı zamanda kadınların direniş deneyimlerindeki farklılıkları ve çelişkileri anlayabilmek açısından oldukça önemlidir. Bu çalışmanın iki temel argümanı vardır: Birincisi, işyerinde aile gibi olmak söyleminin var olup olmaması ile toplumsal cinsiyet, akrabalık, etnisite ve komşuluk ilişkileri kolektif direnişin gelişip gelişememesi sürecinde çelişkili roller oynayabilmektedir. Buradaki temel çelişki, bir fabrikada direnişe engel teşkil eden söylem ve ilişkilerin diğerinde direnişi teşvik edici bir durum olarak ortaya çıkmasıdır. İkinci olarak, alt gelir grupları için artan hanehalkı borçlarının emek bağımlılığı üzerine etkisi incelenerek, işçilerin çalışma koşullarıyla ilgili neyin adil olup olmadığını konusundaki farklı yaklaşımlarının direniş açısından farklı etkiler doğurduğu öne sürülecektir. Bu tartışmada üç faktör dikkate alınmıştır: işçilerin deneyimleri, tekstil sektöründe ücret yapısı ve finansallaşma ve neoliberal popülizmin belirleyici olduğu yakın dönem ekonomi politik konteksti. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma örgütlenme, endüstriyel ilişkiler, toplumsal hareketler ve feminist ekonomi politik gibi birçok literatürü bir araya getirmeyi ve bunlara katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: işçi direnişi, örgütlenme, neoliberalizm, toplumsal cinsiyet, akrabalık, etnisite, aile söylemi, eleştirel olma durumu, hanehalkı borcu, finansallaşma, neoliberal popülizm.

To the memories of Umut and Ayça…

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is based on fieldwork conducted in two female-dominated textile factories in Turkey. One has recently developed resistance through collective mobilization while the other has not displayed any visible acts of resistance yet. Its main question is how and why different modes of struggles emerge in the factories having similar workforces, producing the same products, using the same technical division of labor and operating in the same social settings. This question is particularly important in understanding the diversity in forms of domination and resistance in the seemingly similar companies operating in the same chain of global production which is associated with exploitation of cheap, docile and insecure female labor. Moreover, it helps us explore that what can be identified as a resource or obstacle in worker mobilization may take different meanings and be contradictorily utilized by the actors engaging in production politics. Furthermore, it also invites us to revisit the links between the organization of the labor market and key developments in the political economic context, and workers' dependence and constitution of shop floor relations without losing our focus on contradictory processes and experiences at the workplace settings. In this comparative analysis, my research goals specifically include the questions of how workers' subjectivities are constructed at the workplace; how they experience relations of domination and/or

empowerment based on the intersections of gender, kinship, ethnicity and class; what kind of resistance strategies they can develop; what their resources for and obstacles to developing collective resistance are, and how these processes are connected with broader political, economic and social structures.

The main argument is twofold: First, I argue that a discourse of "company as a family" can serve as a resource for collective mobilization when used by workers, while it at the same time can paralyze the emergence of workers' collective response through "keeping it all within the family" when used by managers. Here, the composition of the workforce based on familial, kinship and ethnicity ties along with neighborhood factors play a key, but also contrary, role in the emergence or non-emergence of collective resistance. Second, exploring the links between worker dependence and increased household debt for the low-income groups, I argue that workers' different of perceptions of fairness in their working conditions—the difference that derives from the politics of production—may also alter resistance patterns in a way that can allow or diminish the emergence of mobilization. This draws on a three-level analysis that consists of workers' particular experiences, wage structure in the textile industry, and the recent political economic context. Therefore, this study incorporates as well as contributes to a variety of literatures which include worker mobilization, social movements, organization and workplace studies, and feminist political economy.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The recent political economic landscape has further sparked the discussion on organized labor activity, worker mobilization or resistance patterns. The economies

of the world have undergone significant transformations within the last decades, mostly characterized by the processes of neoliberalism, globalization and financialization (Epstein, 2005). In this period, welfare policies have been considerably reduced in scope while market-oriented policies have gained importance, and international economic and financial transactions have substantially grown. This transformation has represented a further shift in power relations between capital and labor in favor of the former (Stockhammer, 2010). Some of the implications of this altered reality are clear: polarization of income distribution, increasing rates of poverty, weakening of organized labor and transformation of labor market. The last components are particularly important for the purposes of this study. The restructuring of world economy in accordance with neoliberal policies entailed new production systems and the recomposition of the labor force. Along with liberalization reforms, the main tendency in the developing countries has been the shift from import-substituting industrialization to export-led growth strategy. This accompanies the substantial declines in wages, emergence of atypical and insecure forms of employment, expansion of informal sector, and increased use of domestic and international subcontracting. Due to the increasing global competition that pressures for seeking low production costs, firms have increasingly relied on cheap labor in the export-oriented industries. With these concerns at hand, the most likely to be hired have become the vulnerable groups that constitute the lower segments of societies. This bears important implications for women in the labor market with respect to the export-oriented industries in which they are highly concentrated.

Of these industries, the manufacture of textile and garment is leading the way in establishing a truly global production process (Collins, 2003, 2007; Fernandez-Kelly and Sassen; 1995; Fuentes and Ehrenreich, 1983; Moghadam, 1999; Ngai, 2005). Operating on a highly competitive global market, this sector has been characterized by a feminized labor force, low levels of union activity, insecure and marginalized labor (Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a: 26; Jenkins, 2012: 2-6). However, this does not mean that workers are not resisting and organizing. Many scholars challenged the view of women as a source of cheap labor with nimble fingers and explored different forms of resistance and mobilization strategies in a variety of countries including Mexico and Malaysia (Ong, 1987; Ong, 1991), India (Jenkins, 2012), Turkey (Fougner and Kurtoglu, 2011) and China (Lee, 1995). This study, drawing on a close comparison of two-female dominated export-oriented factories, contributes to this debate by bringing attention to the complex processes and contradictory implications involved in worker mobilization and resistance patterns contextualizing it within the larger political economic developments. With many features shared in common between the two factories, this comparative analysis allows me to examine the significance of certain key factors that distinguished them, as one workforce mobilized against their conditions, while the other did not.

1.2 The Factories

Mobitex and Cyntex (pseudonyms) are two similar workplace cases that allow for a comparative analysis to investigate the resources and obstacles in collective resistance, and different patterns. I ensured that the two factories were similar in size of the enterprise, composition of the workforce, the extent of problems

their workers had, the area where they operated, and the industry with which they affiliated. The only apparent difference was that one of them mobilized whereas the other did not.

Cyntex is managed by the male members of a Kurdish family migrated from southern Turkey in the late 1980s. The eldest member, who has engaged in textile manufacturing since the early 1990s, established Cyntex textile company in the Izmir organized industrial zone in the beginning of the 2000s. He is officially the main employer of the company however his other brothers are also identified and respected by the workers as if they are employers. As indicated in the company website, theirs is a “success story” starting with a small business which then would turn into a large enterprise producing for export and manufactures for global brand names. The company does not produce for domestic market and it is totally export-oriented working with foreign customers. Among the international companies for which the company produces are Ralph Lauren, Puma, Timberland, the Inditex Group (Zara, Bershka, Pull & Bear), Blanco and Prenatal. These are considered among the leading brands marketing their products all around the world. As it produces for the globally known western companies, Cyntex takes place among the most successful textile exporting companies in the region. In 2013, the Aegean Textile and Apparel Exporters' Association awarded Cyntex a golden placate given to those whose export revenues averaged from 20 to 100 million dollars a year.

Mobitex Textile is established in the late 1980s and has been operating in the industrial zone since the beginning of the 1990s by Jewish employers. Mobitex had also other textile plants in Turkey as well as in the Middle East. However, the recent

political and social turmoil in the Middle East compelled Mobitex to close down the plant there together with the additional one in Turkey. Although Mobitex has undergone a significant downsizing, it continues to be one of the most exporting textile manufacturers in the Aegean region. Cyntex and Mobitex produce for almost the same international companies and their export revenues range in the same interval. As in the case of Cyntex, Mobitex has also taken its place among the most exporting textile companies in the region, whose export revenues range between 20 and 100 million dollars a year.

Although Mobitex has a relatively longer past than Cyntex in the textile sector, they produce in the same range for the same multinational companies, provide employment in similar levels, operate in the same zone, and their revenues range in the same interval. The composition of workforce and working conditions are also quite similar in these factories. The Kurdish women constitute the largest share in the total number of workers employed in each factory. These women usually live in close or same neighborhoods. According to the workers in both factories, among the most problematic working conditions are the long working hours, forced overtime, toilet use monitoring, restrictions on communication among workers, very short work breaks, various kinds of humiliating treatment and harassment, hostile attitudes towards union activity, and insufficient health and safety measures. With shared characteristics in common, these cases provide a resourceful context for comparative analysis displaying important similarities in terms of size of the enterprise, employment, location, social setting, industry, working conditions, and composition of the workforce.

In February 2012, some workers at Mobitex initiated a campaign to establish a union at the workplace. After the conditions materialized (i.e. the idea of mobilization gained sufficient support among the workers), workers decided to visit the textile union, and complain about their conditions to the company's most important customers H&M and Inditex, the two largest global clothing retailers. This case has not attracted media attention or any support from domestic or external feminist organizations, which might be the case with many similar mobilization practices. After a period of five months, workers satisfied the legal competence to establish a union and conclude a collective agreement at the workplace. However, it should be noted that bringing the issue to the attention of labor unions and retailers was not an overnight success. Rather, this required extensive efforts as well as taking risks on behalf of workers during their mobilization.

1.3 The Fieldwork

I conducted two months of qualitative fieldwork which included interviews with workers, managers and union representatives. In this research, person-to-person interviewing is the primary technique through which the data is produced.[1] I conducted 24 semi-structured in-depth interviews that lasted from 2,5 to 1,5 hours with female workers from the two factories, with 12 respondents for each. With a few exceptions, most of the respondents are Kurdish who live in same or close neighborhoods. Of the Cyntex workers,[2] four of them are single, one is widowed and the others are married with one or two young children. These women are young or in

[1] See Appendix 1 for interview questions

[2] See Appendix 2 for Cyntex interviewees' demographics

their middle ages, ranged from 25 to 35. Similarly, of the Mobitex workers,[3] three of them are single, and the others are married with one or two young children. Only one of them is relatively older, in her 40s and second marriage, and has two children graduated from high school. Others are younger and aged between 25 and 38.

Apart from workers, I interviewed the human resources managers of the two factories in their offices, which lasted one hour for each. I also arranged meetings with the union representatives most particularly with the head of the textile union responsible for Mobitex, which equal to three visits and interviews that lasted more than five hours in total. In one of the visits, I participated the union meeting with Mobitex workers as a passive observer. The interviews with Mobitex workers were held either in the meeting room of the union building or in their houses, and all of these were tape-recorded and taken notes by obtaining the workers' consent. The interviews with Cyntex workers were held either in their houses or in the coffees fairly far from the workplace area. None of the Cyntex workers consented to be tape-recorded and I took handwritten notes during the interviews. Since they worked very long hours, I was flexible about the timing of our meetings. Collection, transcription and analysis of data were held on an ongoing basis taking into account the emerging themes which might raise new questions for research. This also helped me organize the data into coherent categories and analyze them without waiting for the end of data collection.

I conducted interviews with workers to find out their actual and daily experiences at the workplace with an aim to reveal the complex processes that lead

[3] See Appendix 3 for Mobitex interviewees' demographics

them to different resistance patterns. In the interviews with the mobilized workers, I particularly asked questions to understand the premobilization process that caused them to develop a collective response, which included the questions about their main complaints, workplace relations among workers and between managers and workers, the facilitative factors and obstacles in their mobilization, their feelings, motives and experiences in the process. In addition to standard questions about working conditions and background, most of the questions were aimed to understand what were their resources and obstacles in organizing, how they initially framed their issues, how their grievances gained a collective character, and why they engaged in collective mobilization. The interviews with the non-mobilized workers were aimed to understand their experiences at the workplace, the processes that served as an obstacle to collective mobilization and the possible alternative patterns through which they developed resistance to their conditions.

My research espouses the principle of reflexivity in social science. Contrary to the positivist approaches claiming the rationality of theory, a growing number of scholars have drawn attention to the reflexive model of science which requires dwelling in theory, or in other words, participating in the world that we study (Burawoy, 2009; Harding, 1987; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002). No research is context-free, but the way the scientists approach to the context effects are diverse. As opposed to those who challenge the "noise" by minimizing, controlling or measuring the context effects, Burawoy argues that "context is not noise that disguises reality but reality itself" (2009: 37). The researcher's engagement is the key here to emphasize the dialogue between the observer and the participants, which brings the road to knowledge. That any social researcher cannot be independent of their social

positions, their ambitions, their gendered experiences, and their political commitments incorporates "subjectivity, partiality, bias and political commitment" in all research (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 46, 49). This means the recognition of the researcher as not "an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests" (Harding, 1987: 9).

One of the problems of doing social research especially of those necessitating face-to-face interaction between researcher and participants is how to represent or conceptualize the diversity in women. It is the researcher who has the power to represent the ideas or lives of the researched as similar or different in terms of any divisions among them (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 105). Investigating what is similar and different is of concern for the researcher because "different relationships of similarity and difference affect how people constitute, manage and resist particular boundaries, and with what agency and consequences" (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 112). It is again the researcher who includes some voices and excludes others, and who authorizes the research text and selects the data. Since "data do not speak for themselves", the key point in representing others across differences is therefore the process of interpreting data—the process from which the knowledge is produced (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 115-118, 160). Reflexivity stands as a principle to which feminist researchers are widely applied to deal with the difficulties derived from representing others across difference, and implicit or explicit power relations on social research and this enables researcher to identify power relationships and examine their effects in the research process.

I acknowledge that this research and the methods I use are not unaffected by

my personal interests deriving from my feminist commitments. I also recognize that I am, as a researcher, responsible for the voices that are "excluded" or "included" during the research. Women-to-women research by no means guarantees that researcher shares common interests with researched. However, that I worked in my own society, even in my own neighborhood, decreased the difficulties rising from the research process. Still, as a researcher, I was aware of my position vis-à-vis the researched, differentiated by class, ethnicity, education, or generation. Apart from the human resources managers and the union representative, all of the participants in my research were working-class women predominantly of Kurdish origin. Less-structured research strategies are especially helpful to avoid establishing a hierarchical relationship between interviewer and interviewee (Finch, 1984: 72). Therefore, I preferred semi-structured interviewing to allow for conversational and two-way communication between researcher and participants, and women seemed very enthusiastic about talking to a researcher about their experiences.

During my research, I also paid particular attention to ethical issues in order to minimize potential effects. Informed consent, confidentiality, deception and risk of harm are the most common ethical issues that any researcher needs to address (Bryman, 2008: 118). I obtained (verbal) informed consent from all of my respondents by carefully explaining the scope and purpose of the research as well as any potential risk of harm which might affect participants. I declared my true identity as a researcher and the research did not entail deception. To continually make clear what the participants were consenting to and affirm their participation in research, I considered consent "ongoing" and "renegotiated" throughout the research process rather than given as a once and one for all at the start (Miller and Bell, 2002: 53).

Informed consent included negotiations over the issues of confidentiality and anonymity with ensuring that I and research participants had the same meanings over these terms. For participants and workplaces that did not wish to be identified I used pseudonyms at all stages in research and avoided providing any information which might lead to identification. As a result, all of the participants except for the head of the textile union asked to be given pseudonyms. Interviews with workers were held in private and in places other than workplaces to protect their confidentiality especially when they were asked to express their ideas about their relationships with their employers and colleagues. Despite their informed consent given prior to the research, they might not anticipate how they would feel during the interview. For participants to enjoy their right to withdrawal and to give them the opportunity to request this, I explicitly asked their consent before continuing with the issues which might be considered sensitive (Oliver, 2010: 56). This also helped minimize any potential risk of harm to participants which might arise during research process.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

In an effort to explore the complex processes that lead workers to collective resistance or paralyze the emergence of critical viewpoint from which a challenge to organization may be raised, this study proceeds in the following manner: The next chapter provides a literature review drawing on a variety of approaches which include the theories of mobilization and resistance, social movements as well as organization and workplace studies with a particular focus on gender. In this review, my aim is to analyze the control-resistance and structure-agency dynamics, identify

different resources of and obstacles to workplace resistance, and draw attention to the contemporary definitions of resistance.

Third chapter contextualizes the cases within broader political economic developments with a particular focus on the neoliberal policies associated with the post-1980 period. I specially analyze the main trends in the transformation of labor market, gendered patterns in this transformation, the role of female labor in the textile and garment industry, and women's unionization patterns. My aim here is to point out the importance of connecting microprocesses to the broader social and economic structures.

I analyze the fieldwork data in the fourth and fifth chapters. The first part focuses on the role of gender, family, kinship and ethnicity in the organization of work, labor process and workers' resistance patterns. Cyntex and Mobitex differ in worker recruitment: the former recruits workers especially through familial and kinships ties while the latter promotes a professional approach. Still, the fact that Kurdish women are widely employed in the textile and garment sector makes these companies similar in terms of workforce composition. Despite this similarity, however, their impact on resistance patterns differs between two companies. The family as a discourse and the family in practice prevail at Cyntex, thereby disabling the critical viewpoint from which a challenge to organization may be raised. Yet, the Cyntex family is not without problems because there are divisions and competition among workers especially over the issues of "who and how gains more". Although some workers develop cynical attitudes, their resistance through cynicism does not translate into a collective response rather dissolves within the "family". In contrast,

the community characteristics in terms of neighborhood, ethnicity and gender enable Mobitex workers to collectively mobilize against their conditions. Further, the absence of family-like relations at the workplace becomes the dominant motive when workers frame their grievance whose source is attributed to the management.

The second part of the data analysis explores how workers' perception of fairness develops around company's policy on payments and alters the resistance-control dynamics at the workplace, by analyzing the wage structure in textile and situating workers' experiences in broader political economic trends. As one of these trends, I link the increasing levels of household debt with workers' dependence which is at the same time altered by workers' different perceptions of fairness. Household debt that has increasingly been financed through bank loans and credits is especially an issue for the low income working families in Turkey. Cyntex is known to be a factory where workers can earn higher money through excessive overtime and bonus pays. The common description of Cyntex as the textile factory to offer the highest incomes and its association with "indebted" workers combine to increase control over labor thereby diminishing the potential for collective resistance. Mobitex workers' experiences with "money" differ from those of Cyntex workers. These workers already appreciate the company's policy on payments and do not refer to wage-related issues in identifying the process which led them to mobilization. Rather, their concern was to be able to use their right to reject overtime when the managers forced them to work longer hours. This is related to their perception of unfairness that derives from the managerial attitudes towards them, and it parallels to their demand for family-like relations at the workplace. Although the increasing rate of financial liabilities is a growing concern for the low-income families, the

experiences of Cyntex and Mobitex workers bear different implications for collective resistance, making the former more dependent on their jobs despite the difficult working conditions. After data analysis that is broken into two chapters, I offer the conclusive remarks on the cases in the final chapter.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL DEBATES: WORKER RESISTANCE AND MOBILIZATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the main theoretical debates about workplace resistance and mobilization. In the era of neoliberal globalization, two developments have been particularly important for the working classes (Harrod and O'Brien, 2002: 11). The first is the proliferation of precarious labor markets. The dismantling of labour laws and regulations that provided some protection against arbitrary hiring and firing have led to reductions in protection and welfare of the masses. The new regime of capital accumulation has been less dependent on permanent employment and, rather, promoted the emergence of new production systems, atypical forms of employment, marginalization of work and weakening of organized labor. The second, but parallel, development is related to the changing patterns in the composition of the workforce. In this process, the employment of socially disadvantaged groups has increased as they fill the low-paid and insecure positions in the labor market. In the last three decades, therefore, structural changes in the global economy have posed serious challenges to organized labor.

While the discussion on the future of labor unions has long been on the agenda, a growing number of scholars have questioned the simple correlation between unionization and worker resistance. They argue that not only forms of domination have changed with neoliberal restructuring, but also workers' responses have altered accordingly (Devinatz, 2007; Dick, 2008; Lee, 2007; Ngai, 2005; Ong, 1991). In order to explore the variety in workers' oppositional practices, these studies have paid particular attention to construction of labor-capital relations at the point of production. Other scholars point out the importance of developing alternative conceptualizations of power and resistance at the workplace, which most frequently goes hand in hand with debates over structure-agency dualism (Fleming and Sewell, 2002). The question of "subject" has been brought into the agenda in these debates in an effort to explore how people come to understand and interpret their circumstances, how they internalize, reflect upon and react against them (Burawoy, 1979; Knights and McCabe, 2000; O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001; Ezzy, 1997). Accordingly, subjectivity is identified as not fixed or pregiven but part of an ongoing process which is also not unaffected by social, political and economic structures (Ortner, 2005). However, rather than putting all the emphasis on structural formations, many scholars point out the importance of a component of agency in all social subjects. Bringing "agency" back into the analysis of workplace power relations, scholars also put particular emphasis on the complexity of control-resistance dynamics. They contend that not all oppositional worker practices are emancipatory but rather they can also contradictorily result in the further domination of labor (Fleming and Spicer, 2008; O'Doherty, 2009). Although to what the extent and in what forms workplace resistance can challenge the capital-labor relations are

open to discussion, mobilization literature offers useful insights about the processes that enable or disable workers transform into collective actors. Among the resources or obstacles that several studies have explored are the emergence of collective identity (Isler, 2007; Kenny, 2007; Lee, 2000), ideologies of family, motherhood or kinship (Cairoli, 1998; Krauss, 1993; Scott, 2005), emotions and collective framing of particular issues (Benford and Snow, 2000; Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a, 2012b; Goodwin et al., 1999), and cynicism (Fleming, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2003).

The category of gender has especially taken its place within these debates. Feminist scholars in the field of worker resistance and mobilization have pointed out the gendered dimensions in the construction of production politics as well as women's challenges to that control. A growing concern raised by many scholars in this field is that women are not ready receipts of structures deriving from the "happy marriage" of capitalism and patriarchy (Salzinger, 2004). Rather, they are the agents that develop strategies of resistance, either collectively or individually, and either in overt or covert forms (O'Doherty, 2009). This does not mean a total denial of social structures with overemphasizing female agency. The point is to draw attention to the ways as well as diverse experiences through which microprocesses connect with broader structures (Baier, 2010; Brewer et al., 2002).

In light of these arguments, the aim of this chapter is to bring together a variety of approaches in the resistance and mobilization literature. First, I focus on organization and workplace studies that explain the dynamics of power and resistance. Second, based on feminist literature, I specifically focus on gendered dimensions of resistance at the workplace. Third, I analyze contemporary debates on

resistance that extends the definition of resistance from formal and traditional forms to hidden, informal, diverse and quotidian practices of subversion. Finally, deriving from a number of empirical case studies in literature, I put forward different resources or obstacles that enable or constrain development of resistance through mobilization at the workplace.

2.2 Power and Resistance at the Workplace

The unresolved tension between agency and structure has been the backbone of any debates on power and resistance at the workplace. Beginning from the second half of the twentieth century, oppositional workplace practices have attracted growing attention from a wide range of disciplines in social sciences. Based on different theoretical models, scholars have used a number of terms to refer to workers' practices with subversive purposes and effects, which include "resistance", "dissent", "secondary adjustments", "antisocial behaviour", and "misbehavior" (Collinson and Ackroyd, 2005). In this section, I introduce contemporary perspectives on the notion of worker resistance, which include the theories of labor process, post-structuralism and feminism. Although there are some overlaps between these approaches, their differences are more recognizable and sharper than their similarities, which distinguish them as separate in literature.

2.2.1 Labor Process Theory

Perhaps the most influential studies of resistance and power at the workplace are produced by labor process theory along with Foucauldian studies of the workplace. This theory emerged in reaction to the managerialist organizational behaviour literature that considers worker resistance a serious harm to the harmony

of the organization and thus is accused of helping in the construction of compliant workers in the name of long term effectiveness of organization (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999). Following a totally different orientation from managerialist organization behavior, labor process theory contends that there is essentially a structured antagonism between capital and labor, out of which worker resistance arises (Braverman, 1974). Taking this structured antagonism as their departure point, orthodox accounts initiated by and following Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (1974) have been concerned with the objective organization of the workplace, that is, the "objective" characteristics of the capital in terms of skill, class and occupational structures. However, this emphasis on objectivity has given birth to successive debates within LP theory. In direct relation to the debates over the extent of managerial control and worker resistance, one central issue in the LP literature derives from the tension between structure and agency (Ezzy, 1997). It is this unresolved tension that has led to emergence of various theoretical positions within LP studies (O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001).

The main argument against the initial and structure-oriented approaches in LP theory has revolved around their neglect of workers opposition to capitalist domination. Therefore, the issues of workers' agency, subjectivity and resistance have come to take their place in discussions of the labor process by constituting the core of the critique of orthodox LP analysis (Burawoy, 1979; Ezzy, 1997; Knights, 1990; Knights and McCabe, 2000; O'Doherty and Willmott, 2000-2001, 2001; Thompson, 1990; Willmott 1990, 1994). The studies addressing the problem of the so-called "missing subject" in the labor process point out the role of agents and the complexity of the reproduction of capitalist relations as opposed to those offered by

the earlier structuralist accounts of the LP. One significant study as such is the Burawoy's (1979) ethnography of shop floor, in which he demonstrates the role of workers' agency in the reproduction of capitalist relations of production. In *Manufacturing Consent* (1979), Burawoy explores the hegemonic organization of work enabled by workers' construction of and participation in "the game of making out" through which they generate consent to managerialist expectations of output or, more broadly, managerial control.

Another critical stance to the orthodox accounts of LP theory has been characterized by the later studies of Knights and his collaborators. Through his "linguistic turn", Knights takes his place among the critics of orthodox LP study in which the issues of agency, subjectivity and resistance are claimed to be neglected. Focusing on this undermined agenda and based on Foucauldian framework, Knights aims to challenge the traditional agency-structure binary and supports the idea that LP is primarily a discourse produced and reproduced by power/knowledge regimes (Knights and McCabe, 2000). This line of inquiry also admits "the possibility of recognizing and resisting the power-induced technologies by which we are captured" (Knights and Willmott, 1989: 554). Based on this understanding, Knights and McCabe (2000: 423) use subjectivity to refer to "the way in which individuals interpret and understand their circumstances" and it is "bound with the sense they have of themselves (identity)". As regards the problem of subjectivity, Ezzy (1997:428) also contends that most approaches within LP literature either tend to place the agent in a "passive" position vis-à-vis the capitalist structures or make it totally an "active autonomous subject" resisting these structures. In his alternative framework, Ezzy criticizes the determinism of these dualistic approaches, and rather

points out the importance of theorizing the "social processes involved in the construction of subjectivity" (1997: 428).

However, O'Doherty and Willmott (2000-2001, 2001) argue that critics of orthodox LP have not yet produced coherent and adequate arguments addressing the problem of agency or the missing subject. Underlying is that, they assess, while on the one hand anti-realist approach (e.g., Knights, 1990) completely abandons subject/object or structure/agency, some poststructuralist accounts (e.g., Burawoy, 1985) that attempt to bring the agency back in, on the other hand, are also "unwilling and incapable of thinking outside or beyond structure-agency dualism" (O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001: 461). Their main contention is that a stronger emphasis on subjectivity without abandoning the very premises of LP theory and without falling back upon the either of structure or of agency better helps understand the role of subjectivity in the mediation of capital-labor relations. O'Doherty and Willmott (2000-2001: 114) conceptualize subjectivity as "the open, reflexive, embodied quality of human agency". While criticizing structure-agency dualism, this view also challenges the overemphasizing of shop floor resistance and rather brings attention to the ways through which struggle and conflict in the labor process may support the hegemonic managerial control of organization (O'Doherty, 2009: 109).

Despite their attempts to propose a poststructuralist stance rather than an anti-structuralist one which recognizes the central tenets of LP theory but with incorporating the agency into the debate, this line of argument has also been criticized for not accomplishing what it promises. Thompson (2008) argues that O'Doherty and Willmott's efforts are nothing but the repetitive of the earlier

critiques of structuralism: lack of emphasis on the role of subjectivity in reproducing the capital-labor relations, and the necessity of understanding LP theory as primarily a discourse. These contentions, Thompson argues, fail to assess the central task of LP theory, but rather, turn it into merely a theory of subjectivity. For him, "the greatest task" of LP theory is "to develop a credible account of the relationships between capitalist political economy, work systems and the strategies and practices of actors in the employment relationship" (Thompson, 2008: 108).

Another but different line of critique along with an alternative agenda to study workplace opposition has been raised by the works of Fleming and Spicer who argue against the dualistic views of resistance and power which is too often resulted in the exaggeration of the former. Such perspectives for these scholars have a tendency to tease two inseparable worlds apart, "the diabolic world of power" on the on hand, and "the liberating world of resistance" on the other (2008: 304). What is problematic in these accounts is the implicit idea that managers are always in positions of control whereas workers essentially search for the ways of resistance against managerial control. This view leads to identify resistance as an act that necessarily bears emancipatory implications on behalf of workers. In such accounts that deterministically position the dominating managers against the dominated workers, "power is viewed as a response to resistance or even a response to the response" (Fleming and Spicer 2008: 305). However, the nature of the dynamics of power and resistance is far more complex and ambiguous than it is usually depicted. In order to better elaborate on this indistinguishable and often contradictory dynamic of power and resistance, Fleming and Spicer (2008) suggest the term "struggle". The reasoning lies in his definition of resistance that he identifies as "a manifestation of

deep-seated struggles that spring forth from collective, communicative conflicts around certain issues" (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 305).

Consequently, two main contributions of labor process studies are particularly important: bringing the question of missing subject and emphasizing the contradictions in workers opposition. Initial accounts of labor process theory have been increasingly criticized and thus developed by post-structuralist approaches within the literature. As a result, structure-oriented approaches from which the worker's agency is entirely absent, have evolved towards agency-oriented approaches in which actors in the workplace are denied to be passive recipients of social structures but rather recognized as social agents that reproduce or challenge relations of capitalist production cycling in the dynamics of power and resistance. In this view, workers are social agents that play active roles in both reproducing and challenging social relations of production. Their emphasis on the missing subject therefore allows us to better understand how workers agency participates in power relations at the workplace. The second contribution, that is the emphasis on the contradictions in workers opposition, comes from another group of scholars within labor process literature. Relying on Foucauldian approaches they challenge the dualistic view that identifies power and resistance as two separate sets of relations emerging as a reaction to one another. Rather, they emphasize, resistance is not essentially emancipatory or power is not essentially dominating because the relationship between these two realms is too ambiguous and contradictory to be analytically distinguished. Even the oppositional practices considered resistance at first glance can reproduce the relations of domination so much so that it becomes indeed a difficult task to name opposition resistance. Despite their considerable

contributions, however, this literature has not considered gender an analytical category in studying workplace and organizations. Feminist scholars challenged this gap and pointed out the importance of taking gender as a focus in analyzing labor processes.

2.2.2 Feminist Contributions

Feminist scholars in the field of workplace and organization studies address the dimension of gender and sexuality as key to understand workplace processes of power and resistance. Although feminist literature parallels the theoretical positions within labor process theory which diverge on the problem of structure-agency, feminist agenda introduced in workplace and organization studies significantly differs. In order to figure out feminist contributions, this part specifically focuses on how scholars integrate feminist debates into the dynamics of power and resistance at the workplace. The feminist literature on structure and agency that revolves around the debates on capitalism and patriarchy can be divided into three groups: the first overemphasizing the structures, the second overemphasizing the agency, and the third balancing between structure and agency.

The first group of studies is confined merely to the analysis of structural limits manifested upon women. They aim to shed light on how women's lives have been shaped in and through the interplay of class and gender, or of capitalism and patriarchy. Some representatives of such perspective are the following: For Fuentes and Ehrenreich (1983), multinational corporations together with patriarchal local cultures operate in the way that necessarily disciplines women's labor as well as doubling their oppression. Koggel (2003) similarly contends that women with the

impact of patriarchal structures become ready suppliers of low wage labor as global companies take advantage of women's disadvantages. Mies (1998), too, aims to explore the connections between sexual division of labor and international division of labor in the global economy in terms of what she calls "capitalist patriarchy".

Structuralist perspectives have been challenged by the later accounts of feminist literature contending that they undermine women's agency while putting too much emphasis on patriarchal and capitalist structures. There are three main criticisms: First, in structure-oriented approaches, the complexity of how women develop resistance against, comply with or reproduce the boundaries that surround them by both patriarchal and capitalist structures remains untouched as if there is a unidimensional relationship between the micro and macro processes. Second, this way of understanding leads to misidentification of "perfect relationship" between patriarchy and capitalism. Finally, such analyses tend to homogenize the impact of oppressions while undermining women's own experiences and various strategies of resistance in dealing with "double burden". In such a picture, women are depicted as always being acted upon but never acting. However, the critics of structuralist approach point out that women are not only oppressed and exploited at factories but they also develop forms of resistance as well as reproducing existing inequalities through complex and contradictory ways. Women workers' forms of resistance and their achievements may also differ as do their ways of oppression. It is therefore important to analyze the micro processes in which women are shaped but not necessarily determined by "unchallengeable" power of capital and patriarchal structures.

Drawing on these concerns, the second group of feminist literature has increasingly focused on the contradictory ways through which women' agency is involved in the processes of workplace power relations. One such notable research is the work of Salzinger who argues against the fixed notions of gender in global capitalism. In her ethnography, Salzinger examines four Mexican factories located in the export processing zones to figure out how managers' gendered understandings and assumptions shape the relations of production. In doing so, she demonstrates that gendered perceptions of managers may not be ultimately in the interests of capital and these preconceived notions about "cheap, docile and dexterous" third world women workers may well produce their opposite on the factory floor (Salzinger, 2004: 45). However, Salzinger's approach to workplace power relations is not without its criticisms. Although her work is important in revealing the variability in meanings and practices associated with gender, it undermines as some scholars put "the interweaving of capitalist production with the production of social identities and the many hierarchies they support" and how gender relates to class among others (Wright, 2005: 896). The missing point is how class subjectivities are constructed in relation to gender, racial or ethnic identities (Bettie, 2000: 7). As critics argue, Salzinger gives little causal weight to capitalism in analyzing how gender is produced at local level while she overemphasizes managers' subjectivities that, she thinks, structure shop floor as well as produce gender (Baier, 2010: 221). Therefore, critics of such views conclude that moving beyond a mere focus on social structures towards a mere focus on women's agency, too, brings the danger of overemphasizing of women's experiences as it denies wider structural conditions over which women are unable to exert control.

As an alternative to the perspectives privileging either structure or agency over one another, the third group of scholars in feminist literature has emerged to balance the two contested concepts. Baier (2010), bringing gender into the forefront, argues that albeit the contribution of the analyses based on discursive and performative aspects of gender regimes at the local, the issue is not only the discourses with material effects but that discursive construction itself shaped by material processes. Therefore, Baier points out the importance of understanding social reality as "multileveled and dialectical in its causal dynamics" (2010: 224). Similarly, Brewer et al. (2002) also suggest an alternative agenda for a more comprehensive feminist scholarship in understanding the agency-structure dynamics. They recognize the importance of theorizing the interplay between agency and social structure. However, in doing so, they suggest a "twofold theorizing", one is from bottom up through the everyday lives of women, and the other is from the top down through analyzing social structure and political economy. According to these scholars, once it is admitted that "social change is predicated on individual and structural realities", this could be the biggest lesson for feminist research that neglects either dimension (Brewer et al., 2002: 6).

Apart from these particular debates on the dichotomy of agency and structure, some post-structuralist feminists also contributed to the labor process analysis. Among the labor process studies, Burawoy's *Manufacturing Consent* has attracted a particular attention in feminist literature. Given that some workers resist while many others not, Burawoy's work is particularly important in exploring the questions of what are the consent creating mechanisms at the workplace and why do workers work as hard as they do. However, his study is criticized by feminist scholars for his

neglect of gender dimension in control and resistance (Lee, 1995, 1998; Ong, 1991; Salzinger, 2001). Burawoy aimed to "challenge the idea of the subjectless subject" (1979: 77). However, on the one hand, he defines shop floor subjectivities not as an "imported consciousness" but as emergent within the labor process itself and identifies relations in production as "autonomous" from the consciousness that people bring with them to the shop floor (Burawoy, 1979: 140,156). On the other hand, he also acknowledges that "external" factors such as gender and race might be of importance to what happens on the shop floor (Burawoy, 1979: 156-157). However, in doing so, he is more interested in explaining "why externally produced consciousness does not significantly affect the labor process" (Burawoy, 1979: 136). This shows, Salzinger points out, that while bringing of worker subjectivity to the fore is his strongest contribution, it is at the same time his "greatest failing" since his theoretical framework nevertheless undermines the role of many components constituting the shop floor subjectivity (Salzinger, 2001: 453).

Another notable criticism is raised by Lee (1995) who criticizes Burawoy's notion of factory regime which takes the forms of despotic and hegemonic. According to Lee, factory management may not necessarily find an interest in either form. In her ethnography of two factories in Shenzhen and Hong Kong, she explores different patterns in factory regimes operating contrary to expectations in Burawoy's formulation. Although both are relatively free from state interventions and regulations, which provides the ground for despotic regime in Burawoy's description, only the factory in Shenzhen conforms to despotic mode of control on labor. The managers of the factory in Hong Kong, on the other hand, have already taken the "advantages" of the organization of labor market so that they considered

despotism an unnecessary option (Lee, 1995: 380). While in the rural Shenzhen where migrant women are predominantly populated management regime is based on localistic ties, in Hong Kong it is based on familial relationships. It is these "localistic despotism" in Shenzhen or "familial hegemony" in Hong Kong through which the managements exploit the ties that the workers are dependent on, to control labor (Lee, 1995: 378). With these important contributions, Burawoy's notion of factory regime and his understanding of subjectivity on the shop floor have been both challenged and developed through feminist scholarship.

Feminist labor process analysis is especially important in understanding how gendered subjectivities are constructed and what kind of a factory regime emerged at the workplace. In doing so, many scholars also point out the understanding of agency and structure as relational. While privileging female agency has the risk of overemphasizing of resistance, privileging structural factors also leads to a total neglect of agency. In that sense, both perspectives are rather problematic. A "twofold theorizing" as Brewer et al. (2002) suggest provides a better understanding as it comprises everyday experiences of women and broader social structures. What happens on the shop floor cannot be independently thought of what happens at the world outside.

Having analyzed a number of approaches on power and resistance at the workplace, the next section includes the contemporary debates about the definitional scope of resistance.

2.3 Extending the Definition of Resistance

There is a long tradition of research that emphasizes the different strategies through which workers resist managerial control at the workplace. These resistance strategies initially included the most traditional, open and formal forms of collective resistance such as unions and strikes (Edwards, 1979; Friedman, 1977). However, worker resistance has also been shown to operate in more diverse and quotidian forms. These previously unexplored and neglected strategies through which workers develop resistance to managerial domination have attracted growing attention. Much of scholarly work has become highly critical of the traditional approaches. They either considered employee-employer relations constant or presented workers as totally blind or unable to resist managerial control at the workplace. The common contention in the critique of traditional approaches is that "in a context where workers are often given the stark option of 'loyalty or exit', we must look in other places to find manifestations of employee opposition" (Fleming and Sewell, 2002: 859). Drawing on this framework, this part focuses on the contemporary debates that emphasize the multiplicity of employee resistance at the workplace. In order to reveal diverse forms of resistance emerged in workplaces, scholars usually rely on empirical case studies. In several works reviewed here, scholars refer to the notion of diversity using different conceptualizations such as multiple forms of consciousness, multisided resistance, subjective resistance, livelihood struggle or diverse rational strategies of resistance.

In exploring the forms of resistance based on different forms of "consciousness" Chatterjee (2012) highlights the ways in which multiple forms of consciousness, be it class, gender or religion, simultaneously or disproportionally co-

exist in the same person. In other words, she contends that one form of consciousness may be heightened while the others are mystified at the same time. However, none of these forms are independently exist from one another, instead, they intersect and produce actually existing beings, in her case, "actually existing women" (Chatterjee, 2012: 16). Even the situations where one form is apparently dominant within women enables them to develop resistance by partially or totally getting aware of the structures of exploitation. Her main argument thus is that since there is no single form of consciousness, any awareness of certain structures of exploitation may open the possibilities for resistance.

As Chatterjee points out multiple forms of consciousness, some scholars put emphasis directly on the multiple forms of resistance (Devinatz, 2007; Dick, 2008; Lee, 2007; Ngai, 2005; Ong, 1991). Drawing on the notion of "worker as a living subject", Lee for instance stresses that "to shift our analytical focus from 'class struggle' to 'livelihood struggle' is to recognize the multiple dimensions of labor politics and agency" (2007: 30). Similarly, Ngai (2005) also draws attention to the notion of "multisided resistance". Ngai explores the identity formations of migrant worker women, who are caught in the "triple oppressions of global capitalism, state socialism and familial patriarchy" in Shenzhen, one of China's special economic zones (Ngai, 2005: 4). The main motive of her study is to reveal not only the power relations and multiple forms in dominant structures but also in workers' resistance. Avoiding simple dichotomization of resistance and compliance, "multisided resistance" can be found in very daily practices of life with various forms (Ngai, 2005: 194-195). Ngai identifies factory workers' experiences of dreaming, screaming, fainting, fighting, petitioning and going on strike all as forms of

resistance, “forming a cartography of resistance that will inevitably direct a challenge to power and control” (Ngai, 2005: 195). Ong also is one of the scholars who contend that workers' struggles and resistances are not necessarily rooted in class interests. Rather, they most often consist of “individual and even covert acts against various forms of control” (Ong, 1991: 280). In other words, resistance and struggle vary as do the control mechanisms. Dick (2008), too, criticizes the tendency of privileging some forms of resistance over the others while emphasizing the diversity in resistance, which she calls “subjective resistance” (Dick, 2008: 329). Based on a three-year research on police constabulary in rural England examining forms of resistance against sex discrimination and patriarchal power relations, Dick has come to conceptualize resistance as “refusal” on behalf of women officers’ challenge to the legitimacy of ideas dominant within the workplace. Therefore, she draws attention to the fact that “resistance does not need to be understood as intentional, nor as, necessarily concerned with what people do rather than what they say” (Dick, 2008: 339).

Devinatz (2007) is another scholar criticizing those who privilege overt forms of resistance such as union-sanctioned or wildcat strikes over the covert forms which are less visible and more indirect such as “effort bargaining, absenteeism, withholding enthusiasm, work avoidance and playing dumb” (2007: 3). He defines workplace resistance as “a rational strategy rooted in the structure of production relations adopted by workers for dealing with the irrationalities of managerial control on the shop floor” (2007: 3). Here Devinatz juxtaposes three “irrationalities”: the irrationality of the hours of work, the irrationality of discipline, and the irrationality of the pace of production (2007: 3-4). According to this perspective, workers on the

shop floor develop resistance strategies to deal with these irrationalities when either is present (Devinatz, 2007: 11). For each irrationality on the shop floor, workers utilize a variety of resistance strategies either individually or collectively. Based on the notion of different resistance strategies to rationalize the irrationality of the shop floor, Devinatz also divides workplace resistance into three specific types. The first is the pure and simple resistance used by workers to ease the work or to survive in the workplace. Such resistance is covert, either individual or collective, and not to challenge the particular managerial control but only to make the work more tolerable. "Production secrets" is one of these tactics, the secrets about production that the workers intentionally hide from the managers (Devinatz, 2007: 12). The second strategy is the political resistance used by the workers to challenge the management to abandon a specific procedure the workers are discontent with. This type of resistance tactic is overt, observable by the management, mostly collective but also individual, and to directly challenge to the managers for a particular issue on the shop floor. Wildcat strike is one example of this type of resistance (Devinatz, 2007: 13). The third and the last type is the class conscious resistance through which workers aim at broader social transformation. It is an ideological challenge not only to managerial dominance but also to the capitalist system as a whole. Such resistance rarely occurs as exemplified by a small number of historical events such as some famous general strikes (Devinatz, 2007: 13). According to Devinatz, none of these tactics necessarily develop into one another and nor that one is superior to the others because each serves distinct purposes and workers may feel more comfortable to participate in one considering the dangers of the others especially in the contemporary age (2007: 14). He believes that "pure and simple resistance will not

lead to the breaking of the iron cage of bureaucracy but it certainly enables workers to engage in 'stretching the iron cage'" (A. Prasad and P. Prasad, 2000 quoted in Devinatz, 2007: 14).

It is also worth noting some criticisms about how far the notion of resistance can be extended to include diverse forms of opposition. One such notable contention is the works of Fleming and Spicer. Although Fleming and Spicer (2008) point out the importance of recognizing covert, subtle, ambiguous and ambivalent forms of resistance, they also warn against the potential dangers that such perspective of resistance might bear. On the one hand, Fleming and Spicer (2008) celebrate Foucauldian contributions to the organization studies that especially emphasize the multiple forms of resistance rather than a Fordist image of workplace opposition as the earlier studies exclusively privileged. On the other, however, they are critical of such endeavors that arbitrarily broaden the definitional scope of resistance by moving "from seeing resistance nowhere to seeing it literally everywhere" (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 303). Another equally important pitfall of such views is also their failure to examine quotidian covert practices of resistance without taking into account broader social relations of inequality and domination (Fleming, 2005: 47).

As a consequence, despite a long-standing interest in oppositional workplace practices, there is not a common definition of resistance and power at the workplace. Scholars disagree over the extent of what counts as resistance, whether to distinguish between power and resistance, and how workers agency participates in power relations. These are the main discussions that are worth of recalling. Labor unions are considered one of the most traditional channels of worker resistance. However, they

are by no means the only forms in which workers resist the managerial control. As many studies explore, there are less visible, diverse and quotidian manifestations of worker opposition. Some scholars, however, caution against putting too much emphasis on diversity because giving any opposition the name of resistance bears the risk of neglecting broader social relations of inequality and domination. In addition, oppositional workplace practices can produce contradictory results which do not necessarily challenge existing power relations, but rather unintentionally reproduce them. Recognizing diversity in resistance but with taking into account wider social relations provides an elaborate focus on the control-resistance dynamics.

2.4 Resources of and Obstacles to Resistance

In addition to a variety of perspectives on structure-agency dynamic; subjectivity; resistance, control and power relations at the workplace, there is also extensive research specifically on the conditions that encourage or discourage workers to resist managerial domination. Through which resources are workers able to develop resistance against their domination or in what ways are they prevented from displaying one or other forms of resistance strategies? In exploring these questions, some scholars point out the importance of collective identity. This line of inquiry has shown that emergence of workplace collective identity as "exploited" or around the "communal resources" such as collective memories may either enable or disable the development of collective mobilization (Isler, 2007; Kenny, 2007; Lee, 2000, 2007). Other studies have also shown that resistance strategies have gendered implications, for instance, operating through the ideologies of family, motherhood or kinship, the resources that can either facilitate or diminish the efficacy of collective

mobilization (Cairoli, 1998; Krauss, 1993; Scott, 2005). Drawing on the social movements literature, framing and emotions have been also found to play important roles in the emergence of collective action (Benford and Snow, 2000; Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a, 2012b; Goodwin et al., 1999). Some researchers in critical management studies identify employee cynicism as another source of collective or individual resistance which can challenge or reproduce managerial domination in contradictory ways (Fleming, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Drawing on this framework, this part includes the analyses of collective identity; family, kinship, and motherhood; framing and emotions; and employee cynicism as obstacles and/or resources in workers' mobilization.

2.4.1 Collective Identity

Scholars explore different resources of mobilization that can be effective in bringing workers together around a collective identity. Isler (2007) identifies the factors that make people "organizable" along with emergence of a collective workplace identity. Examining organizability of workers, Isler particularly aims to explain why certain groups of workers succeed or fail in organizing. She defines four key factors that contribute to the workers' organizability: organizers' expectations, labor market structures, employers' actions, and workers' union sentiments (2007: 443). She explores how the first three factors correspond with the last, that is, workers' union sentiments. Beside these factors, however, "workers' own sense of workplace identity" is particularly a key component for workers to be convinced to the relevance of organizing (Isler, 2007: 444). Isler finds that workers' organizability is more likely to occur in the instances where the vast majority of workers identify

themselves as “exploited”. Furthermore, her study shows that deteriorating working conditions as a result of, for instance, long working hours, low wages and insecurity do not necessarily lead to unionization unless there is an “adequate groundwork in re-framing the collective workplace identity” revolved around the key factors listed above (Isler, 2007: 457).

In her case study, Lee finds that collective memories indeed play an important role as mobilization resources. Lee (2000; 2007: 140-153) examines the labor protests in northeastern China erupted in the late 1990s in order to discover the determinants of workers’ mobilization. Lee found that communal resources based on the collective memories of state socialism in China facilitated the mobilization of workers. Workers’ assessment of the present enabled them to make sense of their past which was, workers implied, “a time of material and psychological security” (Lee, 2007: 141). Although the narratives were not necessarily based on the actual experiences, “a constructed past” or “an imagined Maoism” promoted by the workers appeared as an effective mobilization resource (Lee, 2000: 227-8). Romanticizing the past in this case help workers frame their claims and converge on collectively shared memories of Maoist era even if their past experiences were not actually “clean” as they remembered to be.

As opposed to Lee’s study (2000, 2007) finding that communal resources based on the collective memories served as a mobilization resource, Kenny (2007) explores how the legacies can also become an obstacle for workers’ mobilization. By examining the case of South African workers, Kenny (2007: 481) contends that how to define being a worker also bears implications for collective mobilization both in

terms of sources and obstacles. As elsewhere in the world, neoliberal restructuring in post-apartheid South Africa has brought new forms of employment dividing the labor force into permanent, subcontracted and casual labor. What it means to be a worker is no longer defined by permanent work but rather evolved in "permanent casual". Unions' organizing strategies which traditionally framed around employment rights for permanent workers lagged behind the changes in employment types. This complicated the struggle of fragmented labor force while at the same time further reinforcing the divisions among various categories of workers. Therefore, Kenny (2007: 484) argues, the "abstract" notion of a worker which "emerged out of legacies of worker politics, state re-regulation, work restructuring, and workers' positions within the labor process and places of residence" became a major obstacle in workers' collective struggle.

2.4.2 Family, Kinship, or Motherhood

As another source of resistance and mobilization, Krauss (1993) and Scott (2005) explores the ties emerged through family, kinship, or motherhood. Krauss (1993), in her study on toxic waste protests in the United States by white working class, African American and Native American women activists, explores how women's traditional role as mothers becomes a resource for their resistance and how different groups of women create subjective meanings around the issue. On the one hand, motherhood and family became the primary sources that frame women's protests in the US case (Krauss, 1993: 249). However, on the other hand, "these women's protests have different beginning places" and their analyses of the issue are mediated by their subjective, particular experiences on the axes of class, gender and

race (Krauss, 1993: 259). As regards working class women, Krauss argues that ideologies of motherhood which are usually confined to private sphere may become political resources for women to develop resistance (1993: 252). The assumption underlying is that women's extended network of family and community become their "political resources of opposition" serving as a means to voice their claims. Therefore, their struggle breaks down the public-private distinction of mainstream thought, along with proving that "single issue protests are about more than just the single issue" because they directly challenge the social relations of power along the lines of class, gender and race (Krauss, 1993: 248).

Similarly, one of the questions Scott also addresses in her study is how women's position in the labor market and their familial roles may have an impact on collective action (2005: 197). Her study shows that there is not a significant difference between women and men in terms of class perception. For both women and men, work is the "major source of class identity" and it is mediated through family and kinship relations. That is to say, kinship and family play a major role in the emergence of a collective class identity (Scott, 2005: 189). They provide organizational basis for the practices of solidarity, for instance, through the concerns about their children's future as well as day-to-day survival, which is all achieved through the labor market. Therefore, what happens in the household in terms of "its goals, structure and values extends into the workplace and community through networks of reciprocity and collective action" (Scott, 2005: 172, 190). Scott also observes that gender interests are subsumed within the "broader framework of family, community and class" (2005: 172). In the process of mobilization, women neither problematized gender roles nor framed their claims around gender issues nor

used gender relations as a source of resistance. Rather, family and kinship relations prevailed over gender and served as a mobilization source on the basis of class interests.

Another study exploring how patriarchal values and meanings mediate between capital and labor with disabling resistance revolves around the notion of factory as the home and family. Cairoli, among many others, identifies capitalism not as an all-encompassing or totalizing phenomenon which blossoms local systems replicating one another, but rather, as merging with values and practices peculiar to each localities and thus giving birth to different labor processes and relations (1998: 182). Basing her argument on such line of reasoning, Cairoli's study revolves around the question of how female workers make sense of their labor on the shop floor. What she explores in her research on a garment factory is the two processes in which female workers make sense of their labor at the workplace. One is the workers' bringing of their own assumptions and values to the factory rendering them meaningful, the other is therefore the gradual conversion of factory into home. Female workers that had already lived through the traditional patriarchal values at the domestic sphere, transformed the workplace into a home and family where male managers playing the role of father, and colleagues as loyal sisters. This is not only the way that domination—both from employer to workers and among workers—comes through but also the way of workers' realizing themselves "personal self-worth and power" (1998: 182). This meant that equating their domestic roles with those on the shop floor, female workers retain self-worth and power as they are fulfilling these patriarchal roles as a moral obligation or a natural requirement of being a wife or a daughter by caring for each other and serving the male family

members. That is why women workers not only accepted the domination processes but also treated them with deference thereby discouraging the possibilities for resistance and thus facilitating their "rephrased" exploitation on the shop floor (1998: 187-8).

On the one hand, ideologies of motherhood based on women's subjective experiences serve as a vehicle for women to develop political opposition as is the case in Krauss's study. However, on the other hand, Scott shows how familial issues and class interests merge into one another around the communal lines that create opportunities such as spreading information and sharing concerns among the members while they, at the same time, obscure gendered dimensions as broader framework of family, community, and class subordinate sectional interests based on gender. In addition, Cairoli explores how the transformation of factory into home and family enhances exploitation with the workers' own acceptance as well as deference thereby limiting the space for resistance. Family and community are thus two important sites producing contradictions in terms of women's resistance and mobilization practices.

2.4.3 Framing and Emotions in Analysis of Collective Action

Workers' mobilization is simply a collective act. Therefore, any analysis of collective action at the workplace has much to benefit from social movements literature which calls attention to how in-group interaction comes to result in collective action aiming at change in their conditions. Social movements scholars identify framing and emotions as two important sources of mobilization.

One tool that enhances the understanding of collective action lies in the analysis of frames which enable individuals to give meanings to the occurrences within their lives and at the world. Construction of meaning via framing leads individuals to "locate, perceive, identify, and label" what happens in the "world out there" (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). Collective action frames emerge out of amalgamation of three elements: an evolving process, agency and contention. These frames simulate action by setting "beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns" (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). Collective action frames do not merely refer to psychological processes revealing individual dispositions but they also come out of the processes through which shared meanings are negotiated.

Contrary to the alleged opposition of the emotional and the rational, Goodwin et al. (2000) adds that emotions also play a major role in collective action even much more than that the scholars ascribes to the structures for individuals to mobilize. Participants' feelings towards each other both during and before collective action stimulate friendship and solidarity, which shows the importance of emotions. That "emotions mediate between the individuals and the social world" necessitates an analysis of emotions and of the ways they interact with organizational and strategic dynamics as well as other cultural dynamics (Goodwin et al., 2000: 78). Similarly, Fleming and Spicer also suggest that more elaborate focus is needed on affective dimension of struggle, that is, "the fears and tears of struggle—the emotional drive that frames workplace politics" (2008: 307).

Blyton and Jenkins's recent work (2012a) exemplifies a case study which applies social movements literature to collective organizing at the workplace where the workforce is predominantly women previously having no experience of resistance. They call attention to the fact that even though labor unions may somehow be defined as social movement organizations, the workers' union-led campaign in their case was not a social movement. Rather, it is "a particular form of collective action, somewhat akin to a strike, with contained motivations and objectives, and directed at a single employer, rather than a wider-ranging movement for social change" (Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a: 29). Drawing on and also extending mobilization theory (Kelly 1998), and frame analysis (Benford and Snow 2000), they contend that geographic location, community based relations, and a shared identity with a common perception of ongoing injustice stimulated workers' resistance through mobilization. Relying on mobilization theory based on earlier works of Tilly (1978), McAdam (1988) and Gamson (1995), Kelly (1998) investigates worker collectivism. According to Kelly (1998), worker mobilization refers to the processes through which workers develop a collective response against their employer. The process of how collective action becomes appealing to workers includes a recognition of interests through a sense of grievance, a firm belief in change, and an effective use of the means. His model of mobilization therefore devotes particular attention to the roles of injustice, agency, identity and attribution in understanding this transformation. In addition to mobilization theory, Blyton and Jenkins (2012a) consider frame analysis particularly useful in studying worker mobilization. They argue that the emergence of injustice frame which puts all responsibility on the employer is especially a key factor through which a collective response is flourished.

It is worth noting the additional factors that Blyton and Jenkins (2012a) consider along with mobilization theory and frame analysis. They contend that common framing of an issue is strengthened by common experiences for instance deriving from holding similar positions in society and living in same neighborhoods, as well as sharing gendered commonalities. In their case, that is Burberry workers' union-led campaign, formerly compliant workers most of whom are women establish collective mobilization by utilizing opportunity structures (e.g. union, leadership, political elites, media attention) and framing injustice by attributing its source to the employer, as well as basing it on community location. Accordingly, Burberry workers' initial sense of injustice attributed to the employer, their "vocabularies of motive" around the future of their community, elite alliances observed in successful leadership and organizational effort all come to contribute to the collective mobilization of workers, constituting, what the author calls, the four mutually reinforcing components of mobilization (Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a: 41).

2.4.4 Employee Cynicism

Differing from those who identify cynicism as a "harmless safety valve", Fleming suggests that employee cynicism can bring a "subversive efficacy in relation to cultural domination" even if it may not pose a serious challenge to capitalism (2005: 47). Cynicism has been usually associated with either distancing or defense of self. However, Fleming argues, such conceptualizations imply a preexisting selfhood unaffected by the ongoing and interconnected processes of power and resistance. Rather, he argues, cynicism is not only the defense or distancing of self but also, and more importantly, it is itself "the production or constitution of selfhood" (Fleming,

2005: 54). In order to demonstrate how this process works, Fleming (2005), in his study of a call center, examines how dominant discourse of paternalism in the call center interestingly leads employees to claim their maturity and adulthood in cynical manners. Call center workers' construction of selfhood through cynicism as such is not by no means unaffected by social context and broader discourses of class, capitalism, and patriarchy. However, this construction process or cynicism as resistance (maturity claims by employees) is prompted when engaged with power relationship (managerial paternalism) in the workplace.

Scholar also point out that the cynicism that workers display through dis-identification with corporate culture does not necessarily challenge the managerial control, rather, it may reproduce the existing power relations (Gabriel, 1999; Fleming and Spicer, 2003). This process of reproduction occurs even if workers engage in cynical practices and distance themselves from the logic of managerialism. Underlying is that while cynical employees get the impression that "they are autonomous agents", they too often contribute to the reproduction of dominant power relations as they still perform their corporate roles they seek to escape (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 160). With these unintended consequences, workers not only collude in their domination but also negatively affect the emergence of transformative workplace politics (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 162). Reproduction of power relations through dis-identification also demonstrates that cultural power is not necessarily reinforced through the processes of identification. Therefore, Fleming and Spicer (2003) point out the importance of understanding cynicism as an ideology which reintegrates workers into their roles and thus conserves workplace relations of power. However, they still recognize that "not all cynicism is self-defeating or ideological"

(Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 174). That cynical workers reproduce relations of domination without internalizing the values and norms of the organization also raises important implications for redefining the subjectivity. From this perspective that poses a challenge to the subjectification thesis, subjectivity may well be "external" prevailing in the practices of workers rather than "inside" the workers (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 168).

As resources of or obstacles to resistance and mobilization, this part reviewed a number of works that emphasize the importance of collective identity; family, kinship, and motherhood; framing and emotions; as well as employee cynicism. Some findings of these studies contradict one another. The factor that one study identifies as the main facilitating component of workers mobilization proved the opposite in another case study. One of the important consequences that can be assessed here is to understand the contradictory processes on which workers resistance or non-resistance is based. This is largely possible through exploring the contextual factors, workers experiences as well as the meanings workers attached to their seemingly oppositional practices. Even the most traditional and patriarchal values based on the notions of motherhood, family or community may yield significant gains on behalf of workers as they challenge the managerial control at the workplace.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed a variety of discussion and theoretical debates on worker resistance and mobilization. The studies presented in the chapter have analyzed the processes of workplace power relations, developed new

conceptualizations of resistance, brought back the "missing subject" into the question, pointed out the complexity in the control-resistance dynamics, and explored the processes that stimulate or paralyze emergence of collective resistance. Within all these issues, feminist scholars have particularly pointed out the importance of gender as an analytical category in the analysis of labor process, production politics and workplace resistance. Exploring the underlying mechanisms behind workers' experiences should not be spatially restricted to the workplace but need for an analysis of the broader social, economic and political context. In order to better understand the circumstances under which workers as social agents operate and experience power relations, the next section will include an analysis of key developments and turning points in Turkey's political economy.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE POLITICAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT IN TURKEY AND ITS GENDERED IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Introduction

The period starting with the 1980s marked a critical turning point in the transformation of labor and capital relations in Turkey. The pressures of globalization were accompanied by the emergence of neoliberalism as the "hegemonic mode of discourse" and the "guiding principle for economic thought and management" throughout the world (Harvey, 2005). As capital increasingly gains a global character, new production systems have been introduced and the structure of the labor market has underwent a major transformation on a global scale. Throughout the years, the workers have been faced with severe challenges including suppression on wages, hostility towards organized union activity, and proliferation of insecure forms of employment. This is by no means a process without gendered implications. In order to clarify the historical and economic context within which my cases situate, this chapter first provides an overview of the key developments in the neoliberal period of Turkey. I next devote particular attention to gendered dimensions of this immense transformation.

3.2 Turkey in the post-1980s

This section analyzes the main macroeconomic and financial developments as well as the transformation of the labor market since the beginning of 1980s. As do many political economists, I divide these developments into three phases within the Turkish context: the periods between 1980 and 1988; 1989 and1997; and from 1998 up until now (Boratav, 2011). The 1980s and the 1990s are roughly the two decades that Turkish economy was introduced into neoliberal market reforms through deregulation and liberalization policies. Turkish economy, first with liberalization of foreign trade and then with liberalization of all capital transactions, took steps towards the full abolition of interventionist mechanisms under the supervision of the IMF and the World Bank. In the 1990s, Turkey like many other countries was mainly characterized by the growing dependency on global capital flows after the benchmark of capital account liberalization. In this decade, Turkey witnessed a short return to populism in domestic politics, as well as experiencing severe macroeconomic imbalances, fiscal deficits, and several economic crises erupted one after another. In the economic and political instability context and the weakly regulated financial system, Turkish economy continued its dependency on short term capital flows. In the post-2001 period, differing from the preceding era's short-term macroeconomic discipline, many institutional and regulatory reforms were introduced through international institutions. However, as many scholars contend, neither the institutional reforms nor the steady levels of growth and inflation outweigh the volatile structure of Turkey's economy. The implications of all these macroeconomic and financial developments for the transformation of labor have been immense.

The first generation of neoliberal reforms in Turkey dates back to the early 1980s. Following the foreign exchange crisis of 1977-1980, economic growth was reinvigorated through the introduction of a structural adjustment program in January 1980 under the guide and supervision of the World Bank and the IMF (Yeldan, 2006). This development represents a critical turning point as Turkey becomes "a testing ground for neoliberal principles" (Öniş and Şenses, 2007: 268). Establishment of this testing ground was facilitated by the 1980 military coup (Öniş, 2010: 51). Subsequently, the high rates of inflation which almost reached three digit figures were taken under control, recession was brought to a mild level, and public sector borrowing requirement declined. Therefore, the initial stages of neoliberal rupture became successful in its policy goals and made Turkey a "model" in the eyes of orthodox international community (Bedirhanoğlu and Yalman, 2010). Until the late 1980s, deregulation and reregulation went hand in hand by seeking pragmatic solutions to the emerging problems while ultimately maintaining the trend towards the establishment of a liberalized domestic financial system (Boratav and Yeldan, 2001: 5-6). The defining feature of the first phase of neoliberalism was the structural adjustment with export promotion under the managed floating of the exchange rate together with the regulated capital movements (Boratav and Yeldan, 2001: 5). In this period, integration to the global markets was achieved mainly through commodity trade liberalization. Both the exchange rate and direct export subsidies appeared as main instruments for export promotion and macroeconomic stability.

This period was also characterized by the severe suppression of wages through hostile measures against organized labor (Boratav, Yeldan and Köse, 2000: 3; Buğra and Yakut-Çakar, 2010: 527). The military regime as well as the successive

governments immediately took hostile measures against labor unions. Class-based organizational activity was considered a major challenge both to social and political stability and the market reforms. Constitutional and legislative constraints along with an ideologically hostile environment deteriorated both the functioning and the social legitimacy of labor unions. As Adaman et al. correctly notes, "the tolerance for class-based organizational activity was rapidly eroded after a brief period of less than two decades when labor unions appeared as important social actors" (2009: 173).

Decreased labor costs, reduced domestic demand together with gradual but significant depreciation of TL enabled the increase in export revenues. Under the devaluation of currency which was maintained by export subsidization, inflation policy also did not seem to work at the expense of competitiveness in terms of Turkish exportable goods (Boratav and Yeldan, 2001: 6). The rise of exports and economic growth however was not accompanied by a similar performance on behalf of fixed investments (Boratav, Yeldan and Köse, 2000). Capacity constraints and limited technological advance thus resulted in the deceleration of export growth of manufactures during the next decade in the 1990s. Outward orientation of the 1980s which relied on wage suppression, depreciation of the domestic currency, and extremely high export subsidies reached its economic and political limits by 1988. Excessive burden of export subsidization together with real depreciation of TL which resulted in revaluation of foreign debt in domestic currency accelerated the pressures on public expenditures (Boratav, Yeldan and Köse, 2001: 36). The government's populist policies which tolerated the increase of wages in 1989 further deteriorated the fiscal deficits, and liberalization of capital account became almost an inevitable macroeconomic policy response to these developments.

The main development of this period was complete deregulation of financial markets characterizing the second phase of neoliberal policies in Turkey. Accordingly, capital transactions were completely liberalized in 1989 and Turkey opened up its domestic asset markets to global financial competition. With its political, economic and social impacts, liberalization of capital account represented a watershed in the process of the post-1980 neoliberalism in Turkey (Cizre and Yeldan, 2000: 484). As Boratav and Yeldan also point out "the 1989 benchmark was, indeed, the second turning point in economic policies of the post-1980 period in terms of both its distributional implications and macro-economic consequences" (2001:7).

This move towards financial liberalization was expected to bring positive consequences in the overall economy. Initially it provided the necessary conditions to take credit from international financial institutions and also increased the possibilities to attract foreign capital which was expected to increase imports and fixed capital investments for capital accumulation as well as balance the inflationist pressure of wage increases in 1989. Capital inflows in the first instance enabled to finance the rising public sector expenditures and cheapen import costs (Boratav, Yeldan and Köse, 2000: 6). High interest rates were set against the threat of currency substitution in the process of convertible currency regime. Increase in import volume, and the current account deficit led to real appreciation. It also increased the demand in investment by reducing costs of imported capital goods and intermediates. This reform thus might create an efficient and flexible financial system in which national savings would be converted into productive investments at the lowest cost. However, it did not bring any significant change in the financial behaviour of

corporations. Nor did the investment costs cheapened. There was indeed a significant amount of capital inflow to Turkey, however, foreign capital was not for investment purposes but for short term profits through "arbitrage-seeking" (Altıok, 2002: 104).

While public sector expenditures were financed through hot money inflows, private industrial capital also developed several defensive mechanisms so that wage costs could not cause a squeeze of profit margins. One such mechanism appeared in form of widespread layoffs and an overall intensification of marginalized/informal labor employment. In 1994, estimated number of informal workers exceeded the formally employed (Boratav, Yeldan and Köse, 2000: 9). As of 1996, 57% of workers had no social security coverage (Yeldan, 2009). In addition to layoffs and non-unionization, "subcontracting" was proliferated in this process. Being deprived of social and legal rights that permanent employees possess, the growing number of subcontract and temporary workers replaced the majority of unionized workers (Cam, 2002: 98). This constituted a major challenge to labor solidarity and resulted in a considerable loss in unionization. Accordingly, unionization rates decreased from 41% in 1999 to 21% in 2000 (Boratav, 2011: 176; Boratav, 1995).

After the short period between 1989 and 1994 in which real wages were on the upward trend, employees' earnings continued to markedly decline. According to Cam (2002: 102-3), the investment policies played a major role in the impoverishment of real earnings. In the course of neoliberal reforms, domestic debt along with foreign debt incredibly increased reaching up to 56% of GDP in 1997. The state followed an inflationary policy in order to sustain the effects of increased debts. In this process, the high inflation rates served to offset labor cost in the

market. Furthermore, the decline in earnings appeared as a tool to attract foreign investment as the cheapening labor increased the country's competition in the international market.

The short term relaxation was countervailed by the pressures of real interest rates due to the increased costs of credit and the volatility of investment demands. The vulnerability of the Turkish economy to speculative gains of hot money led to another economic crisis in 1994. Income distribution extremely worsened as the outbreak of crisis marked the end of populist policies which were provided by the increase in wages. This fluctuating and unstable environment is marked by the emergence of a new financial cycle which, ultimately, dominates the growth process (Yeldan and Ercan, 2011). It seems that growth is based on not domestic capital accumulation but foreign (speculative) financial capital. In other words, whenever inflows of financial capital increase, growth tends to increase, too. Conversely, in periods of capital flight, we observe recession or collapse as in 1994, 1999 and 2001 crises. Therefore, the growth performance of the economy after capital account liberalization became highly dependent on speculative-led patterns. This created a financial cycle of boom/bust/recovery which, in turn, resulted in the rising volatility of the growth rates.

Capital movements in terms of hot money flows appeared as the major problem that have long affected the growth patterns in Turkish economy. However, liberalization of capital transactions per se should not be considered the single factor behind the volatile structure of economy. Turkey, in fact, did not perform a high economic record before opening up its capital account regime. This move towards

liberalization in the absence of macroeconomic stability and institutional measures created severe consequences (Öniş and Şenses, 2007: 270). While some countries have taken gradual and cautious steps towards liberalizing their capital accounts such as China and India, Turkey, on the other hand, was not capable of taking the measures required for a smooth transition. Therefore, a sharp transition as such resulted in major difficulties that were usually difficult to overcome. The next decade was characterized by a set of policies which aimed to compensate for the institutional weaknesses.

The third phase of neoliberal policies in Turkey started in the course of successive economic crises. As marked by this period, after the financial crisis of 2001, Turkish economy displayed high rates of economic growth so that an average of annually GNP growth rate between 2002 and 2008 reported as 6.5%. According to Öniş despite its dramatic effects, 2001 crisis was a critical turning point which led to significant long-term institutional and structural reforms (Öniş, 2009). However, this rapid growth had "unique characteristics". Yeldan and Ercan (2011) provide two reasons: First, short term capital inflows created a speculative-led growth. High interest rates on domestic asset markets attracted short term finance capital which in turn led to appreciation of domestic currency. Along with cheapened foreign exchange costs, imports boosted both in consumption and investment goods. Second, the post-2001 period has been characterized by the so-called jobless growth pattern. Together with rapid growth, high rates of unemployment and low rates of participation left their marks on the period. Since the outbreak of the financial crisis, the rate of unemployment has not decreased to even its pre-crisis levels. Another important development that has characterized the 2000s in Turkey derives from the

links between domestic politics and financialization: increased levels of consumption and household debt. This will be examined more in detail in the next chapters exploring the connections between worker discipline and debt. Therefore, in this chapter I only give a brief overview of the issue under the following subsection.

3.2.1 Increased Consumption and Household Debt

The last decade of Turkey has witnessed an exceptional case in its history of politics: the successive electoral victories of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) (Öniş, 2012). Karahanoğulları (2012) identifies the post-2002 period in which the AKP is the party in power as neoliberal populism. Neoliberal populism differs from its earlier models in Turkish politics because of its use of different policy instruments in the absence of expansionary policies. Karahanoğulları (2012) argues that both social welfare and the rate of consumption expenditures of the masses have increased in the AKP period. The underlying is the continuing high amounts of short term capital inflows which have led to the decrease in the costs of imports. In 2005, hot money flows amounted 40% of total foreign capital flows. With the impact of global financial crises, hot money flows further increased after 2008, constituting 60% of total flows in 2010. Still a huge amount (65%) of current account deficit has been financing through hot money flows. Especially after 2002, these high amounts of short term capital inflows have stimulated the appreciation of TL which resulted in the cheapening of imports. Lower costs of imports have contributed to improvement of social welfare through cheaper services and products that decrease the costs and prices both furthering the profits of producers and purchasing power of consumers. Therefore, household consumption expenditures have followed an upward trend

although social solidarity funds are ineffectively used, the rate of indirect taxes is high, privatization dramatically increases, and unemployment is high.

The most obvious effects of the increased household consumption expenditures have been the rising household debt, amount of credits and number of credit cards. Household debt has been increasingly becoming an issue especially for the low income groups in Turkey. According to the Central Bank's Financial Stability Report (2013), almost forty percent of households which use one forth of available consumer credits come from lower income groups earning less than 1000 TL per month. It is the process of financialization that has increased the access of households to credit (Stockhammer, 2010: 14). While wages have declined, workers have been encouraged to "buy a piece of capitalism" and many households are driven into debt in the increased availability of the conditions. (Graeber, 2011: 376). Therefore, in Stockhammer's words, increased level of consumption is not a "wealth effect" but a "credit access effect" (2010: 15). Under such circumstances, in the context of Turkey, short term increase of "welfare" is by no means sustainable because when the conditions are reversed, neoliberal populism will be almost impossible.

Therefore, despite the emergence of regulatory mechanisms and institutional strengthening, Turkey still confronts with major problems such as current account deficit, high dependency on capital flows, weak domestic savings, high rates of unemployment and worsening income distribution. Although Turkey in the 2000s displayed a relatively successful growth pattern as compared to the preceding two

decades, the ongoing structural weaknesses remain serious obstacles in limiting Turkey's ability to record a sustainable economic growth.

3.3 Gendered Dimensions of Turkey's Political Economy

This section is divided into two parts. The first part provides an overview of women and labor market in Turkey. In this part, first, I comprise the main discussions about women's changing roles and patterns in labor market particularly since Turkey has been introduced into neoliberal policies. In literature, general patterns in female labor force participation and employment are analyzed in relation to education, social and cultural factors, marital status, urbanization, structural adjustment and changing industrial structure. Drawing on existing literature, I cover these issues as the defining characteristics of women in labor market. Second, I specifically focus on the transition to export oriented industrialization in relation to female labor. In the second part, I shift my focus from portraying women's status in labor market and its political reflections to elaborating on women in textile and clothing industry as relevant to my research. Finally, I analyze the patterns in women's labor union activism in Turkey providing evidence from textile and clothing industry.

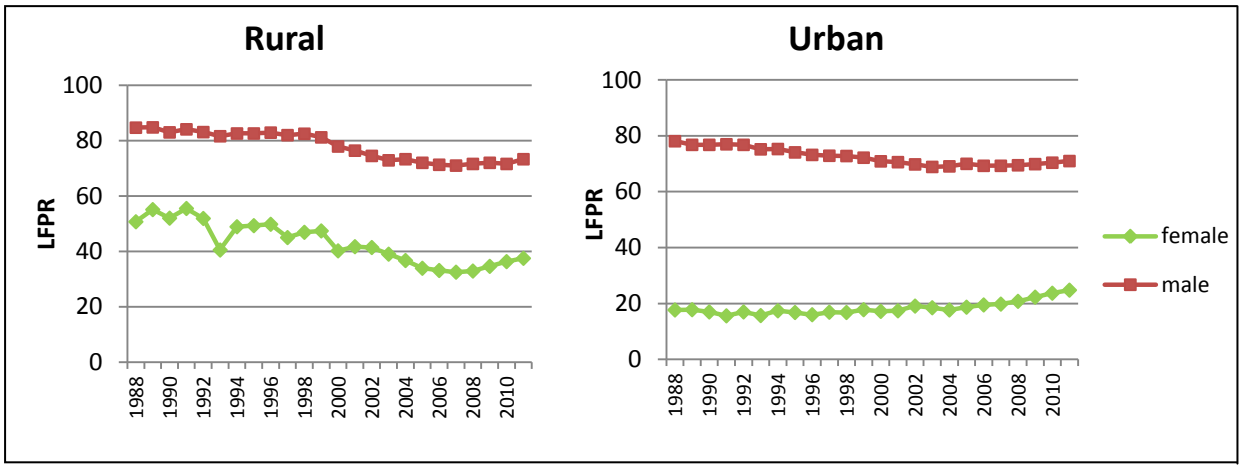
3.3.1 Main Debates on Women's Employment and Labor Force Participation Patterns

The social and economic changes that Turkey has experienced since the 1980s have distinctively transformed the role of female labor in the country's economy. The process of rapid urbanization and the move out of subsistence agriculture confronted women with new challenges. Traditionally, women in rural

areas worked on family farms. However, when the agriculture becomes less important vis-à-vis the other sectors raised in urban areas, much of female workforce either withdrew from agriculture where they engaged in unpaid family work or migrated to the urban areas where most of women stayed at home. In this context, job-seeking women with less educational attainment are considered the most disadvantageous group which has usually concentrated on the urban jobs that offer low wages, require longer hours of work and do not provide social security. This process is mainly linked to the transition from import substitution industrialization to export led growth strategy that is identified as one of the most important determinants of women's economic activities. For a comprehensive analysis of gender and labor market dynamics, however, many researchers point out the necessity of employing a multidimensional approach.

One of the defining features of the labor market in Turkey is the lower labor participation rates of women. Turkish Statistical Institute data indicate that total employment rate for women in 2011 is only 25.6 percent, of which 20.7 percent is accounted for urban and 39.4 for rural areas. Similarly, total female labor force participation rate is at the level of 28.8 percent and it is 37.5 and 24.8 percent in rural and urban areas, respectively (Figure 1). With these figures, Turkey lags far behind the global rate of female employment (47.9%) and labor force participation (51.1%) (ILO, 2012: 92, 96).

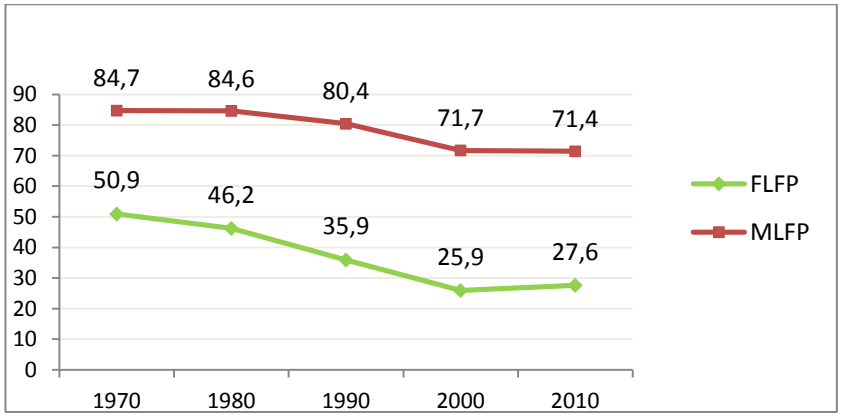
Figure 1. Female and Male Labor Force Participation Rates by Rural/Urban Status



Source: TURKSTAT, Household Labor Force Survey

The figure below which shows the historical trends in female and male labor force participation rates, more sharply demonstrates the change over the years. Regardless of the slightly increasing rates for women in the recent years, for both women and men, participation in the labor market follows a decreasing pattern. Gender gap is quite wide while female participation rates sharply decline over the last decades, from 50 % in 1970 to 27% in 2010 (Figure 2).

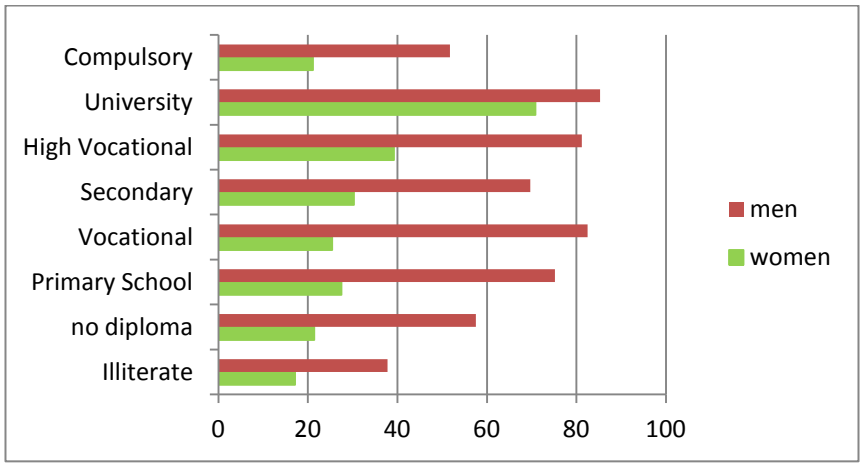
Figure 2. Female and Male Labor Force Participation Rates (%), 1970-2010



Sources: Buğra, 2010: 29; TURKSTAT

Scholars have analyzed women's employment and labor participation patterns in Turkey considering a number of factors. To begin with, women's employment patterns are found to greatly vary depending on the level of educational attainment much more than it matters for the male. For instance, of the women seeking jobs or having jobs in urban areas, those with tertiary levels of education constitute the highest share—at 71 percent in 2011 (Figure 3). The figure indeed shows that labor force participation rates are almost parallel to education levels. Therefore, some researchers claim a direct relation between the level of education and the probability of women entering the labor market (Başlevent and Onaran, 2003; Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010; Gündüz-Hoşgör and Smits, 2008; Taymaz, 2009).

Figure 3. Labor Force Participation by Education in 2011



Source: TURKSTAT, Household Labor Force Survey

Although this approach is dominant, Ecevit (1991) is critical of the views that associate the devaluation of women's work with having less educational attainment. Based on her fieldwork in several manufacturing factories, she concludes that educational degree does not necessarily determine the gendered segregation of jobs, nor is the most important indicator. She gives the examples of such cases where

despite the female workers' superior education levels, their male counterparts still hold the better jobs in factory. Therefore, the evaluation of skill on the basis of education level may not be a good and only determinant of gendered segregation in jobs.

Scholarly interest in women's economic activities in Turkey is not only limited to the impact of education but also those of social and cultural factors, marital status, urbanization, and structural adjustment and changing industrial structure (World Bank, 2009). Those who analyze the role of social and cultural factors in shaping women's employment patterns find that patriarchal structures and values in society play an enormous role in influencing or determining women's decisions to enter the labor market (Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010; Ecevit, 1991; Erman, 2001; Gündüz-Hoşgör and Smits, 2008; Taymaz, 2009). Furthermore, once women take jobs, their work is usually identified in conformity with patriarchal ideology so that women will not challenge the gender-based power relations (Erman, 2001: 125). Ecevit (1991: 57-58) argues that when allowed to work outside, women are usually assigned to jobs for which they are found to be appropriate by not only their male family members but also by the employers. She also observes that this appropriateness criterion that is based on patriarchal values can go so far that even if the employers think of female labor as cheaper and readily available, traditional male industries may not allow women to enter their factories. Patriarchal values determine not only the recruitment processes but also the division of labor within the workplace.

As in many other countries, the gendered division of labor within the Turkish factories is arranged both horizontally and vertically (Ecevit, 1991; Suğur, 2005). Through horizontal segregation, women and men are allocated to different occupations based on gender attributes. In terms of vertical segregation, it is usually the men who are assigned to higher status jobs in factory while women are concentrated at the bottom of the factory hierarchy. Women are rarely given to supervisory positions, if they attain such positions it is usually due to the gender composition of the group they supervise which too often consists entirely of women (Ecevit, 1991: 61). In other words, gender segregation operates in both production and management processes (Suğur, 2005: 56).

Women's participation in labor market also varies according to their marital status and having children (Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010; Gündüz-Hoşgör and Smits, 2008). Both in rural and urban areas, single women are found to enter the labor market more than those who are married. In addition, women with young children are less likely to participate especially in urban areas.

Urbanization and macroeconomic developments or cycles are among the other factors that characterize the female participation and employment patterns in labor market (Başlevent and Onaran, 2004; Buğra, 2010; Dedeoğlu, 2008; Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010; İlkkaracan, 2012; Özler, 2000; Özler et al., 2009). The process of rapid urbanization within the last decades has been accompanied by a decline in agricultural employment towards other sectors for both men and women. As the table below shows, while in the mid-1980s approximately 80% of female workers and 30% of male workers are in agricultural sector, these rates decline to 39% for women

and 17% for men in 2010 (Table 1). With this decline in agriculture, the number of women employed in wage work has been increased in both rural and urban areas. This is evident especially in urban areas where 80 percent of the female workers are employed as wage earners in nonagricultural sectors (Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010: 2). However, this is not that the surplus of labor has been fully absorbed by industry and services. As Buğra and Yakut-Çakar argue, "neither this increase in industrial employment nor the more significant growth of employment in services could compensate the impact of de-ruralization" (2010: 523).

Table 1. Employment by Main Sectors

	Agriculture			Industry			Services		
Year	Total (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
1985	45,0	79,0	30,3	20,0	8,1	25,1	35,0	12,9	44,6
1990	46,9	75,8	33,6	20,7	9,7	25,7	32,4	14,4	40,7
1995	43,4	71,2	32,3	22,3	9,9	27,2	34,3	19,0	40,5
2000	36,0	60,5	27,0	24,0	13,2	28,0	40,0	26,4	45,0
2005	29,5	51,6	21,7	24,8	15,1	28,1	45,8	33,3	50,2
2010	23,7	39,3	17,5	26,2	15,9	30,3	50,1	44,7	52,2

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

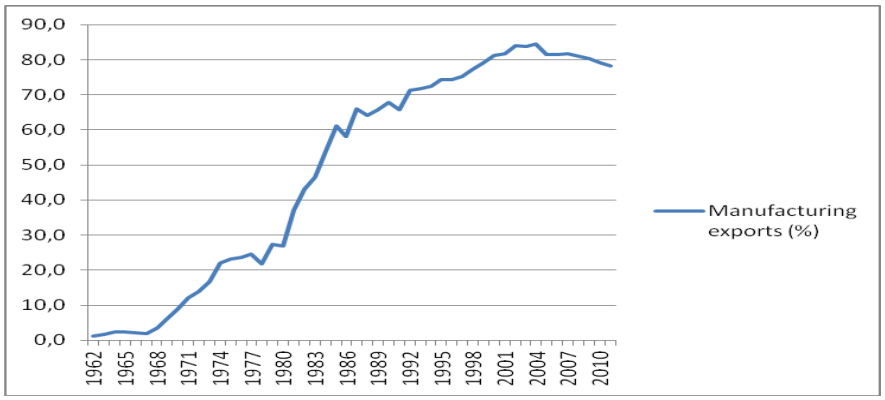
3.3.2 Export-Oriented Industrialization and Female Labor

In many developing countries, export orientation and trade liberalization have led to the so-called feminization of the labor force. Female participation in industrial labor force is found to be particularly useful as women are concentrated in low skill and low paid jobs in tradable sectors (Başlevent and Onaran, 2004: 1376). The literature provides two main reasons explaining the substantial increase in female employment in relation to export promotion. First, the emergence of atypical types of employment replaced the jobs previously associated with male workers. The

stigmatized female workers as docile and obedient therefore have begun to fill these newly emerging precarious jobs at lower labor costs. Second, the transformation of the production and the labor market has created an insecure environment where female workers are forced to participate in labor force to support family income. These supply and demand-related changes have provided the possibilities for more and more women to enter the labor market since the 1970s (Buğra and Yakut-Çakar 2010; Özler, 2000). However, the extent to which these developments apply to the female labor in Turkey remains a controversial issue in much of the literature. The implications of Turkey's transition to outward oriented strategy for gender-labor dynamics have particularly been of great concern in feminist literature. The transformation of female labor in relation to export regime has been subject to debates between those who claim a positive relationship between export orientation and women's participation in the labor market and those who argue that Turkey is an exception to this general pattern seen in the developing world.

According to Moghadam (2005: 120), among the Middle East and North Africa countries, Turkey was the "pioneer" of the export-oriented growth strategy in industry. It is evident in the growing share of manufacturing exports in the economy of Turkey. During the transition from import-substituting industrialization regime to export-oriented growth strategy, Turkey's export revenues substantially increased. As the figure below depicts, while Turkey's manufacturing exports accounted for 68 percent of total exports in 1990, it reached up to 81 percent in 2000 and also followed the same patterns in the recent years (Figure 4). By the second half of the 1990s, the ratio of manufacturing exports to GNP increased to 12% from 1% in 1979 (Başlevent and Onaran, 2004: 1376).

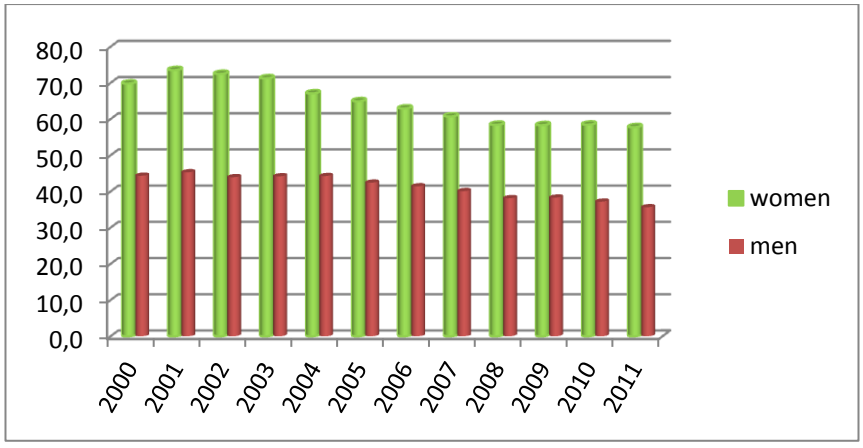
Figure 4. Proportion of Manufacturing Exports in Total Exports (%)



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

These figures show the rising and continuing importance of manufacturing exports in the economy of Turkey. However, to what extent female labor has a role in this achievement is still open to question. Much of the controversy derives from the difficulty in figuring out the exact capacity of female labor with official records because a large proportion of women's economic activities remain in the informal sector.

Figure 5. Proportion of Workers not Registered by Social Security Institution (%)

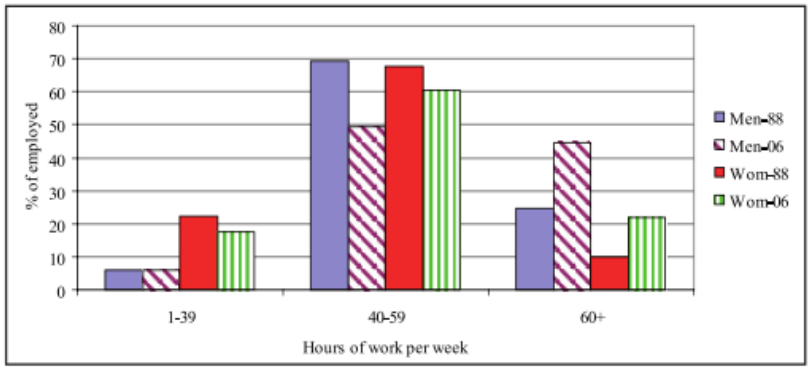


Source: TURKSTAT, Labor Force Statistics

According to the TURKSTAT estimations, almost 60% of the employed women are not still registered with a social security institution in 2011 (Figure 5). The gender gap is considerable in terms of the proportion of the registered workers. Compared to the 60 % informal female workers, of the men employed 35% are not registered with a social security institution in 2011.

On the other hand, the official data confirms the patterns that female labor is concentrated in low skilled and poorly paid jobs. The changes in the hours of work and the amount of wages have strong implications for this view. Contrary to the assumptions that connect the increase in urban female employment to the proliferation of part time jobs, women's working hours have not decreased but rather dramatically increased (Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010: 17). As seen in the figure below, while the proportions of women working less than 40 hours per week and less than 60 hours per week decrease, this proportion increases for women working more than 60 hours per week between the years 1988 and 2006 (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Hours of Work in Urban Areas, in 1988 and 2006



Source: Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010

In addition to increasing hours of work, the average earnings of the low skilled female workers in urban areas also remain much below the minimum wage.

According to the official statistics, almost 80% of low skilled female workers whose educational attainments are less than high school earn below the minimum wage levels in urban areas in 2006. The same rate is approximately 50% for men. In terms of the earnings of unskilled workers, the gender gap is quite high throughout the years (Table 2).

Table 2. Low Skilled Workers Earning Less than the Minimum Wage in Urban Areas

Year	Men (%)	Women (%)
2002	46,8	75,4
2003	42,7	72,3
2004	50,5	78,3
2005	51,2	78,7
2006	47,3	77,0

Source: Dayıoğlu and Kırdar, 2010

The findings so far have indicated the increased importance of manufacturing exports, existence of high amount of informal female labor, increased hours of work for women, and concentration of low skilled women in poorly paid jobs. However, scholars have differently interpreted these figures around the debate on feminization of the labor force after export oriented regime. There are both the scholars who agree that the relationship between export orientation and female employment in manufacturing in Turkey is a positive one (Dedeoğlu, 2008; Özler, 2000; Özler et al., 2009) and those who claim the otherwise (Başlevent and Onaran, 2004) as well as the view that argues for a partial feminization of the labor force (İlkkaracan, 2012).

Özler (2000) investigates the relationship between export outputs and female manufacturing employment in Turkey between 1983 and 1985. Based on plant-level data, her study considers the components such as workers' skill composition, wage levels, capital intensity, and technological change. Her findings suggest that export orientation policies led female manufacturing employment to increase more than the male. Especially, the increased family income insecurity has an enormous impact for women to find jobs in manufacturing (Özler, 2000: 1242). Yet, Özler underlies that women's employment patterns in relation to export-led industrialization is not unidimensional across countries rather may involve diverse underlying processes and consequences. For instance, Özler finds a negative correlation between technology and female employment in Turkey. Accordingly, not only that women were still concentrated in low-skill and low-paid jobs but also their employment rates tended to decline at large scale enterprises where technological investment in machinery and equipment was introduced (Özler, 2000: 1246). Özler et al.'s (2009) later study which examines the patterns in Turkish manufacturing industry between 1990 and 2001 still confirms her previous findings that confirm a positive relationship between female share of manufacturing and export activity.

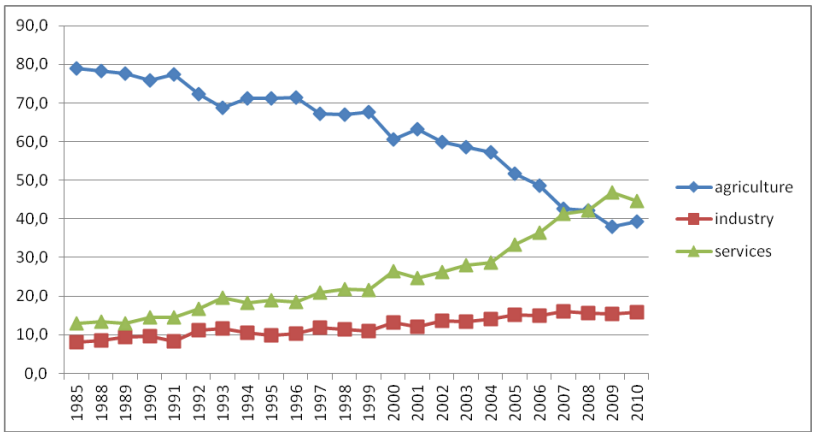
Dedeoğlu (2008) also disagrees with the claim that Turkey remains an exceptional case in terms of declining female employment as compared to the other developing countries that follow outward oriented strategy. First of all, she contends, there is a measurement problem as official statistics do not really capture the extent of women's economic activities in the labor market. Second, the ever-growing ambiguous line between female labor at home and outside home overshadows the actual extent of work women have performed. Third, women's economic activities

constitute a large portion of informal labor which is quite difficult to be reflected in official statistics (Dedeoğlu, 2008: 56). Therefore, she warns against the measurement problem and points out the importance of female labor in export-oriented sectors especially including the garment industry.

Rather than a complete feminization, according to İlkkaracan (2012), Turkey's transition to export-led industrialization has only partially led to feminization of the labor force. Labor absorption capacity of economic growth remained the main structural problem because of the instable growth patterns under financial liberalization and the lack of advanced technologies which could generate further employment. In other words, export-led growth could not generate the structural conditions to absorb the surplus of labor derived from rural-urban migration and urban population growth. Despite this context, however, the labor absorption capacity of economic growth has been found to be on the rise in the urban areas from the 1990s onwards. With the impetus of the rising male unemployment along with economic crises that pushed women outside to find jobs, this period implied "a gradual feminization of the urban labor market in the export-led industrialization period" (İlkkaracan, 2012: 9). However, this slight increase in urban women's employment has not only and most importantly emerged from the jobs in export-manufacturing. Rather, it is the service sector that has contributed most to the increase in women's employment. The figure below shows that female employment in services has been following an upward trend since the mid-1980s, while female employment in industry has been modestly rising from the 1990s onwards (Figure 7). İlkkaracan adds that of the jobs created, 75 percent emerged from the service sector, while this ratio was only 22 percent in manufacturing between the years 1980 and

2009 (2012: 10). Therefore, these findings do not completely support the thesis of the feminization of the labor force in Turkey given that this notion is explained by the increase in female workforce primarily in export manufacturing under the outward-oriented policies.

Figure 7. Female Employment Rates by Main Sectors



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

İlkkaracan (2012) strengthens this argument by providing further explanation about financial liberalization period in Turkey. Following the depression of real wages in manufacturing, the lower labor costs stimulated an export boom in the 1980s. Industries such as textile and garment where women are highly employed had the largest share in the growing rates of exports. Despite the relaxation for a short period between 1988 and 1993, the succeeding economic crises further deteriorated the real wage depression and the real manufacturing wage rate of the late 2000s remained much below its level in the 1980s (İlkkaracan, 2012: 13). Turkey's labor-cost advantage in export manufacturing raised its competitiveness in the global market. However, the growing dependency of manufacturing sector on the imported goods triggered the current account deficits which were to be sustained by short term

capital inflows attracted by high interest rates in Turkey. These conditions led to a shift from lower-labor-cost and female-dominated manufacturing (eg. textiles) to productive and male dominated sectors (eg. machinery). This is another important factor that diminishes the increase in female employment in Turkey as opposed to the expectations of the labor force feminization under export-led policies. By looking at the share of female employment in total manufacturing employment in Turkey, Başlevent and Onaran (2004) also argues against the claims of feminization of the labor force in Turkey. Between 1988 and 2001, female employment in urban areas underwent a twofold increase by reaching up to two million. However, the share of female workers in manufacturing employment remained relatively low and stable at the level of 18% during the same years. Furthermore, the share of manufacturing in female employment even decreased from 32% to 26% between 1988 and 2001.This shows that on the contrary to the common trend observed in many developing countries, women in Turkey have never been concentrated in manufacturing jobs during the export boom years. (Başlevent and Onaran, 2004: 1379).

It is worth noting that the export-led growth path has undergone a great transformation in the last decades. Under the pressure of the global capitalism, individual enterprises have been increasingly forced to adopt the changing patterns if they were to survive. Among the changes this new pattern has brought are the growing amount of informal labor and the rise of new types of employment (Balaban and Sarıoğlu, 2008). This transformation has reflected in the state policies that bear significant implications for class relations. According to Özdemir and Özdemir-Yücesan (2005), the main strategy in the post-1980s period was the re-regulation of collective labor law to ensure the containment of collective capacities of the working

class in national policies. However, the prevalent structural rigidities still fell short of satisfying the needs of global restructuring of capital. Especially after the 1994 economic crisis, Turkey took important steps for a "successful" transformation towards export oriented strategy (Özdemir and Özdemir-Yücesan, 2005: 66). Rearrangements in the existing labor acts introduced new and precarious forms of employment and labor contracts in conformity with the neoliberal paradigm.

Yaman-Öztürk (2010) links these developments to the transformation of the female labor with a special focus on women's "survival strategies". She observes three main macroeconomic changes that lead women to engage in several strategies to earn their lives (Yaman-Öztürk, 2010: 97). The first is the change in the employment patterns and growing unemployment. While women workers are usually the first to be laid off in times of economic crises, they are also further pushed to the market and increasingly involve in informal economy especially in the export oriented production. The second is the increase in the amount of unpaid domestic labor. With the impact of transformation in the health system as well as the cuts in the consumption expenditures, women are led to undertake more care work and housework. The third is the social network activities. Especially during economic crises, people more and more rely on informal ties and build social networks as a survival strategy in which women undertake much of the responsibility. Within this framework, women's growing efforts to seek jobs in the post-1980s are very much related to the survival strategies women pursue especially to support their family incomes.

As seen, feminist scholars have different accounts about the role of female labor in the economic restructuring of the post 1980s. Feminization of the labor force is one debate of which scholars do not have a common view. Some argue that contrary to the trend in the developing world Turkey has not experienced an increase in the level of female employment or participation rates. While export-oriented growth strategy in the developing countries has led more and more women to concentrate in the low-paid and insecure jobs in manufacturing, official data in Turkey do not reflect such a tendency. Others therefore cast doubt on the accuracy of formal statistics because measurement is really a problem in assessing the exact number of women employed in the industry where informality is a widespread practice. Nevertheless, official statistics demonstrate that particular subsectors such as textile and clothing employ considerable numbers of women in Turkey as elsewhere in the developing world. The next section provides an overview of textile and clothing industry in the country with its implications for female labor.

3.3.2.1 Women in Textile and Clothing Industry

As many scholars point out, industry especially manufacturing has always been the sector where female workforce is very limited. However, female employment is relatively higher in labor-intensive subsectors of food, textile and clothing where informal labor is also widely used (KSGM, 2012: 25; Toksöz, 1994: 440). As the tables show, during the years between 1992 and 2001, women constitute approximately 30% of the employment in textile and 50% of the employment in clothing—the figures much above the total rates of employment for women in Turkey (Table 3 and Table 4). As a result, textile and clothing is considered the main

employer of women and thus subject to many studies in feminist literature in Turkey (Dedeoğlu, 2008, 2010; Ecevit, 1991, Suğur, 2005; Suğur and Suğur, 2005). That these particular subsectors employ relatively higher numbers of women confirms that "there is a persistent pattern of gender-based sectoral and occupational segregation in industry: women are almost confined to unqualified jobs in textiles, garment and food sub-sectors" (Toksöz, 2011: 26).

Table 3. Employment in Manufacture of Textiles Table 4. Employment in Manufacture of Clothing

Years	Total	Women	Men	Women (%)	Men (%)
1992	184.865	56.425	128.440	30,5	69,5
1993	191.751	59.072	132.679	30,8	69,2
1994	189.576	58.924	130.652	31,1	68,9
1995	195.474	58.692	136.782	30,0	70,0
1996	218.029	65.055	152.974	29,8	70,2
1997	236.009	72.393	163.616	30,7	69,3
1998	239.053	75.224	163.829	31,5	68,5
1999	210.113	59.060	153.053	28,1	72,8
2000	222.143	63.464	158.679	28,6	71,4
2001	219.604	61.156	158.448	27,8	72,2

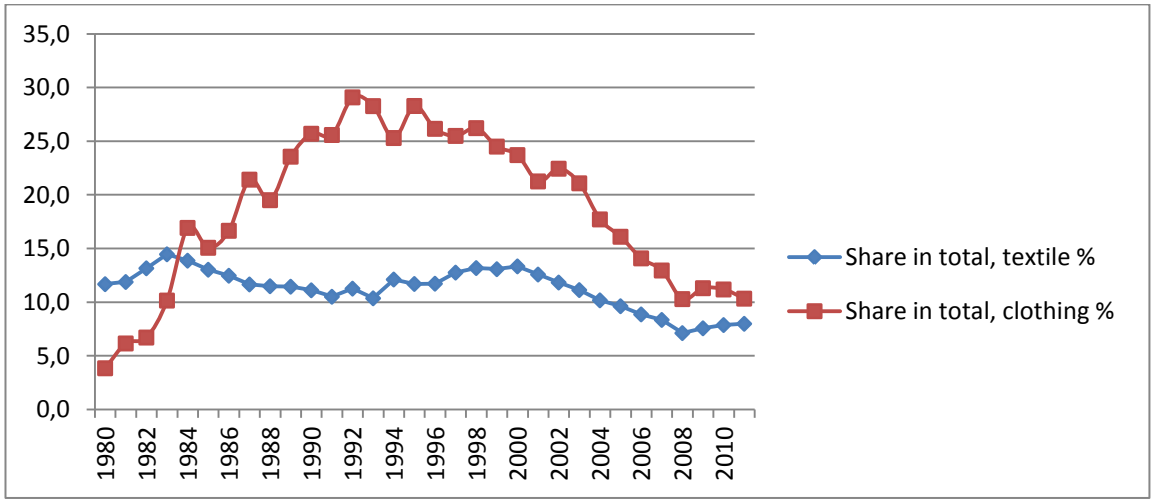
Years	Total	Women	Men	Women (%)	Men (%)
1992	94.524	47.268	47.256	50,0	50,0
1993	90.060	43.947	46.113	48,8	51,2
1994	93.408	45.062	48.346	48,2	51,8
1995	122.566	61.603	60.963	50,3	49,7
1996	138.342	68.770	69.572	49,7	50,3
1997	151.046	77.774	73.272	51,5	48,5
1998	148.075	73.849	74.226	49,9	50,1
1999	142.853	71.060	71.793	49,7	50,3
2000	147.844	72.413	75.431	49,0	51,0
2001	152.925	72.901	80.024	47,7	52,3

Source: ILO, LABORSTA

The textile and clothing sector has a considerable share in total production, employment and exports in Turkey (Ministry of Industry, 2010: 129). Turkey's textile industry, which is listed among the world's top ten exporters, is also the second largest supplier to the EU in both textiles and clothing (Ministry of Economy, 2012: 1; European Commission, 2012: 10). Turkey ranks 8th in textile, and 5th in clothing among the exporting countries of textile and clothing, respectively (WTO, 2011: 124, 131). Despite the declining patterns in the recent years, textile and clothing still play an important role in the country's economy. As the figure shows,

textile and clothing have approximately 20 percent of share in total export volume of the country in 2011 (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Share of Textile and Clothing Exports in Turkey's Total Exports, 1980-2011



Source: TURKSTAT

These sectors also employ considerably high numbers of workers in Turkey. According to the official data in 2011, there are 365.798 workers registered in 15.084 workplaces in textile industry, and 399.552 workers in 29.021 workplaces in clothing industry (SSI, 2011: 32). Furthermore, when informal workers are added, the number of textile workers rises up to 450.000, and of clothing workers to 1.500.000 (BST Bakanlığı, 2012: 9).

Textile industry is one of the manufacturing industries where especially women in low-income groups living in urban areas are widely employed (Suğur, 2005: 47). In the developing countries such as Turkey, employment of low-cost female labor provides textile companies with higher advantages of competition in the global market (Dedeoğlu, 2010: 10; Toksöz, 2011: 26; Suğur, 2005: 60). In fact, most of the exporting sectors employ workers who are not affiliated with a labor

union. Through nonunionization policies these companies also enjoy the advantage of keeping labor costs at minimum levels (Suğur, 2005). The elimination of quotas on textile and clothing has further accelerated the international competition in textile and clothing market (BST Bakanlığı, 2012: 20). In 2005, international trade quotas on textile and clothing were completely removed in accordance with the World Trade Organization Agreement on Textile and Clothing. This agreement came into force in 1 January 1995 and stipulated that quantity restrictions would be gradually decreased within a 10-year period (Ministry of Industry, 2010: 74, 130). Therefore, increased global competition with the impact of countries such as China and India, has had negatively affected the exporting sectors in Turkey. This is also evident in the figure above that increased global competition resulted in a considerable decline in the export volume of clothing and textile in Turkey (Figure 8). Nevertheless, the textile and garment industry continues to keep its importance in the economy of the country, and the female labor plays a major role behind this "success". This female-dominated industry (at least by total rates in the world) is commonly associated with poor working conditions and less levels of organized union activity. The next section offers a brief overview of female participation in union activity in Turkey's manufacturing industry.

3.3.2.2 Women Workers and Labor Unions in the Manufacturing Industry

Let alone female members, the exact number of union members has always been controversial in Turkey. Although I cannot find the official number of female union members either in total or by economic activity except for that of civil servants, the national newspaper *Birgün* announces that according to statistics in

2007, there are 3.043.732 union members, 15.2 percent of those are women (Kıran, 2012). The very low proportion of women in industry may exclusively have an impact on the rates of female membership in labor unions. However, women's participation in unions is very low even in the subsectors of textile and clothing where there is a considerable amount of female workforce. This is evident in the gender composition of the administrative positions in the textile unions in Turkey. As the data shows, neither the confederation of labor unions nor the labor unions in textile sector seems to include women in decision making mechanisms (Table 5).

Table 5. Distribution of the Officials in Charge at the Mandatory Bodies of the Workers' Labor Unions by Textile Sector, and the Confederation of Turkish Labor Unions (TURK-IS)

	Chairperson				Managing committee				Supervisory committee				Disciplinary committee		
	male	female	total		male	female	total		male	female	total		male	female	total
Textile unions (2010)	11	0	**11**		38	7	**45**		25	8	**33**		27	10	**37**
TURK-IS (2012)	1	0	**1**		5	0	**5**		3	0	**3**		4	1	**5**

Source: Labor Statistics, 2011: 116, 118; TURK-IS website

The number of strikes in textile sector is also very low, which is 4 for the last three years (Table 6). In fact, the total number of strikes by each economic activity both in public and private sectors has been too few and on decline for the last decade in Turkey. While total 52 strikes were recorded in 2000, this number declined to 11 in 2010 (Ministry of Labor, 2011).

Table 6. Strikes in Textile Industry by Year

		number of strikes	number of workplaces involved	number of total workers	number of total workers involved	participation rate (%)	number of work days not worked
TEXTILE	2008	1	7	287	140	48,78	5880
	2009	1	1	603	3	50,0	162
	2010	2	2	538	197	36,62	11798

Source: Ministry of Labor, Labor Statistics, 2010, 2011

It is worth noting that fewer rates of unionization are not peculiar to Turkey because in many other countries in the world, pro-market policies diminished unionization especially through new forms of employment which stand as a challenge to labor solidarity (Cam, 2002: 97-98). Beside the general decline in the rates of organized labor, the patterns in women workers' participation in unions require a particular attention. Although limited there are a number of studies that analyze female labor in relation to union activism. In literature, women are most often depicted as disinterested in the organized labor activity. One of the important reasons behind women workers' "disinterest" in unionization is that women first have to convince their husbands and then arrange their daily lives (i.e., domestic chores) to be able to spend sufficient time for union meetings (Ecevit, 1991: 73; Sinclair, 1991: 18; Toksöz, 1994: 440). In addition, if they are involved in union activities, women workers feel more threatened than men with losing their jobs (Toksöz, 1994: 444). It is also widely recognized that traditional structure of labor unions further discourage women workers to participate in their activities. Unions are traditionally male-dominated spheres and the inferior status of women in labor force is well reflected in patriarchal practices and attitudes of labor unions (Walton, 1991: 173). However, it is extremely important to consider the diversity in women's

experiences in relation to union movements. Walton (1991) finds that although family responsibilities, domestic chores and patriarchal structures of unions are major obstacles for women to engage in union activities, women's domestic experiences may not always be at odds with their union participation. Rather, women's attitudes they develop from their experiences at home that are very much based on how women and their families see their role within the family may support their active participation in union practices (Walton, 1991: 163-164). Whether the reasons lie behind historical settings, institutional processes or cultural forms, nevertheless, the rate of female participation in union activity is much lower than the rate for male workers in Turkey.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed portrayal of the political economic context that transformed the capital and labor relations with different implications for women and men. The first section included the key macroeconomic and financial developments in the neoliberal period of Turkey. The main characteristics of the first phase of neoliberal period were export promotion, trade liberalization, deregulation, suppression of wages and declining agricultural support measures, which aimed to dismantle government regulations in financial, goods and labor markets. During the 1990s, Turkey like many other developing countries was mainly characterized with rising dependency on global capital flows due to the benchmark of 1989 financial account liberalization. Beginning from this period, speculative and short term capital inflows have increased the fragility of the economy resulted in a boom and bust cycle in growth patterns. During the 2000s, Turkey underwent significant changes with an

effort to improve institutional framework. However the country still faces the issues of high current account deficit, domestic and external debt, hot money flows, unemployment, and persistent inequality and poverty. These are not without gendered implications, which constituted the discussions in the second section of this chapter. Neoliberal restructuring has required transformation of production systems and recomposition of the labor market. Proliferation of insecure forms of employment together with worsening income distribution has changed the gendered patterns in the labor market. Although scholars point out that the measurement is a problem in assessing the accurate numbers, women's participation in the labor market are achieved through more insecure ways. Especially with the industrial restructuring, women have concentrated in the low paid jobs exposed to poorer working conditions. The most prominent export-oriented sectors such as textile and garment are part of an industry where considerable numbers of women are employed producing for global market. The power of organized labor has been weakened and the possibilities for collective resistance against the worsening conditions have decreased and remained limited. These possibilities are considered to be more limited for the female labor that is usually identified as obedient cheap labor working in difficult conditions. This does not mean that workers or female workers in particular do not resist. The changing nature of capitalist domination has altered the manifestations of labor resistance. As Fleming and Sewell point out, in a context where workers are given the option of loyalty or exist, we must explore the alternative manifestations of resistance (2002: 859). With these issues in mind, the next chapter will explore different resistance patterns in two female-dominated

textile factories, one is mobilized, and the other has not displayed any visible resistance yet.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF "COMPANY AS A FAMILY" AT THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER, KINSHIP, ETHNICITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how the absence or presence of managerial discourse of family alters worker resistance strategies, by analyzing the implications of the recruitment process based on family, kinship, and ethnicity networks. Cyntex and Mobitex are two textile manufacturing factories whose workforces predominantly compose of women of the same ethnic origins. However, what makes these workplaces differ in terms of the composition of the workforce derives from the recruitment process. While many Cyntex workers especially the male members that hold key positions are recruited according to kinship or familial ties, the recruitment of Mobitex workers is mainly based on formal procedures. I argue that this difference plays a role in the construction of labor process, labor control and workers' resistance patterns at the workplace. Intertwined with ethnicity and kinship, gendered factory regime intensifies in the case of Cyntex. The existence of gender-ethnicity-kinship dynamic results not only in the emergence of stronger and closer ties among workers but also it is promoted and manipulated by the company's image as a family. Cyntex workers therefore are both experientially and discursively

exposed to the construction of workplace relations by virtue of their familial or kinship as well as ethnic bonds. As a result, managerial discourse of family has been strengthened in practice with the actual ties among workers. Mobitex, on the contrary, does not rely on a managerial promotion of family as a discourse. Neither does it recruit workers based on informal ties. Rather, Mobitex is known to be "professional" when deciding whom to work in the company. Yet the majority of Mobitex workers are of the same ethnic origins as in the case of Cyntex. This is in fact one of the typical characteristics of the organization of the labor market in Turkey. As the largest ethnic minority in Turkey, the Kurdish people are concentrated in low-wage sectors of the economy. Kurdish women's integration into to the wage labor market in the urban areas reflects the gendered as well as ethnicized patterns in the organization of labor market in Turkey.

Scholars have underlined the role of agency in understanding labor process, workplace control and resistance (Burawoy, 1979; Ezzy, 1997; Knights and McCabe, 2000; O'Doherty and Willmott, 2001); the relevance of gender, family, kinship and ethnicity to production politics (Lee, 1995, 1998; Ong, 1991; Ngai, 2001); and the role of social processes involved in worker resistance and mobilization (Benford and Snow, 2000; Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a, 2012b; Casey, 1999; Gabriel, 1999; Kelly, 1998). This literature points out the importance of how workers as agents participate in the reproducing or challenging of their conditions, how social categories such as ethnicity, gender and kinship come to play a role in the construction of workplace politics, and how social processes rather than merely institutions and structures transform individuals into collective actors against their conditions. My research both derives from and contributes to this literature. By taking a closer look at these issues

with a comparative framework, I explore not only how ethnicity, gender and kinship play a role in the control-resistance dynamics but also how these processes are differently and contradictorily constructed and result in the similar workplace settings. Although scholars offer different insights into the concepts of agency-structure and power-resistance, my approach is informed by those who identify these dynamics as interconnected without falling back upon the either of structure or of agency (Ezzy, 1997; Fleming, 2005; Fleming and Spicer 2008; O'Doherty, 2009). This approach provides a more elaborate focus on how microprocesses connect with broader societal forces while emphasizing how these processes at the same may involve ambiguous and contradictory consequences.

Based on this theoretical framework, I proceed in the following manner: first, I discuss the relevance of gender, ethnicity, and kinship to the analysis of labor process. Then, I focus on the worker recruitment in Cyntex and Mobitex which results in a different workplace politics. Here, I argue that emergence of "Cyntex family" through both discursive and experiential practices undermine the development of collective resistance at the workplace. In contrast, Mobitex workers that are recruited by formal procedures and not through informal ties are lack of as well as in the pursuit of "family" at the workplace. This absence of "family" fuels workers' grievance against the management and stimulates collective action. Finally, I elaborate on the workers' mobilization or non-mobilization in the factories. In doing so, I analyze the processes that lead workers to unite or divide. I argue that the demand for gaining privileges which are already given to certain workers divide Cyntex workers into competing groups. These privileged groups consist of the male staff having kinship and familial relations to management; the female relatives of the

managers thought to be spying on their coworkers; and the female workers having sexual relations with branch managers. The division and competition lead some workers to develop cynical attitudes towards the managerial discourse of family as well as the managers that are thought to treat workers unjustly. Worker cynicism is a type of resistance which enhances the likelihood of collective mobilization. However, it at the same time may result in workers' collusion with their own domination. Accordingly, Cyntex workers' cynicism collapses into the discourse of family and thus weakens the emergence of a collective response. Mobitex workers, in contrast, have more resources to be united than divided. A common understanding and framing of grievance intertwined with shared experiences through neighborhood and ethnicity networks enable workers to develop solidarity and trust which results in collective mobilization.

4.2 Relevance to Labor Process

Early studies of labor process put emphasis on the objective and scientific structures of capitalist production such as deskilling and management control (Braverman, 1974). The focus on the structural factors have been challenged on the grounds that it undermines the role of agents and the complexity of the formation of capital-labor relations (Burawoy, 1979; Ezzy, 1997; Knights, 1990; Knights and McCabe, 2000; O'Doherty and Willmott, 2000-2001, 2001; Thompson, 1990). One such analytical tool is Burawoy's distinction between the "labor process"—the technical and social organization of tasks in production—and the "political apparatus of production"—political and ideological components of production which he calls the politics of production (Burawoy, 1985; 87). His theory of the politics of

production however has been subject to critiques by feminist scholars. While Burawoy calls the problem of the "subjectless subject" into question, his analysis of the labor process and the politics of production explicitly dismisses social and cultural relations such as gender, race and ethnicity (Salzinger, 2001). Linking the question of the "subjectless subject" to the emergence of gendered regimes at the shop floor, feminist scholars have moved a step further and challenged the binary constructions of objective and subjective aspects as well as economic reductionism in the analysis of capitalist production and labor processes (Lee, 1995, 1998; Ong, 1991; Ngai, 2001; Salzinger, 2001). These scholars have referred to labor force as a subjective agent and point out the importance of bringing cultural and social relations into the analysis of production process. As they avoid economic reductionism, they emphasize that capital and labor have cultural and social aspects. Among these aspects, relations based on gender, kinship, and ethnicity are considered indistinguishable parts of labor processes, labor control as well as workplace resistance (Lee, 1995; Ngai, 2001). As a social category, gender has long been identified as central to the analysis of the formation of capital-labor relations. Nevertheless, little attention has been paid to the instances when gender intertwines with kin and ethnic dynamics in the construction of the production politics. This study also aims to fill this gap while pointing out the importance of kinship, family, gender and ethnicity in the organization of tasks in production as well as the contradictory implications in the construction of the politics of production at similar workplace settings.

The cases of Cyntex and Mobitex demonstrate that the composition of workforce makes a difference in workplace politics. The apparently similar

characteristics of the workers in terms of gender, ethnicity and neighborhood bear different implications as they diverge on the worker-management relations based on kinship and familial ties. Although majority of the workers are Kurdish women living in close neighborhoods, the degree of informality among employees as well as between employees and management is different between two factories. In Cyntex, worker recruitment is mostly based on familial and kinship relations while this is not the case in Mobitex. The more homogeneous composition of workers in Cyntex couples with company's image as a family. Although emergence of "Cyntex family" both in practice and discourse is not without problems, the informal networks at the workplace lead to a certain degree of complicity among workers. On the contrary, Mobitex workers complain about the absence of family-like relations on the shop floor, which they use as a resource for mobilization adding to their other commonalities based on ethnicity and neighborhood relations. The following part explains worker recruitment in two factories, which bears different implications for labor process and production politics.

4.3 The "Nature" of Community: Worker Recruitment

Recruitment of workers is what makes Cyntex and Mobitex differ in terms of composition of the workforce. While the latter recruits workers based on family, kinship and ethnicity networks, the latter follows a "professional" recruitment process through formal procedures. This does not mean that Mobitex workers constitute a highly heterogeneous population vis-à-vis Cyntex workers. Still, they are predominantly Kurdish women who live in close or same neighborhoods. However, this is related to the common trends in the labor market rather than the recruitment

process. That the vast majority of the workers in both Cyntex and Mobitex are Kurdish women is not coincidental. Rather, the predominance of Kurdish female labor particularly in the manufacturing sector derives from structural factors. The Kurdish people in Turkey are both materially and non-materially much worse off than the Turkish population (Icduygu et al., 1999). One strategy to survive this environment of insecurity is migration from rural to urban areas (Icduygu et al., 1999: 995). Rural-to-urban migration has different implications for women and men. Increasing economic difficulties in the cities have pushed more and more Kurdish women to find jobs outside to support their family incomes. Although the large proportion of these women's economic activities are informal, a growing number of migrant women are employed in the manufacturing sector, especially in the textile and clothing industry (Moghadam, 1996).

The rural-to-urban migration patterns in Turkey display the characteristics of chain migration (Erman, 2001). Once a member of a family, particularly the male, finds a job and settles in the city, the other family members and relatives follow suit. They create their own networks of information and live in close neighborhoods whereby the newcomers participate, and these people are generally clustered in the squatter housing neighborhoods (Ayata, 2003). This is reflected in my research as well. I interviewed most of the participants in their houses. They are especially clustered in the neighborhoods associated with Kurdish population, where residents live in squatters in the countryside. Both Cyntex and Mobitex workers live in same or close neighborhoods where Kurdish residents are predominant. Despite the similarity in their workforces, worker recruitment differs between the two companies. Cyntex intentionally recruits workers based on family and kinship ties,

and that is why its workforce is more homogeneous than Mobitex.

In effect, participation of women in labor force through familial or kinship ties is typical of small-size and family owned enterprises (Ecevit, 2003: 76). Cyntex is obviously a large-size enterprise with almost 500 employees. Still, the employer predominantly recruits workers with whom he shares the same origins based on village, hometown, ethnicity, kinship, and family networks. One of the Cyntex workers, Suzan, who is also of Kurdish origin, explains the recruitment process:

> They (the managers) have a very crowded family. I don't even exactly know how many brothers they are but I know four of them and they manage the company. They favor especially workers from Mardin and Diyarbakır. They really protect their relatives and villagers. I personally know many employees here who are relatives or villagers of the boss like their cousins, uncles, brothers-in-law, daughters-in-law…

The recruitment process through informal ties is reflected in my interviewees. All of the women I interviewed were the workers that entered Cyntex with the help of their networks. One started to work through her relative's call, one through her villager, one through her neighbor, one through her friend and others through similar informal ties. This is not an uncommon practice according to workers, as Zeynep explains:

> This is how it goes. You have to know someone inside. Here (Cyntex), on the shop floor, everyone knows each other. We're relatives, friends, neighbors... So, we're like a *big family* where everyone knows each other very well (emphasis added).

Unlike Cyntex, Mobitex is not a workplace where many workers and the managerial staff are tied to each other through familial or kinship networks. According to the human resources director, worker reference matters only to the

extent that it matters to any human resources departments. The primary consideration is entirely based on predetermined and professional stages of recruitment:

> The recruitment of workers is an onerous process. We (human resources management) announce available positions on the website. First, we consider applicant CVs. After an initial review, we call applicants for interview. After the interviews, applicants are invited to take pre-employment tests. Then, we recruit the successful applicants.

The human resources director as well as the workers I interviewed particularly emphasized that worker recruitment was an open and formal process in the company, that is, not relied on informal ties between the management and the employees. Nevertheless, both companies have a workforce whose composition is homogeneous to some extent. This results in the emergence of strong group boundaries at the workplace, one that bears contrary implications for patterns of worker resistance at the two factories. Recruitment process based on informal ties intertwines with company's image of a family and results in the further control over Cyntex workers. In contrast, Mobitex workers' ties through common ethnicity and close neighborhoods in the absence of kinship, familial or family-like relations play a significant role in their collective mobilization.

4.4 Being a Part of Company: Emergence or Non-emergence of Family

Common boundaries of family, kinship and ethnicity result in not only emergence of "family in practice"—that is, the *big family* as the workers refer to—but also are accompanied by Cyntex's managerial discourse of family. While Cyntex workers are part of a "family", Mobitex workers lack any feelings of belonging as such. Their close networks at the intersection of ethnicity, gender and neighborhood however facilitate collective resistance. Therefore, membership to a particular social

group establishes worker solidarity for the purposes of mobilization in the latter while it paralyzes emergence of collective resistance in the former. Further, what reduces the possibilities for the development of Cyntex workers' collective response is what strengthens the cause of Mobitex workers during their mobilization. Despite their cynical attitudes, Cyntex workers are not able to turn this potential into a collective response. Rather, they are reintegrated into their familial roles as their problems remain within the limits of family. In contrast, Mobitex workers are in pursuit of "being a part" and, thus, the absence of family-like relations at the workplace fuels their grievances and functions as a resource for mobilization.

Metaphors of team and family are commonly adopted in a variety of organizations from manufacturing to supermarkets (Casey, 1999: 156). The concepts of team and family have different connotations. While the former is usually referred to professional and technological employees, the latter is promoted among the blue collar occupational groups (Casey, 1999: 162). Differences notwithstanding, by managerial accounts, both are claimed to evoke positive practices such as employee participation, commitment, productivity, and empowerment (Willmott, 1993: 515). The seemingly positive and generative social practices of family and team however bear complex processes when installed in the organization. Not all families are "happy", nor do they experience unhappiness in the same way (Gabriel, 1999). Nevertheless, the discourse of company as a family is a widely used and effective management strategy to integrate workers into their roles in the factory (Casey, 1999; Gabriel, 1999). As noted, the case of Cyntex demonstrates that the emphasis on family is not only a discourse but also emerges in practice with the help of kinship, familial and ethnic ties among workers and employers. This double functioning of

"family" results in the further consolidation of disciplining mechanisms at the workplace. According to the company's human resources director, Cyntex is like a "very big family", where the problems are jointly discussed and the decisions are taken together. He adds that every worker can openly and freely voice their demands or complaints regardless of administrative hierarchies. In order to achieve this goal, the company supports multiple ways of communication between workers and managerial staff:

> We have effective communication channels. Cyntex Textile explicitly espouses an open door policy. Workers are free to directly visit the employer whenever they want without any hierarchical limits. We employ this strategy because we are aware that textile is a sector whose workforce is not very well educated. This sector is very open to labor abuses by uneducated personnel. We know the sector and don't allow such abuses to happen in our company. Workers may have complaints about the employers as well. If this is so but they hesitate to voice their complaints, they can use complaint boxes. We set up complaint boxes in every changing room and we regularly control them. In addition, they can also interrupt me any time to voice their demands or complaints. In fact I regularly ask workers if there is something they are discontented with. We also conduct surveys once every three months to understand worker discontent. Then we evaluate the survey results and think about how to improve working conditions. We also share the survey results with worker representatives in our monthly meetings. Workers in every division select their representatives once a year. They participate in the monthly meetings in which directors, supervisors, employers etc. are also involved. In the meetings we discuss our problems: what could we achieve so far, where did we fail, what should be our future plans? After the meetings, we declare our reports what we call the action plans to inform all of the workers. So, we approach our workers like a *very big family*. If you don't behave so, you can never prevent their discontent (emphasis added).

Open door policy, complaint boxes, regular meetings, action plans as well as face-to-face interaction are all among the communication channels that the director claims to have in the company. Through these channels, the company aims to lift any possible barriers between the employer and the employees of different positions so

that everyone could feel like the components of a whole. What follows his emphasis on family is crucial: unless you behave like a family, you can never prevent worker discontent. Construction of workplace relations around a family discourse therefore appears as one effective strategy that helps sustain the tensions which may arise among workers and managers.

The Cyntex family at the same operates in "hierarchical, repressive and paternalistic" forms (Casey, 1999: 162). Male superiority prevails among the members of this big family. In effect, there is a gendered division of labor both horizontally and vertically. In terms of horizontal segregation, women and men are concentrated on different divisions based on perceived gender attributes. In the divisions that require the use of heavier machinery equipments such as ironing and sewing male workers are relatively higher. Through vertical segregation, men are assigned to higher status jobs in the factory while women are concentrated at the bottom of the hierarchy. All of the high status staff such as employers, directors, supervisors, and branch managers with a few exceptions is male. Women are frequently employed only in the position of assistant branch manager as long as gender composition of that particular line is female dominated. However, not only gender but also kinship and familial relations come to play an important role in the vertical segregation of employees. Except for one female branch manager, both top and branch managers are male and mostly from the same family or kinship. Holding key positions from security guard to managers, the male staff exerts further control over the female labor. Supervisors and branch managers are the most available staff to the workers while the main employer rarely appears to them. Among the high-status personnel, branch managers are particularly important because they are always

in touch with workers and supervise all the activities on the assembly line. In contrast, the main employer is not always available to ordinary workers. However, workers have a good image of their employer. Every worker I interviewed identified the boss as a person who is serious and hardworking but at the same helpful and sensible. In Saadet's words,

> He is serious and disciplined but behaves kindly to workers. One of our busiest days, he coincidentally saw me carrying heavy stuff and said "do your own job, I'll deal with this stuff for you". I couldn't know what to do and then gave him the packages surprisingly. I later heard that he helped many other workers that day.

While the boss acts like a father who rarely appears and keeps distance but still protects his dependents, the branch managers are the brothers who always intervene in the affairs and compensate for the father's absence. Female workers call their branch managers "brother". Just as a sister is often in conflict with her brother but he is still her brother and respected as such, the relations between the workers and the managers appear to be a love-hate relationship. While workers complain about their managers, they at the same time praise the moments they friendly share inside or outside the shop floor. Sevcan talks about her (male) manager in the sewing division:

> He is a very good person. He everyday asks me "how are you today?" Even when my son is sick, he wonders about his situation. Sometimes in the morning, he comes to the factory bringing some food and we have breakfast together. He even sometimes takes us outside to have a picnic.

There is only one female branch manager in the factory supervising the cutting division. As the male managers behave like "brothers", she displays "mother-like" relations to the workers under her supervision. Halide expresses her view of the

manager:

> She is very kind. She thanks us, asks about our private issues, calls us daughter… She is like a mother, understands us. For instance, if you're waiting for an important call during the working hours, she allows us to speak on the phone as long as we inform her about it in advance. She does so because she wants to defend us against the supervisor in case he sees us talking on the phone.

Interestingly, however, the use of family as a discursive mechanism is not peculiar to management efforts that result in further control over labor. A family discourse may also be used by workers themselves with different purposes as appeared in the other case. Exhausted by managers' "unfriendly" manners, every Mobitex worker emphasized their pursuit of family-style relations at the workplace. It was this pursuit of family that predominantly shaped their framing of issues during mobilization. Although there is a similar kind of vertical and horizontal gendered division of labor, the personnel who occupy key managerial positions are not tied with kinship and familial networks. Nor do the company managers use a language of family. That the politics of production was not revolved around a discourse of family, however, translated into worker discontent. All of the workers I interviewed complained about the way their supervisors approached them. They were frustrated by this unfriendly environment where the managerial staff did not consider their employees members of a family.

Workers' description of a family which they desired to emerge at the workplace was more or less the same—a family in which relations among members are based on mutual respect, some degree of intimacy and share of ideas. Deprived of such a work environment, workers harbored deep grievances which in turn fueled their collective resistance. Mobitex workers' yearning for family-like relations at the

workplace that emerged in the organizational and cultural dynamics became the dominant "emotional drive" for their collective action (Goodwin et al., 2000, Fleming and Spicer, 2008). According to the organized workers, this absence of family-like relations was much more important than material gains, which fueled their grievances and paved the way for mobilization. Workers feel themselves uncomfortable in their relations to the managers and the employer. They believe that under these circumstances they cannot be motivated to work more efficiently and also feel unhappy since they lack of family-like relations. The following is how Ayşe expressed her feelings when she was asked "what does it mean to be a family at the workplace?"

> Modesty is very important. You're just a manager not a son of a sultan! To be honest, if my manager doesn't say "good morning", doesn't ask "how are you today?", and doesn't take my opinions into account, what I'm gonna do with that manager? We can't even suggest our ideas, we can't speak! But sharing ideas (between workers and managers) and being *like a family* are very important for a company to survive. (emphasis added)

Installation of family rhetoric into the workplace introduces new practices that "would flatten hierarchies, encourage more participative decision-making processes and strengthen employees' feelings of identification and attachment, and displays of competence" (Casey, 1999: 160-161). As Ayşe emphasized, in the absence of "family", workers feel more directly exposed to hierarchical barriers and totally excluded from the decision-making process, as well as detached and incompetent. Therefore, while the family-like relations facilitate workers' integration into their jobs and thus function as an inclusionary mechanism as in the case of Cyntex, their absence creates exclusionary practices through which Mobitex workers

gain no sense of a family member. In this exclusionary environment, workers lack integrative mechanisms which they think quite significant for both worker motivation and company success. According to Selma,

> The most important factor behind a company's success is the respect and love that it shows to their workers. This has never ever happened here. Our supervisors, managers, employer don't know anything about human psychology. They should learn how to approach and get on with workers. I sometimes may feel bad or not want to work. So, they should know how to motivate us.

Not only do they feel excluded but also threatened by danger of losing self-respect and self-value under the ongoing unfairness at the factory. All of the workers I interviewed had a memory about how they were inhumanly treated at the workplace even in their practices of religion. Nezhiye told one of her unforgettable memories:

> Last year in Ramadan, the time for breaking the fast was very late, like 9:00 pm. We weren't even allowed to have iftar. Work comes first! Our managers gave us a tomato and cucumber, and said "eat this food" in the iftar. Or they gave us a package of cheap biscuit to be shared between 10 workers. Everyone knew that, our boss, supervisors, directors… We complained about it to the supervisor. He just shouted like "this is Mobitex, this is Turkey! Here is the door, work or leave if you like!" They behaved us like an animal. I will never forget these days!

While family discourse functions as a management strategy for labor control in Cyntex, it emerges as an important motive through which workers frame their issues to challenge their conditions in Mobitex. Therefore, considering the different contexts on which it emerges, family as a discourse can be a control mechanism over labor as much as workers' challenge to that control. Nor do family-like relations come to be strengthened by kinship ties in the case of Mobitex where worker recruitment is not as informal as in Cyntex. Workers' yearning for family-like relations along with an ongoing "unfairness" at the workplace stimulated their

mobilization.

4.5 Resistance Strategies in and through "Family"

Cyntex family is by no means without problems among its members. Unequal distribution of power relations between workers and the competition to be a "favorite child" divide members of this family into competing groups at the workplace. Some workers are highly disturbed by this atmosphere and distance themselves from competing groups. Despite taking a cynical view of the workplace relations, they are simultaneously integrated in the roles which they try to escape. Far from turning into a collective resistance, their cynicism is subordinated to managerial discourse of family and thus fails to transcend the limits of this family. In contrast, Mobitex workers lack a family environment where they could keep their issues within the family. The existence of close networks among workers in the absence and pursuit of a family at the workplace becomes an important resource for mobilization as well as a determinant of resistance strategy. Ethnicity, gender and neighborhood factors facilitate the emergence of trust and solidarity around the idea of union. They at the same time provide physical conditions where workers can come together and arrange meetings to mobilize support. Workers' neighborhood networks made it easier to mobilize support by visiting houses one by one. I now elaborate more on the factors which divide Cyntex workers and, in contrast, unite Mobitex workers around the idea of collective resistance.

4.5.1 A Family with Problems

Cyntex is a "family" which is not without problems at the workplace. There are serious divisions among workers due to the competitive environment of the

company. Some groups of workers are thought to be holding privileged positions on the shop floor. Based on interview data, three groups can be identified: the male workers having kinship and familial relations to management; the female relatives of the managers claimed to be spying on their coworkers; and the female workers having sexual relations with the branch managers. In addition to these prevalent groups, there are some other workers that have no familial and kinship ties or sexual relations with the managers but still aim to get the same advantages given to the privileged workers. What remains outside the competition between the privileged group and the demanding group are a small group of discontents. These workers use a cynical disposition as their individual experiences contradict the "family" orientation of the labor process, which is highly celebrated in the company culture. Employee cynicism is one of the strategies to resist the normative controls at the workplace, and defense and distancing are popular ways of explaining this cynicism (Fleming, 2005). Although it may be a trigger for collective mobilization or other overt forms of resistance, cynicism not necessarily result in a transformative workplace politics (Fleming and Spicer, 2003; Willmott, 1993). Some respondents expressed their cynicism as they told how exhausted they were from the competitive atmosphere among workers and thus skeptical about the genuineness of "family" at the workplace. Emergence of cynical attitudes following the loss in credibility is not uncommon in the workplaces where family rhetoric is installed (Casey, 1999). However, the potential of employee cynicism as a source of collective resistance or mobilization frequently dissolves when the management responses to that cynicism with a more intensified emphasis on family rhetoric. It is partially this process of intensification that paralyzes Cyntex workers' will to resist. Nevertheless, this is only

one part of the explanation. The other is related to workers experiences of debt, which has roots in the political economic context. How financial liabilities of workers along with Cyntex's specific conditions increase worker dependence and thus weaken the possibilities for collective resistance is the subject of next section. Before that, I now analyze the implications of family rhetoric for workers' resistance patterns.

The family in discourse and the family in practice by no means result in a peaceful environment where every worker is satisfied with their conditions. It is a family where power relations are unequally distributed also among sisters that compete with one another. I argue that this competition among Cyntex "family members" undermines the emergence of collective resistance at the workplace. The first privileged group consists of the male employees that hold superior positions by virtue of their kinship and familial relations to management which further strengthens the horizontal segregation on the shop floor. Even if not employed in higher positions related to shop floor work, the male members still engage in managerial jobs such as canteen operating or finding new customers to the company. In contrast to the male privilege of kinship and familial ties in gaining higher positions, all the female members are employed in low-status jobs. In other words, the male members take the advantage of family and kinship ties in gaining higher status in the company, which is not the case with the female members. Serap talks about the employees who are from the same family or kinship with the boss:

> Not all of them hold high status jobs like managers, supervisors, or directors. For example, their cousins operate the canteen. But especially their sisters-in-law (the wives of cousins or brothers) are employed in low-status jobs like us. I saw once our manager kicking his cousin's wife

> in front of us. Because of long working hours, she couldn't stand and fainted. Our manager saw her on the floor, came and kicked her to wake her up to continue working.

Although these women do not enjoy the advantage of family and kinship ties in gaining higher status in factory, they enjoy this privilege in their relations to other women workers. Therefore, they constitute another privileged group that fuels divisions among workers. This privilege emerges when they think to be different from other ordinary workers who do not have kinship ties to the managerial staff. Sevcan, who has any familial and kinship ties to management told how this had happened:

> They (the employers) have sisters-in-law working on the shop floor. You must see them! They're walking around like showing off. They use the shuttles. In the shuttle they're joking among each other to get the front seats like "I'm the first bride, I must take the front seat"

These women are thought to be spying on their coworkers in order to inform the managers about any inconvenience. Therefore, ordinary workers are not only at the gaze of managers but also of women workers of the same family or kinship with the managerial staff. Just as it functions as a control mechanism, it at the same time leads to emergence of divisions among women workers. When a worker is known to be a relative of the managers or the employer, she automatically becomes the enemy, who will betray her coworkers as soon as an opportunity arises. They are stigmatized by other workers as the "boss's men"[4]. Even the new comers are treated with this suspicion, as Suzan tells:

[4] Here, the term "boss's men" is directly translated from its Turkish version as "patronun adamları". Workers use this term to refer to those who are thought to side with management and thus ready to "spy on" their coworkers to gain advantages. Therefore, the term does not have any female or male connotation but encompasses the both wherever workers use it.

> When I first started to work, our branch manager and other workers were staring at me. They were weird and strange to me. I then realized what's happening when my manager asked me "are you the employer's bride?" No! it was just a misunderstanding, I have coincidentally the same surname with the company owners.

Another worker, Nuran, who is the sister of branch manager' wife told how she had been excluded and felt isolated on the assembly line:

> Since they know that I'm branch manager's relative, they (coworkers) haven't accepted me as a friend. Only my brother-in-law stays with me in lunch or tea breaks, otherwise I stay alone. I think it's because of my sister. She worked here before me and was gossiping about everything to her husband, I mean, to our manager. They think I might be like my sister spying on them.

Informal ties based on kinship somehow undermine those based on ethnicity and consolidate the divisions among workers. Regardless whether they really spy on their coworkers, the workers bounded the managerial staff with kinship ties are directly stigmatized as the "boss's men". Being a boss's man however has its own advantages. The managers protect them, allocate less work to them, ignore their mistakes, and allow them to leave earlier. This privileged group does not only consist of the workers of the same kinship but also those who desire to be involved in that group. Interestingly, workers are also divided between those who criticize and distance themselves from the workers having kinship ties to the managerial staff and those who want to participate in this privileged group so that they can benefit from the same advantages. In these circumstances, "there is no such thing as solidarity because everyone thinks of their own interests and cheats on each other" (Suzan). Also, "to be a favorite worker" becomes "the best thing that a worker can do" because "once you're favorite, no one else can clash with you and you guarantee your position" (Halide). This increases the pressure on workers for competition

among each other. In Perihan's words,

> Everyone is in competition with one another to be a favorite worker. I am the favorite worker in our division. Our manager repeats it in every meeting in front of other workers. He advises others to become like me. Other workers, of course, get jealous of me.

Another group that is thought be gaining privileges consists of the women that are claimed to get advantages through sexual relations with the managerial staff. Cyntex Textile has been identified as a company where workers' sexual affairs or sexual harassment in particular are common. Even the workers of other factories in the zone referred to Cyntex as a dangerous place to work for women: "if you work at Cyntex, you eventually lose your honor" (interview). All of the Cyntex workers I interviewed also were aware of this bad reputation and even some of these women experienced sexual harassment at the workplace. Some of the women that had been harassed at work complained to their supervisors about it while others were not able to do so. However, not all workers identify sexual relations in the factory as harassment. Women usually despise their widow coworkers for being "sexually available" especially referring to the way they dress in the workplace. Distancing themselves from their female coworkers that behave "inappropriately", women believe that most women workers in the factory do everything to win their managers' favour. Behaving "seductively" is considered the most effective way for women to ingratiate themselves with those in key positions.

Sexual relations at work can be interpreted in different ways considering control-resistance dynamics (Fleming, 2007). Burrell, for instance, identifies sexual relations at the workplace as resistance to managerial control when they express a "demand not to be controlled" (Burrell, 1984: 102). He argues that workplaces are

historically “desexualized” areas because sexual activity within capitalist organizations has been considered inappropriate having disruptive influence on the production process and workforce discipline. However, among others, he emphasizes that sexuality is not irrelevant to the workplace, rather it is everywhere. It is in individuals’ self-representation and dressing, in jokes and gossip, looks and flirtations, secret affairs and fantasy, as well as in verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature (Pringle, 1990: 162). According to Burrell (1984), consensual sexual activity at the workplace can be considered resistance against the management efforts to desexualize the workplace. Cyntex bears mixed implications. To the extent that interview data allow, the sexuality dimension reveals in different forms including sexual harassment, consensual sexual activity, gossiping about workplace relationships, and the women workers that are thought to be having intimate relations with managers for the purposes of gaining advantages. Therefore, workplace sexuality at Cyntex is neither strictly resistance that workers consensually engage in at the expense of managerial threat nor control that the male staff exerts on the female subordinates.

“Everyday, on my way to the factory, I was wondering ‘what will happen today’: Cyntex is like a soap opera!” said Sevim as she talked about the workplace relationships. Cyntex, as a typical industrial organization, seemingly attempts to desexualize workplace (Burrell, 1984; Collinson and Collinson, 1989; Fleming, 2007). The main employer immediately dismisses workers who are engaged in sexual relations at work. However, unless the boss hears about gossips, no one loses her/his job. In fact gossips are much more frequent than the cases of dismissals. If not a big scandal, the employer rarely fires workers for their involvement in sexual

relations at the workplace. The most important reason for this attitude is probably the employer's reluctance to fire his skilled workers because male branch managers as well as employer's partners are those who frequently engage in sexual relations at work. Many male employees that hold superior positions sexually abuse female subordinates at the workplace. Cyntex workers gave a variety of examples of male managers sexually harassing female subordinates in forms of repeated requests for dates, deliberate touching or bodily contact, staring, looking up and down, and making sexual comments. Some of the workers I interviewed had recently quit their jobs for sexual harassment of their managers or employers as one of these women, Serap, explained:

> They (managers or employers) even harass the young trainees. I also know the youngest brother of the boss had a relationship with my friend who later had an abortion and was fired. He usually comes to work drunk. After my friend, he started to make a pass at me and I quit the job in the end.

Not all the sexually harassed women were able to leave their jobs. As soon as an event of harassment reveals, women, not the managers, are threatened by losing their jobs. Therefore, women are usually silent when faced with manager abuse because "they have to condone the managers' behaviours if they are to earn a living", says Sibel. Sexually harassed women faced with the threat of losing their jobs become more amenable to management control. This strengthens the control of male manager over the female labor in the case of Cyntex. Among the female workers, widowed, separated or divorced women are particularly more at risk because they are considered the most available targets in the workplace. As Sevcan explains, "widows are working by necessity and what happens in society continues to be happening on

the shop floor".

One important implication of workplace relationships or harassment is that they further divide women among each other. Workers predominantly accused of their coworkers particularly the widowed of being sexually available to the male managers. A group of women whose names frequently take place in gossips have been despised and excluded by their coworkers. For many, women are harassed because they allow it to be so:

> Widows even shouldn't say anyone that they are widowed. (Halide)
>
> Even a look means everything. You may look seriously but you may also look seductively. (Aynur)
>
> This is about personality. A woman means honor. Some honorably work but others not. (Zeynep)

Most of the workers distanced themselves from Cyntex's identification of "a dangerous place for women to work" as they were critical of the managers or the women that "inappropriately" behave or dress at the workplace. These criticisms usually circulate through gossip. Another important implication of workplace relationships at Cyntex is reflected in these gossips that target particular workers perceived as competitors. Gossiping about women's sexual relations with male managers and coworkers or their inappropriate behaviours at the workplace is widespread among the Cyntex workers. In addition to functioning as a control over female sexuality and behavior, gossips are strategically used by women as a means to eliminate their "rivals" on the shop floor. Through the spreading of negative gossip, a worker's demand to be included in the privileged group may result in the exclusion of other. Once the employer hears about a gossip that he is not expected to tolerate

because it is a big scandal, gossipers are aware that their targets will lose their jobs. Nalan, a young single woman, was one of the workers once chosen to be the object of gossips:

> We sometimes see writings on the walls of the workplace toilets. These are gossips about women, something like "she is a bitch", "she sleeps with him", "she dates him"… They give all the actual names and this sometimes becomes a scandal when the boss hears about it. This happened to me. I was a favorable worker getting on well with my managers. But there were some women that were jealous of and hostile to me. One day I saw my name writing on the toilet wall. Everyone was talking about me! Liars! I got out of the control and quit the job before the boss quit me. The gossipers are still working there but I lost my job!

Regardless of what has been told is true or not, gossiping about sexual relations appears as one mechanism that workers use for the purposes of competition that may result in worker dismissals or leaves. It is worth noting that work relationships can be quite intimate and intense as employees work closely and share most of the day on the shop floor. Romantic and consensual relationships may occur among workers as well as between workers and managers (Williams et al., 1999). In fact, some workers recognize that romantic relationships are also evident in the factory. "We always see couples hugging each other on every corner at the lunch breaks" says one of the workers (Gülcan). Even one of the managers married a worker despite the boss's disapproval: "Our manager married one of the workers and didn't care what our boss had said. But soon after, they both quit the jobs because of the pressures" (Serap). Despite gossips and management threats, these workers somehow resist the desexualization of the workplace and thereby express their "demands not to be controlled" (Burrell, 1984: 102). Nevertheless, Cyntex continues to be a family with problems, in which problems are subsumed under the discourse

and practices of family.

4.5.2 Emergence of Solidarity and Trust around Gender, Ethnicity and Neighborhood Ties

Unlike Cyntex, just as family is entirely absent as a discourse, worker recruitment at Mobitex is also not based on ethnic, kinship or familial ties. Although the majority of workers is Kurdish and lives in close neighborhoods, there is not a managerial control that manipulates these ties. In contrast to Cyntex where ethnic, family and kinship relations altogether intensify the control over labor, ethnic and community ties became important resources at Mobitex that workers used for the purposes of mobilization. The long hours of work prevented workers meeting inside the factory about their issues. The fact that they live in same or close neighborhoods made it possible to arrange meetings outside the workplace. Their ethnic ties had already facilitated friendships as well as emergence of trust among workers. Mobitex workers had a shared sense of grievance and believed the effectiveness of collective action. Coupled with the emergence of injustice frame which put all responsibility on the management, workers were able to develop a collective response. As Blyton and Jenkins (2012b) argue, common framing of issues is also strengthened by common experiences deriving from holding similar positions in society and living in same neighborhoods. Fatma succinctly explains how they organize and mobilize around the idea of unionization:

> First, we organized in small groups. We were three workers in the beginning. Then we selected people that we can trust. To be honest, the most facilitative factor behind our mobilization is that we are mostly from Muş-Varto and live in close or same neighborhoods.

The core group that initiated the mobilization activities consists of three close friends who are also of the same ethnic origin. Their common identity as Kurdish women workers strengthened the development of resistance based on trust relations. Through these ties, workers were able to convince others and reach the sufficient number to establish a union. It is similarly this close network that helped the core group easily visit other workers in their houses during pre-mobilization. Despite the facilitative factors, however, mobilization is by no means an easy task. Şükran told how difficult to mobilize support from some workers:

> There were workers that didn't want to join the union. Women were afraid of their husbands and fiancées or they were afraid of losing their jobs. But we visited them in their houses one by one. We talked to their husbands or fiancées, and convinced the abstainers in the end.

The workers' close networks as well as their meetings in the houses spread the idea of unionization. The more they learnt about their rights, the more they became confident and believed that they could achieve. For those who initially had no belief in success, Ayten states, "we told them everything about their rights and gained their trust because even one worker was very important and we didn't want to lose anyone". In the beginning, even this core group, the three friends that initiated lobbying, did not have any experience and even any idea of unions or worker rights. They only knew that unions were dangerous and they could lose their jobs. These workers first mobilized those who they could trust because they could have failed if their union activities had been heard by the managers. Their only fear was failure of mobilization rather than losing their jobs because they thought that "they had nothing to lose" (interviews). A few workers by themselves visited the textile union, told

their working conditions and learnt about their rights. All the women I interviewed were aware of basic worker rights and even some of them had information leaflets that were provided by the union. Although some divisions did not support mobilization, the workers achieved the majority required for unionization in the company. In contrast to Mobitex, the degree of divisions and competition among workers are far from being negotiable at Cyntex.

Unlike Cyntex, the workers in Mobitex also have not faced with any serious difficulties in terms of sexual harassment at the workplace. The widowed workers are still considered the most available targets in the eyes of male managers. However, in contrast to Cyntex, women workers at Mobitex do not consider "seductiveness" as a "weapon" to win male managers' favor. Women did not refer to any workplace relationships that had been the object of gossips, and none of them despised their female coworkers for abusing their "womanhood". Workplace sexuality does not have a strong impact on Mobitex workers' relations as in the case of Cyntex. Among the workers I interviewed, only one of the workers, Ayten, who was widow at that time told that she had sexual harassment once. Before her second marriage, one of the managers, although he was married with children, pressured her for a date. She refused him but did not complain about it to the employer: "It is all about that I'm a widowed woman. If he genuinely approached to me, I wouldn't get that much angry". The same worker added her opinions about consensual workplace relationships, which she found quite "normal" to happen in a workplace environment:

> I don't judge people hanging out at the workplace. We work long hours and see each other every day, more than I see my daughter. So, to me, emergence of intimate friendships is very normal after sharing that much time and working together under very difficult conditions. I, myself, met

> my husband that way! We both work at Mobitex. It's my second marriage and I'm happy. There is nothing embarrassing about it.

Except for this case, however, none of the workers I interviewed thought that sexual harassment or workplace relationships are widespread in the company. Mobitex does not have a bad reputation like Cyntex, either. All of the Mobitex workers I have seen had a look, which Cyntex workers might criticize for being inappropriate. They wore, for example, miniskirts, colorful socks, and denim jackets while almost half of the Cyntex workers wore head scarves having a conservative look. Lacking evidence for worker's political affiliations, however, it would be a rough description that ideology matters in workers' stances to sexual relationships at the workplace. Nevertheless, as far as the interview data show, Mobitex workers do not face with sexual harassment as frequently as in Cyntex and the workplace relationships are not manipulated by managers again as in the case of Cyntex. Consequently, workplace sexuality does not appear to divide Cyntex workers as it does in Cyntex.

4.5.3 More on Different Patterns: Employee Cynicism and Mobilization

What are the implications of all these divisions and competition for resistance patterns at Cyntex? As noted, the main implication is the emergence of cynical attitudes among some workers, which have failed to turn into a collective response against their conditions collapsing into the family rhetoric. The family involves the "condition of ambivalence" which Casey identifies as the "manifestation of an incomplete internalization, or incomplete rejection" of the corporate values or behaviors (Casey, 1999: 169). One such manifestation of ambivalence is the

expression of the wish to find intimacy with workers one works alongside for long hours, and the desire to escape them after hours. Aynur who has been working for six years describes this confusion:

> When I first started, I thought I had really good friends. You know it's always good to have close friends on the shop floor because you work together, you work really long hours together and become like a family. Soon I realized everyone here competes with one another. You can't find any genuine friendships, they just pretend. Even if they seem to be friends they do it for their own interests to ask for a favor like "can you work overtime for me today?" I don't have any friend from work that I meet outside the workplace. Why should I see them outside? I already see them enough. When I'm gone from here, I don't wanna see any face from work.

This confusion arises from the contradictions between the family rhetoric and the individual experiences. The confusion becomes stronger when workers are unable to express their frustration as long as they are limited by "familial" practices. In fact, the managerial response to the worker frustration results in a more intensified process of identification with the company's familial culture and productivity goals (Casey, 1999: 171). A similar process happens at Cyntex as seen in Halide's statement below when she talked about regular company meetings:

> Meetings are frequent especially before the loading days. We sometimes really can't stand working overtime in the loading days. Like, orders will never end those days! Manager comes and says "good job girls, we're doing well. Don't give up, work harder".

Suzan also tells how their boss joins the meetings in the loading days:

> He tries to motivate us saying things like "Today is very important. It is how we earn money, and this is your success. I know some of you already work hard. I want all of you to work hard, finish that job and get your money". He sometimes speaks too much and even tells how they have become such a big company. He always says "never complain, I was a worker like you before".

The loading days are the busiest days that workers work longer hours to finish the orders until the deadline. Therefore, workers feel more stressed and exhausted, and the meetings are more frequent those days. The meetings especially those in which the boss also participate are an opportunity for workers to voice their complaints: "we always talk each other before the meetings and decide to say our common complaints but this never happens. The boss tells something and we turn back to our jobs" (interview). However, as this worker says, this "opportunity" usually results in a meeting where the management encourages workers to turn back to their jobs and work harder. These meetings are also an opportunity for "hardworking" employees to be shown as a model for others. I have already quoted the "favorite worker" Perihan whose success is declared by the manager in the meetings. Suzan also implies that company meetings are the crucial events where favorite workers are appreciated as she mentions the boss's statement "I know some of you already work hard". Although some workers decide to voice their complaints before the meetings, they avoid standing out in a competitive environment where favorite workers are appreciated.

The way that workers attribute the sources of their issues also bears contradictions. According to scholars of mobilization theory, attribution of source of injustice to the managers or the main employer rather than some invisible forces of capitalism is central to the emergence of collective action at the workplace (Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a, 2012b; Kelly, 1998). Cyntex workers display contradictory implications for this kind of attribution and their description of managers are sometimes mixed. Some attribute any discontent or frustration to their managers (not to the employer) and hold them responsible for any of the problems which occurred

or may occur at the workplace:

> Everything ends up with the managers. We rarely see our boss but we're always at the gaze of our managers. He allocates the work, he evaluates our performance, he decides how much to produce and how long to work that day. The boss even doesn't know what is going on here on the shop floor. When we have any complaints, we directly go to the boss. In fact our boss says "you should come to me first if you have a problem". He's a nice guy and, though young, very mature for his age, not like the managers. If he really knew about some of our managers and how they were unjust to us, he wouldn't let them work here.

While the employer is known to have a good personality, some managers are accused of treating workers unjustly. Workers rarely contact the employer, and the meetings in which they have a chance to see him and tell about their complaints turn out to be "motivation" session instead—a session where the "family" is emphasized, the "favorite child" is appreciated and the workers are left with no choice. Further, not all managers are "bad brothers". As noted before, there are many instances that workers share friendly moments or engage in brother-sister relations with managers. Therefore, attribution of injustice to the managers is not only far from having any signs of collective resistance but also this potential is paralyzed by family-like relations at the workplace. In return, worker cynicism cannot find a way of expression in form of collective response but is strategically displaced through acceptance. As other studies indicate, "the company is family and prison at the same time", which results in a process of "keeping it all in the family" (Gabriel, 1999: 180, 191).

As a consequence, despite similar criticisms and problems, Cyntex workers eventually find a common ground with management where they can participate in family-like relations. Even some Cyntex workers resist this normative control

through less visible strategies such as distancing and cynicism. However, these strategies fail to translate into collective mobilization. As compared to Cyntex workers whose grievance is subsumed under "family", Mobitex workers express their discontent with managers in every single affair going on in the factory. Human resources manager emphasized that the company has always been in a good contact with their employees. Workers, she added, are offered alternative communication channels: they can contact with human resources personnel, they can use Mobitex call support for employees, or they can directly visit the employer. Although, she claims that "the company put no barriers to workers, and the doors are always open to them", workers' experiences prove otherwise. According to the workers I interviewed, when they tried to meet the human resources manager to voice their complaints, she merely repeated "this is Mobitex, you must admit". Workers were further convinced that nothing was "fair" inside the company. In Ayten's words,

> How could they behave such unconscionable! I always say this: management is a shirt with fire. It's not only about managing but also being fair to all. A president, a governor, a market manager… doesn't matter, it's all about fairness. If you're not fair to people, how can you sleep at night?

Mobitex workers' grievance against the management therefore is framed in terms of unfairness and pursuit of family-like environment at work. Scholars have already pointed out that frames stimulate mobilization by inspiring and legitimating collective action (Benford and Snow, 2000). Blyton and Jenkins (2012b) go one step further and argue that specific geographic and community characteristics also contribute to the emergence of collective response at the workplace. Drawing on Kelly's mobilization theory and Benford and Snow's frame analysis, they point out

the importance of community factors in understanding the processes that underpin the collective action. The initial sense of injustice and the attribution of the source of this injustice to the management are the main triggers for collective action (Kelly, 1998: 27). However, not every sense of injustice translates into collective action. In understanding how a successful transformation could be possible, Blyton and Jenkins (2012a, 2012b) argue, framing analysis is particularly useful. Frames entail an interpretive function which helps give meanings to events or occurrences and thus guide action. They are also collective in character when perform as "action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings" intended to mobilize support (Benford and Snow, 2000: 614). Therefore, central to the emergence of collective action is the common sharing of a particular framing of an issue. It is in this process of framing that the "nature of community" which refers to the sharing of common experiences by virtue of occupying similar positions in society significantly contributes to the collective framing of that particular issue. Both Cyntex and Mobitex have similar characteristics regarding the "nature of community" employed in the companies. However, in the former, the relations based on familial and kinship ties intertwined with family as a discursive control mechanism paralyze workers' will to collective resistance. Worker dependence is stronger at Cyntex not only because of the "family" but also due to the competition-related divisions among workers. Rather than seeking solutions within the company whose management they think was unwelcoming to them, Mobitex workers united in organizing a union at the workplace. As noted, mobilizing workers is not an easy task regardless of the amount of grievance they harbor. Workers' collective identity as Kurdish women who also live in same neighborhoods facilitated mobilization as well as emergence of relations

based on trust.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have pointed out the importance of cultural and social aspects in understanding the capital and labor dynamics and, in particular, argued that the relations based on gender, family, kinship and ethnicity are not irrelevant to the analysis of labor process, control over labor, and workplace resistance. Basing this contention on a comparative framework, I have underlined that the recruitment process makes a difference in production politics even in the apparently similar workplace contexts. Although the composition of workforce in terms of gender, ethnicity and neighborhood is almost same between two factories, recruitment of workers based on familial and kinship ties alters the production regime and resistance patterns. The predominance of workers who have familial and kinship ties to the management has resulted in the construction of "family" at the workplace. Existence of close networks among workers and managers has been also supplemented by the managerial discourse of family. This is by no means a happy family rather it is a family with problems and competition among children. In this process, some workers harbor cynical attitudes as they deal with difficult working conditions and high competition among several groups in the factory. Employee cynicism is a type of resistance and may transpose into collective response against the management. However, this may also turn into a "self-defeating" practice on behalf of workers as seen in the case of this factory (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Workers cannot find a way of expression within the confines of family. Whenever they voice their criticisms, they are reintegrated into their familial roles as managers

intensify the process of identification of workers with the company. Interestingly enough, what becomes an obstacle for one group of workers emerges as a resource for the workers of another factory. The nature of community and geographical factors which include gender, ethnicity and neighborhood became the strong resources for mobilization and resistance strategies of workers. This factory lacking a managerial discourse of family and following a formal procedure of recruitment led to emergence of common framing of grievance among workers due to the unfriendly environment of the workplace. Despite having a workforce with similar characteristics, the management neither manipulated the close ties among workers nor developed an image of company as a family. Workers' common characteristics became their resources to establish a common framing of the issue, that is the absence of family-like relations at the workplace. Frustrated by the attitudes in which their managers approached to them, workers could not find a way of reintegrating themselves into their jobs and felt excluded at the workplace. Their grievance or feeling of injustice was attributed to the managers and the employer with a shared framing of the issue. Their cause was added to the emergence of trust and solidarity that derived from the common ties among workers and resulted in mobilization. Therefore, the absence or presence of "family" altered the resistance patterns between two factories, leading to or paralyzing the development of collective response against their equally difficult conditions.

CHAPTER V

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INCREASED LEVELS OF HOUSEHOLD DEBT FOR LABOR DISCIPLINE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how workers' perception of fairness develops around company's policy on payments and alters the resistance-control dynamics at the workplace, by analyzing the wage structure in textile and situating workers' experiences of debt in broader political economic trends. Textile and garment are part of an industry where workers receive lower wages that are frequently paid irregularly and inadequately. Although they still deviate from some legal procedures, Cyntex and Mobitex are different in the sense that workers can receive payments on time and regularly. However, earning of an ordinary worker is higher in the former due to excessive hours of overtime and incentive system. It is at this point that workers' perception fairness diverges. Mobitex workers do not consider any unfairness in wages as long as they are paid regularly. Although it is difficult to find similar factories where workers receive regular payments, they still believe that they can find another company to work if they are to quit jobs. Their main concern is rather the unfairness that derives from the managerial attitudes towards them. This is not unrelated to the demand for family-like relations at the workplace. Cyntex workers, on the contrary, perceive fairness totally in terms of earnings they receive.

According to these workers, there is no hope for finding a similar factory that pays as much as Cyntex in the textile sector of the region. Yet, that Cyntex workers receive better incomes is highly associated with the portrayal of Cyntex workers as indebted. Cyntex workers' association with indebtedness is not coincidental but rather part of a broader picture rooted in the political economic developments. Household indebtedness has increasingly becoming an issue in Turkey, especially for low-income working families. Alarming rates of indebtedness in the last decade has both international and domestics sources. Increasing role of finance at the international level and neoliberal populism at the national level have combined to affect household behaviour. That is, household expenditures of consumption have followed an upward trend. Growing levels of consumption has been fed by an increase in rates of debt particularly through consumer loans and credit cards. Among those who go into debt, the low-income waged labor constitute the largest share.

The case of Cyntex is representative of the indebted waged labor who are encouraged for consumption through debt in the available conditions provided by broader political and economic environment. This at the same time brings our attention to the micro level which combines with broader developments. The absence of typical issues at Cyntex Company— the issues associated with textile industry such as inadequate earnings and irregular payments—makes the company a "star" on the eyes of the textile workers in the region. Paying as high as possible could be in a textile factory or being associated with offering the "highest" earnings, Cyntex attracts workers who aim to use bank loans or have already gone into debt. This shows how macro and micro level developments have come affect each other resulting in the further dependence of workers which diminishes the possibilities for

collective resistance. Despite devastating working conditions, Cyntex workers are both satisfied with what they earn at the end of a work-month, and feel motivated with incentive systems at the workplace. In contrast, Mobitex lacks of any kind of incentive systems that connect workers to their jobs although it follows a similar "fair" policy in terms of payments. Mobitex has relatively less overtime work than Cyntex. In addition, workers are not given any bonus or extra payments as such. Still, workers are not concerned with gaining with overtime or incentive systems. The wages they are offered are already not below the average in textile, and bonus system is in fact rare in manufacturing. As a result of their knowledge of wage structure in the sector, they do not have any higher expectations. What they are concerned more is to be recognized their right to reject overtime when managers order them to work longer hours. This demand was usually voiced as workers expressed their discontent with the pre-union working conditions at Mobitex and the pursuit of family-like relations. This has also implications for the role of debt in Mobitex workers' experiences. Wage-related issues are subordinated to the demand for a family environment. Nor do they think that they are particularly dependent on the earnings they receive from Mobitex because just another textile company can offer the same amount. Although both Mobitex and Cyntex workers are doubtlessly representative of low-income groups in society, their experiences of debt demonstrate different tendencies. This difference affects their reliance on earnings, thereby making Cyntex workers more dependent.

In this part, first, I provide an overview of wage structure in textile and garment industry in general and Cyntex and Mobitex in particular. Second, I focus on workers' experiences of overtime and bonus system. Third, I analyze Cyntex

workers' association with indebtedness. Finally, I connect workers' indebtedness to broader developments in finance and neoliberal populism, which provide available conditions for low-income groups to consume and go into debt at increasing levels. In doing so, I also emphasize that workers' experiences of debt may differ and result in distinct tendencies with respect to worker mobilization.

5.2 Earnings in Textile and Garment Industry

In Turkey's textile and garment industries, most workers are paid minimum wage or slightly higher despite having worked at the same workplace for several years. In 2012, the legal minimum wage was approximately 900 TL in terms of gross monthly income (Ministry of Labor, 2013a). This amount is below the national poverty line and much less than the threshold for a family of four to live a decent life, that is 985 TL and 3208 TL, respectively (Türk-İş, 2012). Although the minimum wage is already low, it is not uncommon for textile workers to be paid even below the minimum wage. Still, it is almost impossible to assess the accurate numbers due to the high rate of informal labor and underreporting of wages as well as the lack of official wage data broken down by occupation (Seidman, 2010: 505). It is worth noting that workers not covered by collective bargaining agreements earn only 45 percent of covered workers' wages in the overall manufacturing sector (TURKSTAT, 2010: 40). Of the registered workers in textile and garment industries, only 8 percent are represented by labor unions (Ministry of Labor, 2013b). This official report confirms that most workers in textile and garments tend to be paid very poor wages and work in abusive conditions due to extremely low rates of unionization.

Based on information collected through interviews with workers and union representatives, common characteristics of earnings in textile can be summarized as in the following: First, an ordinary registered assembly worker earn slightly above the minimum wage, and a line manager is paid slightly higher than a worker. Second, the workplace practices such as profit sharing, bonus scheme, or other incentive systems for workers are uncommon. Third, overtime work is inevitable in the sector but workers rarely receive adequate or legally defined amount of payments for the hours worked beyond regular hours. Even where overtime is fully paid, these payments are rarely officially recorded so that no tax and social insurance contributions have to be paid on top of them. Finally, worker payments both in forms of wages and overtime are typically not paid on time and regularly.

5.2.1 Earnings in the Factories

Except for the first one, Cyntex and Mobitex do not exactly fit in this portrayal of textile and garment sector in the region. These factories follow a "fair" policy on payments: workers are paid regularly and on time including wages and overtime. Furthermore, Cyntex implements an uncommon practice, that is, bonus scheme. Still, workers' emphasis on "fairness" is an exaggeration. As their wages are not increased according to the years they worked, their overtime is not paid in legally defined terms. According to the conditions specified under Turkish Labor Code No.4857[5], overtime work is work which exceeds 45 hours a week. The law limits total overtime to 21 hours in any given week, with a maximum of 11 normal hours of work in a day with one day off per week. Employees must consent to overtime work

[5] For English version, see Labor Act of Turkey
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/ankara/download/labouracturkey.pdf

and total overtime work must not be more than 270 hours in a year. Accordingly, workers are required to receive pay for overtime that complies with the legally-mandated rate of 1.5 times the normal hourly wage. Many workplaces reportedly fail to comply with the law: either no overtime is paid or it is paid at the rate of normal hour (Lally 2005; Stoop, 2005). According to the head of textile union, this is also the case with Mobitex and Cyntex. While workers argue that employer pays overtime at exact rates, the union representative points to widespread misunderstanding about overtime pays:

> Workers don't know what overtime is. Any hours worked beyond normal hours is overtime, and hourly rate for overtime work is 1/1,5. However, overtime is usually paid at the rate of 1/1 per hour and workers think that they get the exact amount of money.

Primary concern of Cyntex and Mobitex workers, however, is whether their wages and overtime pay are paid on time. Their criterion for fairness of money is not about employers' miscalculation of overtime as their main concern becomes receiving some amount of overtime in addition to their regular wages. Although wages are same in two companies, the money workers earn at the end of a month differs between them. Earnings are higher in Cyntex. While an ordinary line worker earns at most 850-900 TL at Mobitex, a worker in the same position earns at least 1000 TL at Cyntex. This difference derives from two practices: overtime and bonus pays. Overtime work is common in textile however employers usually avoid paying overtime regularly and adequately. Although both factories' employees work overtime and are paid accordingly, overtime work is much more frequent at Cyntex than Mobitex. Cyntex workers are also paid bonuses when they comply with certain rules at the workplace. It is the only textile factory in the zone that uses bonus

scheme and this regulation is rarely adopted in the overall manufacturing. When long hours of overtime and bonus pays are added to their monthly wages, Cyntex workers earn more than not only Mobitex workers but also any other textile workers in the region. Therefore, Cyntex is identified as a place to earn the best money in textile. This is what makes Cyntex workers' primary reason to work here despite all their complaints about working conditions. Furthermore, Cyntex workers are "different" from other textile workers in the zone in the sense that they are identified as more in need of money due to their debts. Cyntex is associated with its indebted workers. Any worker employed at Cyntex is thought to be a debtor. All of the workers I interviewed indeed have bank loans either for buying a new home or a car or meeting other familial expenses. As workers consider Cyntex a place to earn money much more than in any other companies, they highly rely on their incomes which they believe employers fairly and regularly pay. As it increases worker motivation at the workplace, this reliance is also reflected in workers' attitudes towards getting into debt. As a consequence, Cyntex's fair policy on payments as well as its bonus scheme creates a sense of guarantee that increases workers' expectations to repay their loans. This in turn enhances workers' dependence on Cyntex and appears as another control mechanism over labor.

5.2.2 Workers' Experiences of Overtime and Bonus

The meanings workers attach to overtime work differ between Mobitex and Cyntex. For Mobitex workers, overtime is a source of exhaustion as well as a forced activity and thus violation of worker rights when their consent is not obtained. At Cyntex, too, overtime work is hardly a matter of choice, rather, it is forced and

exhausting. However, Cyntex workers are at the same "willing" to work overtime because it means an opportunity to increase their incomes and thus causes them to work longer hours. Another similar opportunity at Cyntex is the bonus scheme through which workers earn a certain amount of money on the condition that they confirm to the rules set by the management. This is a rare regulation in manufacturing and thus seems quite attractive to workers. Most workers think that bonus is highly motivating and can be earned without much effort at the workplace. When bonus pay adds to wage, workers are automatically paid more than other workers in textile. On the contrary, Mobitex lacks any kind of incentive systems. Nor is its overtime work as frequent as at Cyntex.

Workers identify Cyntex's exceptionality in payments with almost same words: "we're dying of exhaustion but Cyntex really gives what you deserve" (interviews). Long working hours is the main source of this exhaustion. Although the shop floor works almost every day of the week, the factory does not have a shift system. A typical working day at Cyntex is divided into periods as in the following:

7.15-18.00	normal working hours
18.00-22.00	overtime
22.00-03.00	extra overtime
03.00-07.15	sleeping in the workplace

Cyntex workers rarely leave the factory at the end of the normal working hours. They usually work overtime until 10.00 in the evening. Most frequently, however, overtime continues until the morning. After a few hours of sleep in the workplace workers that stay for overtime continues to work during the normal

working hours. What they call "*sabahçılık*" that is the extra overtime which requires working until the morning and then continuing work until the evening, is the hardest part of working at Cyntex. *Sabahçılık* is common in the "loading days" which are the busiest days when workers are required to catch up the orders and load them into the trucks. Those who work until the morning make themselves a bed with leftover fabrics in the director rooms. When they wake up these workers have to be available to work in the normal hours as well. They sometimes stay in the workplace for days. As Serap says, "we know when to start but don't have any idea about when to stop". Working overtime is not a choice when the branch managers order workers to work overtime. As Perihan explains,

> They (managers) force us to stay for *sabahçılık.* We are allegedly allowed to reject overtime but in reality we must work overtime once the manager orders. *Sabahçılık* normally finishes at 3 a.m. but I've never seen it finish before 4 a.m.

Workers are forced to work overtime although the law mandates that in order to have workers work overtime or extra hours, the employer must obtain their consents. However, it is the managers not workers that have the final say on overtime. Deciding who is going to work overtime is far from being consensual: "The line manager comes and says like 'you, you and you're gonna stay for overtime', says Nuran. We don't have any choice, he just orders". They are not only forced but also threatened to work beyond normal hours. Those who reject to work overtime are faced with the choice of work or leave, as Halide explains:

> We make out 2000-3000 orders a day just in the cutting division. We also work overtime to finish the orders in other divisions. When we reject to work overtime, we are either given a warning or simply dismissed. As a rule, three warnings mean dismissal.

As one of the most exporting textile companies in the Aegean region, Cyntex has always orders to meet deadline and thus needs “hardworking” employees. Workers not only deal with orders in their divisions but also work overtime to finish orders in other divisions. If workers attempt to reject overtime, they are reminded the rule: “three warnings means dismissal”. Long hours of work and overtime have effects on workers social lives as well. Working excessively long hours leaves workers a very limited life outside the workplace. Exhausted by overtime work, Suzan explains how her family is affected:

> We work overtime until the orders are finished on the line. Going to work means you don’t have any social life. I can spend only half an hour to my child, family. When I’m home, going to bed is my biggest desire.

These workers are not able to decide on overtime, and excessive working hours is really a problem at Cyntex. Similar concerns were also raised by Mobitex workers. Ayten explains how they were forced to work longer hours before they organized a union:

> We couldn't say “no” when the line manager came and said “you’re gonna stay”. Leaving the workplace before 10.00 p.m. was hardly the situation. I remember the nights we worked overtime until the morning. The union came and then everything changed. Now I can say “no!”, “no I’m not gonna work overtime today”. It’s my legal right.

Before being represented by the textile union, Mobitex workers shared similar concerns with Cyntex workers about long working hours. They were not given the choice of rejection when overtime was ordered. However, at the same time, overtime was less frequent at Mobitex and *sabahçılık* was rare. Cyntex’s reputation for longer hours of work is not unknown to Mobitex workers. Nermin expresses her view of Cyntex in similar words as other Mobitex workers:

> Yeah, I've always heard about Cyntex workers. They work longer hours than we do because of too much overtime. They're even not allowed to walk around the outside of the factory in the lunch breaks. I also heard they sometimes sleep at the workplace and continue to work on the following day. I wouldn't like to work there.

Why then do these workers continue to work at Cyntex rather than quit the job and start a new one at another factory where overtime work is less tiring and more manageable? All of the answers are same: we work overtime but Cyntex pays us fairly, on time and regularly. As Sibel explains:

> Maybe the only reason for we still work at Cyntex despite excessive overtime is that we are regularly paid what we deserve. Actually, wages are pretty much the same in textile. But here we earn more because of overtime especially when we stay for *sabahçılık.* And we get our money timely.

According to them, it is rarely the situation in other factories in the region. In other factories, they claim, many workers wait for months to receive their overtime pay, if they ever get. These workers that have been working in textile sector for years know about the other factories in the region. Their experiences or what they hear from workers in other factories confirm their view that Cyntex has a really "fair" policy on payments. Halide talked about a similar experience:

> Because Cyntex is the best in the region, we don't want to quit our jobs despite all of our complaints. We work for money in the end. Cyntex pays the highest. Actually I once quit the job because I'm fed up with overtime work. I started a new job but couldn't earn and get my money as I did at Cyntex. So I turned back to Cyntex to earn more.

Halide could work at another textile factory only for a few months after she quit her job at Cyntex. She believes and also experienced that it is not possible to earn that much money elsewhere other than Cyntex. She is a young woman married

with one child but, like others, hardly spends time with her family as she says “I worked 50 hours overtime within two weeks”. As compared to overtime which requires very long hours of work and forces workers to stay at the workplace until the orders finish, bonus scheme is an “effortless” practice in the eyes of workers.

The management promises monthly bonuses to workers. In order to earn bonus pay, workers are required to meet a set of rules. In the initial states, workers were paid bonuses in proportion to the number of rules they followed. They were not expected to fulfill the rules at once. Soon after its implementation, however, the system changed to make the rules more binding. Bonuses were started to be given only when all rules are followed. In this new scheme, workers fail to get bonuses if they break any of these rules on any day of that particular month. Cyntex management identifies four principles that workers are required to follow to earn 120 TL extra payment, that is the bonus. The following principles are written in the notice boards:

1. be respectful to your managers
2. don’t use the restroom during working hours
3. don't take leave during the workday for any reason
4. don’t miss the employee shuttles

Earning bonus is not an easy and effortless task although some workers think otherwise. The second is usually the most difficult rule according to women workers:

> I had already done all of these things before bonus scheme was introduced at Cyntex. But as a woman I really have difficulties in obeying the rule about toilets. Most workers are women and we have some special days and needs, we’re not like men. We have to wait for the breaks to use the toilets or we lose the chance to earn bonus. (Gülcan)

Because women workers could not comply with this rule properly, the managers later started to allow women to use the toilets up to two times during the working hours. Male workers are still not recognized this exception. In order to follow how many times a worker uses the toilet during working hours, workers are required to sign a paper on which workers' names are listed. If the manager notices that a worker has more than two signatures, that worker is deprived of bonus pay for that particular month. After the second rule, the most difficult rule workers think is the third rule about leave. If they want to be entitled to bonus, workers must not take leave even in time of emergency.

> My son once was sick and I was at the hospital with him all night long. I wanted to go to work not to lose the bonus pay but missed the shuttle that morning. I was a little bit late and the line manager immediately asked me "where have you been?" I said my child was sick and asked for permission to go to the pharmacy. He didn't believe me and wanted to see a hospital report. I showed him the report and went to the pharmacy but didn't receive bonus for that month anyway. You must go to work even if your mother dies! (Halide)

Halide violated two rules: she missed the shuttle and asked for leave. Although it was an emergency and her only violation in a month, her manager did not entitle her to bonus pay. As all other workers, however, she did not want to be deprived of bonus and went to the workplace despite her case of emergency. Workers find the first rule "be respectful to your managers" easier than other rules. Regardless of whether they are paid bonus, none of the workers want to behave "disrespectful" in their relations with managers:

> We must be respectful if don't want to risk our jobs. We must learn to get on well with managers. Actually we sometimes handle each other as well. He sometimes ignores your mistake and, in turn, you work overtime without any questions when he orders. Then both of us will be happy. (Suzan)

"Handling" is one strategy to ease the possible tensions as workers are required to show respect to managers. This reciprocity between worker and manager is at the same time disciplining. While managers ignore minor mistakes, workers feel more and more indebted to managers. As Suzan says, "obeying orders without questioning" means to repay their indebtedness to managers. Here, respect means obeying orders—sometimes in exchange for minor favors through handling. In the end, workers are aware that the final word is of the manager on whether they will be entitled to bonus. Showing respect is difficult in abusive working conditions, but it is at the same time rewarding in form of bonus pay.

Cyntex's bonus scheme is rare both in itself with its four requirements and in the sector. Impressions, however, are mixed: bringing bonus system to Cyntex is a "proud" and "success" for the manager; "unique opportunity to make money" for the workers; and "just another practice to divide labor" for the head of textile union. It is indeed a success in the eyes of the managers not only because workers started to confirm to the rules more than ever but also because labor productivity has considerably increased:

> Although we have introduced nothing new except for the bonus scheme, since starting this system, labor productivity has increased by 30-40 percent. When workers feel motivated, you gain more. Because the more they are satisfied, the more they become productive. We have made a really good job that everyone appreciates.

Despite their difficulties in properly fulfilling the requirements, workers think that Cyntex's bonus scheme is an invaluable opportunity because it means extra money. The rewarding side of bonus regulation therefore undermines their problems which might arise as they comply with the rules. Some workers even go far to argue

that bonus is effortless and easy to earn. In Suzan's words,

> It's like money coming effortlessly. I already do these four rules. The only difficulty I've had is the rule about using toilets during working hours. I deal with it anyway. Bonus is quite motivating.

Whether they find it effortless or not, all workers consider bonus an opportunity to earn money and do their best to comply with the rules. When bonus and overtime are added to regular wage, an average monthly income for an ordinary worker reaches 1000-1200 TL. This amount is much above the net minimum wage which is approximately 750 TL. Although they earn higher than other textile workers whose incomes are equal to or slightly higher than the minimum wage, 1000-1200TL is still quite low with respect to the living standards in Turkey. As an ordinary textile worker, however, they cannot even imagine that they could earn much more than they receive in any other factories than Cyntex.

Perhaps the most important implication of bonus system for worker participation or motivation is the rising competitive environment at the workplace. As workers feel themselves more motivated and appreciate the rewarding side of bonus scheme, the management increases labor productivity to a considerable extent in the absence of any other work-related changes. This is similar to what Burawoy (1979) argues in *Manufacturing Consent*. Employing a metaphor of game, Burawoy explores how workers compete with each other to "make out" and surpass their expected production quotas. The more workers are skilful in playing the game, the more they receive incentive pays as well as garnered noneconomic incentives such as respect and prestige. In his case of shop floor workers, Burawoy argued, the game of making out obscured the fact that management was gaining productivity with only

minor increases in wages while obtaining workers' "consent" to produce. Cyntex's bonus scheme as a tough but "invaluable opportunity" adds another component of competition into the workplace where divisions among labor are already prevalent. Those who are in the close circle of managers are much more tolerated than other workers when manager comes to evaluate worker performance and entitle them to incentive pays. This is what some workers argued who did not think that they were one of those privileged.

> I really work much to get the bonus, much more than her! She takes leave whenever she wants, she talks on the phone while working, and many other things… but I've never seen her given a warning. She always gets bonus pays. I don't know why our line manager always ignores her mistakes. I think she must be doing something to get that money! (Nur)

As Nur emphasizes, some workers are thought to be unfairly benefiting from incentive pays. Bonus scheme is a competitive mechanism through which workers are offered incentive pays in proportion to their performance in fulfilling the requirements. It is the line managers that have the responsibility for evaluating worker performance. In addition, for each levels of production achieved over the minimum target, line managers are entitled to incentive pays. That is, the more the line workers produce, the more their managers earn. However, producing over the base target does not fuel antagonisms between managers and workers. What managers earn is not of a concern for workers. Rather, competition and conflict are reflected among workers arising from "who gets more than another". This is also what the union representative points out as he criticizes Cyntex's bonus scheme and the four requirements to earn bonuses:

> When it comes to bonus scheme… Bonus is neither reflected in payroll, nor in severance, nor paid as premium. Managers tell something and

> mislead workers as if they are written laws. Workers therefore take it as a rule and suppose this is the way it is. Bonus is like money coming from air! Managers probably receive a tax deduction for bonus payments or record them as another expense. What then is a bonus system? It is in reality nothing more than dividing workers, which leads to spying on each other. Otherwise, how do the managers check that workers confirm to the rules? For example, one rule says "be respectful to your managers". Well let's say a worker is apparently respectful to manager. But what if s/he swears at the manager when he is not around? Another worker probably will complain about it to the manager. Another rule again says "don't miss the shuttles". How do the managers know while hundreds of workers use the shuttles? A worker can miss the shuttle but s/he also can arrive earlier taking a bus. But still this is an opportunity for another worker to complain about it to the manager. Again, how do managers know how many times a worker goes to the toilet? This system raises an opportunity for workers to spy on each other in a competitive environment. This is nothing more than dividing workers.

"Spying on each other" is widespread among Cyntex workers because it is at the same rewarding. In exchange for minor favors or privileges, these workers speak about their colleagues to the line managers. While some workers guarantee bonus pays through "spying", managers receive information about any convenience on the shop floor which would slow down the pace of production. Therefore, workers' strategies to garner bonus at the expense of being stigmatized as "spying" add to their competition over "who gets more". As noted, earnings matter among Cyntex workers because they are employed at a company where workers are offered opportunities to increase their incomes.

Unlike Cyntex, Mobitex fits in the overall portrayal of wages in the textile sector in terms of earnings that an ordinary textile worker receives. Heard of Cyntex's bonus scheme, Ayten explains her opinions:

> I would expect that we could receive something like bonus in exchange for our extra efforts. Let alone bonus we were not even given a thing like a testimonial, a small present or just a "thank you" for our success! That would definitely motivate us.

Her point however is more about "being appreciated" rather than earning extra money. Here, the motivating side of bonus system outweighs the rewarding side of it. This is contrary to Cyntex workers' view of bonus system, which considers the rewarding side or earning extra money more important than being appreciated or feeling motivated. Mobitex workers have similar opinions about wages. In the absence of incentive systems and excessive overtime, Mobitex workers receive lower earnings than Cyntex workers:

> Wages are low in textile. With overtime, I could earn 900 TL at most. Though low, Mobitex was always fair about money. They always gave our money on time and paid our social security premiums. (Şükran)

Mobitex workers appreciate the company's policy on payments although their earnings parallel to the average in textile. Like Cyntex workers, they also emphasize how their wages are paid regularly and how it is difficult to find this kind of a factory in textile. The common view of Mobitex workers are reflected in Selma's words:

> If I wanted, I could earn the same money anywhere else but you know it's hard to find a company like Mobitex where I can receive my money on time and fairly. Wages are pretty much the same in textile as long as you don't work at Cyntex!

Mobitex and Cyntex are the largest textile factories in the zone operating next door to each other. Therefore, Mobitex workers know about the working conditions at Cyntex, and vice versa. In her statement, Selma emphasizes that earnings are higher at Cyntex. As some other interviewees, she also has a negative impression of Cyntex even if its workers are paid higher. Rather than earning higher incomes with excessive hours of work, Mobitex workers' main concern was to be able use their right to reject overtime work. This was the dominant view when workers talked to

me about their earnings. In Ayten's words, workers thought that "money is of course important but there are also other very important things. We wanted better conditions, we wanted our managers to know they couldn't make us do everything they wanted!" Therefore, Mobitex workers' approach to wages and incentive pays is not framed in "quantity", that is the amount of money they depend on, but in "quality", that is motivation and humane conditions they desire.

Why do then Cyntex workers, unlike Mobitex workers, prefer worse conditions with higher wages to better conditions with lower wages? Workers' dependence on higher incomes and thus Cyntex is not unrelated to the attribution of Cyntex workers to debt, which has roots in broader political and economic environment.

5.3 Every Worker is a Debtor

Cyntex workers are highly critical of long hours work but they at the same time appreciate the company's attitude towards overtime and bonus payments. When bonus and overtime payments are added to their monthly earnings, workers believe that they are paid what they deserve as well as at higher rates than in other textile factories. In the eyes of workers, Cyntex's policy on payments makes company a place to make money through alternative sources. Cyntex is not only associated with "higher incomes" but also with "indebted workers". Both Cyntex workers and other workers in the zone that I had conversations repeated that anyone working at Cyntex most probably has credit payments. Indeed, all of the women workers I interviewed identified "debt" as their main reasons for working at Cyntex Textile. My first interviewee was correct: "from every Cyntex worker you meet you'll hear things like

I bought or will buy a new house". They were all in debt without exception: some are in debt to the bank for a car loan, some for a house loan, and some for her family or children's expenses. Suzan is one of these workers:

> Cyntex is a place to earn good money. Since I've been working, I bought a new house and met my children's expenses. I'm really exhausted by overtime work but I also get happy at the end of the month when our payments are made. I must pay off my debts anyway.

Relying on higher incomes or payments that are regularly paid, these workers get into debt especially as soon as they start at Cyntex. All workers have concerns about bank loans like Halide: "I started job to get a bank loan because I want to buy a house. Everyone here has credit payments. We're dying to stay for *sabahçılık*!" The more they are in debt the more they find it difficult to risk or quit their jobs. As a result, the more they get bank loans the more they are willing to work for long hours of work:

> Even there are some workers feeling bad when orders are finished on time! Because we don't work overtime on these days. Workers rely on overtime and get bank loans to buy things like car, home, or pay their rents. What can we do otherwise with only minimum wage? Overtime means money. (Perihan)

Debt is a serious burden for these workers, so much so that they are not interested in whether overtime is calculated at legally defined rates. They know that they will receive their money on time and its amount will be more than a regular wage. Once they guarantee bonus pay, the only matter becomes "the more I work overtime the more I earn this month". In fact, workers are not recognized their right to reject overtime because their managers force them to work beyond normal work hours. Otherwise, they are threatened with the choice of "work or leave". If not

constrained by “debt”, they could prefer their choice of “leave” and start at another factory where working conditions are less exhausting. Instead, indebted workers are “willing” to work overtime regardless of whether it is forced, exhausted and inadequately paid:

> Even pregnant women work overtime with their own demands. I know a woman almost 9 months pregnant and still working. She made a deal with the manager. After giving birth, she would start one month later in exchange for the additional weeks she worked before taking maternal leave. She had to work: she bought a house, got into debt to the bank and she relied on this job. (Zeynep)

These workers represent the low-income groups in Turkey, which have the largest share in the growing rates of household debt. In that sense, their dependence on Cyntex as a company that offers the possible highest earnings in textile cannot be unrelated to the broader political and economic developments especially in the last decade.

Similarly, Mobitex workers are without a doubt representative of the low-income groups in Turkey. However, their experiences with debt differ from Cyntex workers. It would be an unsubstantiated claim to assess that none of the Mobitex workers are indebted. Still, the interview data allow me to infer that Mobitex workers’ approach to earnings and their understanding of fairness make them less dependent on debt than Cyntex workers. First, despite receiving poor wages they do not consider it primary concern among other issues. They believe that their earnings are not less than the average amount that an ordinary worker could receive in the textile sector. To these workers, receiving wages and overtime on a timely basis is more of a concern. Second, Mobitex workers’ views about overtime and bonus bear different implications than those of Cyntex workers. They identify any payments that

are additive to basic wages as a means to increase worker motivation rather than extra source of income that they would "die for" as Cyntex workers. Finally, workers' mobilization also bears implications for dependence on earnings because union activity is obviously a risk that might result in job losses:

> We had nothing to lose: we would change the working conditions or quit our jobs to work elsewhere. In fact, we knew the risk that we would lose our jobs. Years ago, someone tried to organize workers and 80 workers were suddenly dismissed. Even the word "union" was enough to risk our jobs. But we were decisive and trusted each other. I could find a similar job anyway. But I never wanted to work in these conditions anymore. After union, many things changed here. We're better now. (Fatma)

A firm belief in change or a perception that collective action could change the situation is one of the fundamentals of how workers are transformed into collective actors against the employer (Blyton and Jenkins, 2012a: 27; Kelly, 1998: 34; Klandermans; 2004: 363). Mobitex workers' sense of "nothing to lose" was an important trigger which strengthened their belief in the possibility of change in their conditions. Like many others, Mobitex was a textile company where any talk of unionization was strictly a taboo. The possibility of being fired was an obvious threat for workers that had been involved in union activity. However, Mobitex workers attempted to form a union at the expense of losing their jobs. Accordingly, their primary concern was to improve their working conditions rather than not risking or quitting their jobs. Under these circumstances, they felt less concerned than Cyntex workers with the threat of losing their jobs. Mobitex workers believe that they could find another job with similar working conditions even if they thought it was difficult (but not impossible) to find a company with a fair policy on payments. Cyntex workers however consider the company the only textile factory in the region that

offers such high earnings. If they lose their jobs, they are faced with the fact that it is almost impossible to earn the same amount of money at another textile factory. Therefore, Cyntex workers' reliance on their incomes is not as much as an issue in the case of Mobitex workers. In the same vein, the burden of debt is more of a concern at Cyntex, which strengthens their reliance on the "highest incomes". Figures show that household debt is an issue especially for low-income working families. As noted, however, the experiences of debt and their implications for workplace control and resistance may differ among workers of the same income groups. In order to better analyze the dimension of debt in Cyntex workers' experiences, the following part provides a broader picture of how "debt" fits in the political economy of Turkey.

5.4 Household Consumption and Debt in Turkey

Households in Turkey have been recently faced with a new challenge: the growing levels of consumption and financial liabilities. The increasing rate of household consumption is particularly an issue when it is accompanied by a rising trend in household debts. Not all families are equally affected by this development. The share of those who increase their expenditures on consumption using consumer loans and credit cards increases as income levels decrease. Overall, credit expansion has been a concern for households as much as for business. Credit boom of the last decade has been particularly characterized by two developments: neoliberal populism and financialization. Since 2002 when the AKP first came to power in government, Turkey has displayed increasing levels of economic growth. The party in power has continued its popularity achieving electoral victories one after another. Behind this

electoral success lies the support of large masses, which are attracted by increasing levels of "prosperity". In this part, first I focus on the details of this "prosperity" which has encouraged more and more people to consumption through financial tools. Second, I relate what scholars call neoliberal populism to broader political economic developments in the last decade, which has been marked by financialization. In the neoliberal period, finance capital has become the "increasing force of the creditor-debtor relationship" intensifying the subordination of the former (Lazzarato, 2011: 23). Based on this framework, I argue that low-income workers' tendency to spend more on consumption has been maintained by growing levels of debt, which is enabled by the increasing availability of financial conditions. This in turn operates as a mechanism of labor control but one that can also alter with workers' experiences.

The durability of AKP's electoral success is considered an extraordinary experience in the history of Turkish politics. The exceptional is the AKP's successive electoral victories with increasing shares in the last three national elections. Behind this electoral supremacy lies the AKP style populism which is triggered by the recent economic environment in the last decade (Öniş, 2012). Turkish economy experienced one of its best economic growths during the AKP government since 1950. Achieving single digit level inflation, favorable global liquidity environment and Turkey's ability to attract foreign capital as a result of favorable global context generated fortunate environment for AKP. This prosperity has been reflected in government's redistribution policies becoming a tool for gaining electoral support of the large segments of society. However, neither this stunning economic growth seems to be sustainable nor the government's approach to redistribution is hostile to neoliberal market principles. This is what brings us to the phenomenon which

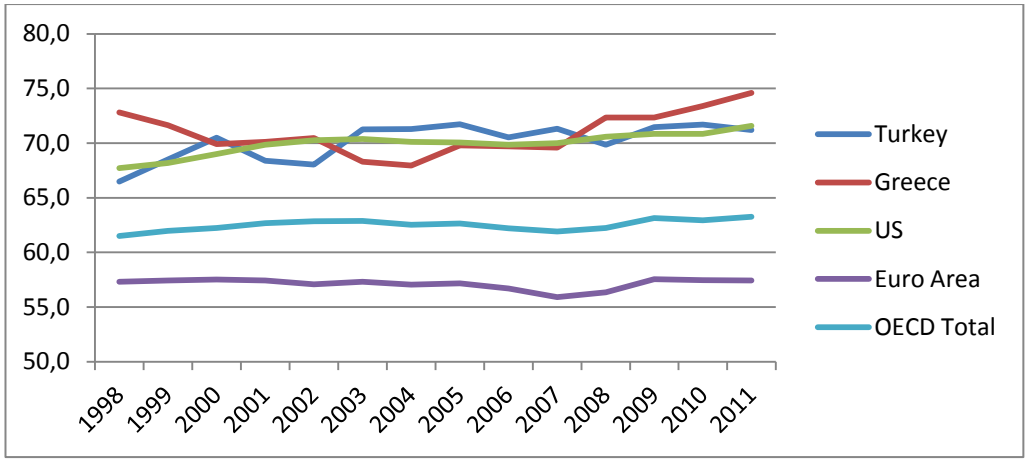
Karahanoğulları (2012) identifies as neoliberal populism. According to him, the growing rates of household consumption and the availability of financial tools that stimulate greater levels of consumption have created a sense of "wealth" in the last decade. This "wealth" however is rooted in the broader world economic conditions. Enabled by international capital flows, the impetus behind Turkey's recent economic growth has been a stunning rate of credit expansion for both business and households. Greater numbers of households go into debt to finance their purchases as their expenditures of consumption rise year by year in the last decade. The role of finance is not limited to credit expansion but also includes the increase in short term capital inflows and the appreciation of domestic currency. It is this credit expansion along with capital inflows that enables households to spend more and go into debt at higher levels.

Far from being a threat to the capitalist economy, debt is "the strategic heart of neoliberal politics" (Lazzarato, 2011: 25). One of the hallmarks of economic development since the 1980s has been the increasing role of finance throughout the world. This process has been referred to as financialization whereby financial actors or motives gain dominance over economic policy and economic outcomes (Epstein, 2005: 3). Turkey was introduced to financial account liberalization in 1989, the critical turning point which would characterize the following decades with rising dependency on global capital flows. Lack of strong institutional framework, fiscal discipline and macroeconomic stability, Turkey's economy has become even more volatile after opening up capital account regime (Öniş, 2007: 270). Under the speculative nature of financial markets, capital movements in terms of hot money flows constituted a major problem that have long affected the growth patterns in the

country. The growth performance of the economy following financial liberalization has been largely dependent on speculative-led patterns.

Dominance of finance over the real activity has important implications for household behaviour. High interest rates on domestic asset markets attract capital inflows which in turn lead to appreciation of domestic currency. Cheapened foreign exchange costs result in an increase in imports that are boosted both in consumption and investment goods. This also facilitates to keep inflation at lower rates as well as encourages household consumption. Household expenditures on consumption have considerably increased especially in the last decade. In the mid 1990s, final consumption expenditure of households constituted 65 percent of GDP. For the years between 2002 and 2011, the average of this share is at the level of 71 percent. In order to better understand what these figures mean, international comparison will be helpful.

Figure 9. Household Final Consumption Expenditure, Percentage of GDP



Source: OECD, National Accounts at a Glance

According to OECD statistics in the figure above, household consumption

shares of GDP between 2002 and 2011 for Euro area and total OECD countries are 57 percent and 63 percent, respectively. Interestingly, Greece and the USA are the only countries that display equally high figures along with Turkey in their pre-crisis period.

These figures raise important questions: What is the source of rising consumption in Turkey? How do the households afford their expenditures on consumption? Figures on labor force, employment and incomes are not able to explain the rise of consumption levels (Table 7).

Table 7. Labor Force Indicators, 2000-2012

Years	Not in labor force (thousand, 15+)	Labor force participation rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Waged labor of the employed (%)	Wages of GDP (%)
2000	23 133	49,9	6,5	38,7	29,2
2001	23 667	49,8	8,4	39,0	28,3
2002	24 223	49,6	10,3	42,0	26,3
2003	25 272	48,3	10,5	42,8	26,1
2004	25 527	46,3	10,8	46,1	26,3
2005	25 905	46,4	10,6	49,8	26,6
2006	26 423	46,3	10,2	51,9	26,2
2007	26 879	46,2	10,3	53,4	-
2008	26 967	46,9	11	54,4	-
2009	26 938	47,9	14	60,0	-
2010	26 901	48,8	11,9	60,9	-
2011	26 867	49,9	9,8	61,7	-
2012	27 846	50	9,2	62,9	-

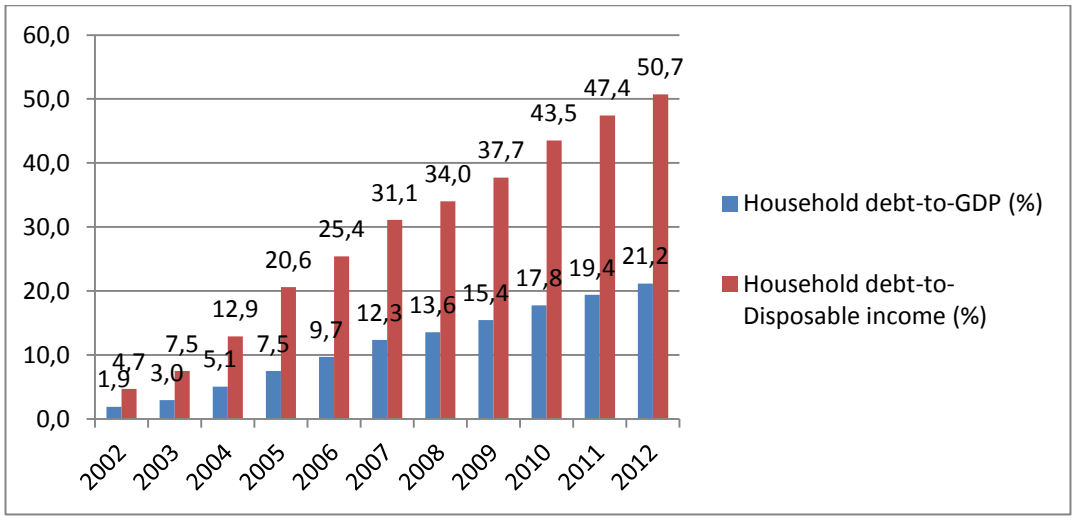
Source: TURKSTAT

In 2000, there were 23 million people who are not in labor force among the non-institutional working age. In 2012, this figure reaches up 27 million. Similarly, the 6,5% unemployment rate hits around 10% from 2000 to 2012. Though slightly increasing in the last few years, employment and labor force participation figures are not promising enough to absorb the increasing working age population. Low

participation and employment rates are not supportive of rising consumption levels. The decreasing shares of wages in GDP also contradict the increase in household consumption. Waged labor has the biggest share of working population and follows an upward trend during the last decade. However, while the number of waged labor increases, the share of wage expenditures in GDP decreases. This shows the worsening of incomes on behalf of waged labor.

This is where we could argue that consumption boom is fed by a spectacular rise in household indebtedness. Households in Turkey have significantly increased their household debt relative to their disposable income. This difference has accelerated especially in the last decade. As households tend to spend more over the course of the last ten years, they also go into debt much more than they previously did.

Figure 10. Household Financial Liabilities, Percentage of GDP and Household Disposable Income



Source: TURSTAT and Central Bank of Turkey

The figure above indicates that the ratio of debt to disposable income in

Turkish households rose from 4,7 percent in 2002 to 50,7 percent in 2012. This means that the amount of household debt surpasses half of their total incomes. At the same time, the share of household debt in GDP has been increasing since 2002. As figure illustrates, household debt is equal to 21 percent of GDP in 2012 while this ratio was 1,9 percent a decade earlier. Although many other countries may have similarly high figures, the pace of increase in household debt is alarming in the case of Turkey (Central Bank of Turkey, 2013: 28).

In the past five years, credit expansion has reached 43 percent for business, 33 percent for households, and 23 percent for small and medium enterprises (BDDK, 2012: 77).The growing level of household debt has been reflected in this stunning rate of credit expansion.

Table 8. Shares of Consumer Loans and Credit Cards in Household Consumption

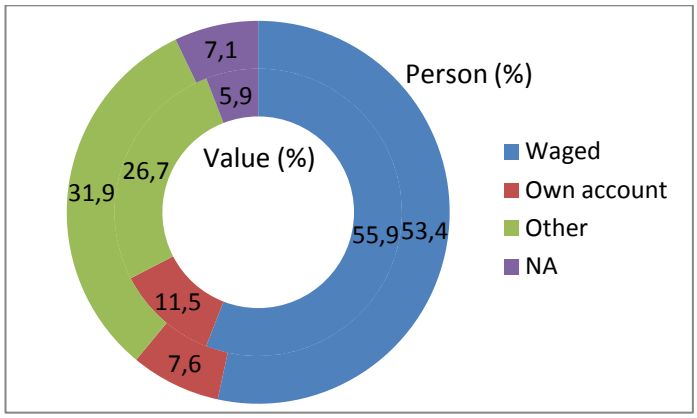
Year	Consumer Loans (million TL)	Credit Cards (million TL)	Final Consumption Expenditure of Resident Households (million TL)	Consumer loans + credit cards /consumption (%)
2002	1.973	4.335	238.399	0,03
2003	5.331	7.030	324.016	0,04
2004	11.831	13.920	398.559	0,06
2005	27.945	17.601	465.402	0,10
2006	45.739	22.037	534.849	0,13
2007	64.971	27.806	601.239	0,15
2008	78.971	34.853	663.944	0,17
2009	90.137	37.612	680.768	0,19
2010	126.931	45.191	787.753	0,22
2011	167.020	58.466	923.836	0,24
2012	193.370	77.501	992.745	0,27

Source: BDDK, Turkish Banking Sector Interactive Monthly Bulletin and TURKSTAT

In the last decade, more and more people use bank loans and credit cards as they meet their rising expenditures of consumption. Consumer loans and credits cards constitute a high and growing share of household consumption. As the table above illustrates, this ratio rose from 3 percent to 27 percent in the last decade.

As all of the figures demonstrate, the growing household consumption where employment and labor force participation rates are very low, and incomes decrease rather than increase is fed by the rising rates of debt particularly in forms of consumer loans and credit cards. Then who are the people that have the highest level of financial liabilities? This requires a further focus on the composition of the indebted households. Among the households that are in debt to the bank for consumer credits, waged labor in lower income groups constitutes the largest share. The figure below that shows the distribution of indebted households in Turkey according to their employment status. The data illustrate that waged labor constitutes the highest share both in quantity and the amount of credits with more than 50 percent in both figures.

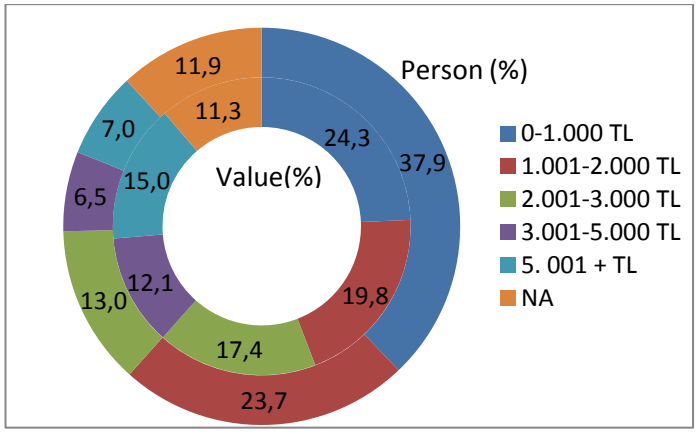
Figure 11. Household Consumer Credit by Types of Employment (%), 2012



Source: Central Bank of Turkey, Financial Stability Report, 2013

Furthermore, among those who are employed as waged labor, the lower income groups whose incomes are less than 1000 TL have the largest share both in quantity and the amount of credits, that is 37,9 percent and 24,4 percent respectively.

Figure 12. Household Consumer Credit by Income Groups (%), 2012



Source: Central Bank of Turkey, Financial Stability Report, 2013

These figures that show the distribution of indebted households according to employment status and income group reveal that having regular job and earning are important factors in receiving consumer credit. However, the data also bring our attention to the fact that it is the waged labor having lower incomes that apply for the bank loans more frequently than other employed and income groups. Almost 40 percent of households which use one forth of available consumer credits come from lower income groups earning less than 1000 TL per month. Indebtedness is seriously a problem for lower segments of society whose share of income in GDP also follows a downward trend while their ratios of consumption and debt increase.

Narrowing down our focus from broader political economy to Cyntex Textile provides a better understanding of workers' experiences with debt. As representative of the low-income groups, Cyntex workers' association with indebtedness cannot be

evaluated without taking into account the growing levels of household indebtedness in Turkey. The increasing availability of financial tools to the public adds to particular experiences of Cyntex workers at the workplace. These workers are faced with the problem of indebtedness, and think that they have to work at Cyntex which, they believe, offers the highest possible earnings in a textile factory in the region. Therefore, "debt", which is a financial burden in broader terms, simultaneously serves as a control mechanism at the workplace. This is not an ordinary workplace, but one in which workers can earn money through the exceptional practice of bonus scheme as well as excessive hours of overtime. The management keeps its "fair" policy on payments and pays workers timely and adequately. Therefore, as workers regularly receive their wages, they are also offered extra sources of income in forms of excessive overtime and bonus. Overtime work despite all its difficulties becomes an opportunity on behalf of workers. Based on their experiences, workers are sure that their wages and extra payments will be paid without any inconsistencies. Working excessive hours plus confirming to the four rules of bonus system are considered the alternative ways for additional sources of income beyond minimum wage. Receiving regular and higher incomes correlates with workers' expenditures and their capacity to spend as well as lend more. Cyntex's fair policy on payments and its bonus system create a sense of guarantee and trust that increases workers' expectations to repay their loans. This in turn enhances workers' dependence on Cyntex and appears as another control mechanism over labor. The claim and the reputation of the company for offering the highest earnings with a fair policy on payments further connect workers to their jobs. This bound is very strong, so much so that workers do not even consider being represented by a union necessary

because, they claim, there is nothing unfair about payments:

> The idea of going home at 6 p.m. sounds good. But we work a lot and this is what makes money. We already earn higher than others in textile. Why do we need for a union? (Suzan)

The amalgamation of workers' particular experiences at Cyntex, structure of textile sector, and broader developments in political economy diminishes the possibilities for collective resistance. In contrast, Mobitex workers' particular experiences enable them to have a different view of economic structures. Although they accept that the amount of money they receive at Mobitex is low, they believe that it is already the average of textile factories in general. Therefore, higher incomes are not their expectation of a textile company. Yet, according to these workers, "fairness" at the workplace is not all about "money". Unlike Cyntex workers, they already consider a possibility of "exit" in the sense that they can find another job that offers similar conditions. What they expect is humane conditions in which managers and workers engage in family-like relations. This was in fact the main motive behind their mobilization and they did not feel obliged to work particularly at Mobitex, rather theirs was a demand for change at the expense of risking their jobs.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the role of earnings in worker mobilization or non-mobilization, by contextualizing it within three levels: workers' particular experiences, wage structure in textile, and broader political economic developments. I have demonstrated how the difference in the first level articulates with other two levels. Workers' different experiences have derived from their understanding of fairness as well as their approaches to earnings. For Cyntex workers, fairness is

limited to regular and adequate wages and incentive pays. Cyntex's association with the "highest earnings in textile" supplements and strengthens workers' view of the company's policy on payments. Underlying the "highest" earnings is the excessive hours of overtime and bonus pays. Although workers complain about long hours of work, they are also satisfied that they can increase their incomes through overtime and incentive pays. Cyntex is not only associated with "highest earnings" but also its "indebted workers". That the company offers the highest pays attracts workers who aim to earn higher to meet their expenses of bank loans.

The common view that every worker persistently repeated was "every workers is a debtor at Cyntex". This is not unrelated to broader political economic developments. Household debt has increasingly been an issue especially in the last decade of Turkey. As a result of both domestic and international policies, more and more people are provided the available conditions to increase their consumptions through bank loans and credit cards. The increasing role of finance in the global economy which has paved the way for neoliberal populism at the domestic level has stimulated domestic consumption through debt by decreasing the barriers between individuals and the financial tools. In other words, going into debt with bank loans and credits cards has turned into an easier or even ordinary activity for many. As Graeber (2011: 382) argues, with the "financialization of everyday life", economic freedom of the masses have been "reduced to the right to buy a small piece of one's own permanent subordination". What is striking is that the largest share in the growing levels of household debt in Turkey belongs to the low-income groups. Textile workers are obviously the representative of low income groups in Turkey. Cyntex workers' concern for debt is therefore not coincidental but rooted in broader

political economic policies. The company's "exceptional" position within the textile sector in the region makes it a "star" on the eyes of workers, who are dependent on higher earnings to pay their credit loans. This is in turn strengthens the company's "bad" reputation with its indebted workers. The more they are dependent on higher earnings, the more workers find it difficult to quit their jobs. When this difficulty merges with the company's "fair" policy on payments, collective resistance is far from being an option as workers even do not think that it is necessary.

Mobitex workers' interpretation of wage-related issues greatly differs from Cyntex workers. Although they similarly appreciate the company's fair policy on payments, they do not consider Mobitex exceptional in terms of earnings. Unlike Cyntex therefore "quitting the jobs" is an option for these workers. In fact, they risked their jobs for participating in union activity. According to workers, Mobitex like many other factories was hostile to unionization and the workers that were involved in mobilization activities were immediately fired. Mobitex workers took a risk and developed a firm belief in change in their conditions at the workplace. Their contention was not to receive higher incomes. Rather, what constituted their grievance and sense of unfairness had been the unfriendly environment of the factory as well as managerial attitudes. In terms of payments, they only contended that they wanted to be recognized their rights to reject overtime when their managers forced them to work longer hours. They neither identified overtime as a source of income nor did they think that it was worth putting up with managers' attitudes.

The difference in workers' identification of fairness and perception of wages between two factories therefore has been reflected in their ability to organize. While

Cyntex workers interpret fairness in terms of regular and adequate or higher payments, Mobitex workers' perception of fairness mainly revolves around working conditions and managers' behaviours towards them. Cyntex workers consider themselves dependent on the higher earnings that Cyntex pays them in order to repay their loans. In contrast, Mobitex workers concern other issues rather than wages which they claim they could earn at similar rates at another factory. Consequently, debt and thus wage-related issues have been differently experienced between the workers of two factories, thereby making collective resistance possible in one of them while paralyzing it in the other.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Based on the fieldwork of two female-dominated textile factories, this study has analyzed different configurations of what can be identified as a resource or obstacle in worker resistance and mobilization. The main objective of the thesis is to explore how dynamics of power relations are contradictorily reflected in workers' actual experiences within two apparently similar workplaces. This research is particularly important in understanding the diversity in forms of domination and resistance in the industrial settings that operate in the same chain of global production which is frequently associated with exploitation of cheap, docile and insecure female labor. The neoliberal period has been marked by the weakening of organized labor and collective resistance especially with the restructuring of the labor market towards higher degrees of insecurity and deterioration of job conditions. Scholars of mobilization and resistance literatures have pointed out the importance of looking for alternative manifestations of resistance in this political economic context that limits the scope for organized labor activity. Accordingly, contemporary debates have oriented towards new definitions of resistance exploring different processes, resources and obstacles in a variety of workplace settings. In doing so, many studies also point out the importance of connecting microprocesses to the broader social and economic structures. It is mainly these perspectives that have guided my analyses during this study.

Textile industry is perhaps one of the best examples of how neoliberal restructuring in the developing countries have transformed industrial labor by redefining composition of the workforce and production systems. Operating on a highly competitive global market, textile sector has been characterized by a feminized labor force, low levels of union activity, insecure and marginalized labor. This does not mean that workers are not resisting, nor do the control-resistance dynamics and capital-labor relations follow monolithic processes. The particular cases analyzed here have demonstrated how complex these processes could be even in similar contexts.

I have made two arguments, one is related to the emergence of familial discourse at the workplace, the other is more engaged in the political economic context exploring the links between debt and dependence. The first argument is as follows: A discourse of "company as a family" may serve as a resource for collective mobilization when used by workers, while it at the same time paralyzes the emergence of workers' collective response through "keeping it all within the family" when used by managers. In the case of mobilized workers, the absence of "family" at the workplace fulfilled workers' grievances and led to collective framing of the issues against the management. The common experiences through gender, ethnicity, and neighborhood, on the other hand, enhanced the emergence of solidarity and trust among workers for the purposes of mobilization.

In the case of the non-mobilized workers, the presence of "family" in contrast diminished the possibilities for the emergence of collective response outside of the family. On the one hand, some of these workers developed resistance through cynical

attitudes towards the managers and the competitive workplace environment. While all of the workers have a good view of the main employer, these workers put all the responsibility to the managers for any inconvenience at the workplace. On the other hand, despite their complaints, workers were also satisfied with their friendly moments they shared with some other managers. Yet, at the same time, the main employer's father-like attitudes and his encouragement of workers for being a "favorite child" persistently reintegrated workers into their jobs. Being a favorite child meant divisions among workers due to the competition it constantly stimulated. Many workers had already been in the "privileged groups" at the workplace. Some "spy on" their coworkers, some are thought to be favored by managers through engaging in personal relations, and some have already had familial or kinship relations to the management. Outside of these competing groups were the cynical workers. However, they could not find a way of expression if they intended to do so. Whenever they raised their concerns, the issues remained inside the "family" either through the managers they identified as brothers or the employer they considered a "father". Their capacity to spark a collective response through cynicism failed to find a way of collective expression within the managerial discourse of family. Workers' relations based on ethnicity and kinship on the other hand further strengthened the emergence of family at the workplace. Therefore, I called this contradiction a "family with problems". This case has showed that although it is one type of worker resistance which is less visible but still can spark collective action, cynicism may result in further domination of workers through particular constitutions of the labor process.

The second argument draws on a three-level analysis: workers' particular experiences, wage structure, and increased levels of debt for low-income groups. I argue that the first has a great influence on the other two. In the recent political economic context, going into debt through consumer credits has become an "ordinary" activity but also a growing issue especially for the low-income groups (Stockhammer, 2010). Debt is not detrimental to accumulation of capital, rather it is the very core of neoliberalism that leads to income transfer between classes (Lazzarato, 2011: 25). While the productivity of workers has increased, the real wages have displayed downward trends (Graeber, 2011: 375). The pressure on wages however does not mean less consumer spending. During the last decade, Turkey's household consumption ratios to GDP are as high as those of Greece and the US, the crisis countries. In the context of Turkey, neoliberal populism in domestic politics has both supported and been enabled through the mechanisms of financial capital (Karahanoğulları, 2012). Although this seems to create a sense of "prosperity" on the eyes of the masses, the source of rising consumption levels does not derive from wealth but rather from debt. In fact, the low-income families constitute the largest share among those who use consumer credits in Turkey. This fact relates most to the departure point of my second argument that explores the links between worker dependence and increased household debt for the low-income groups. Textile workers are clearly representative of the low-income groups in society. Economic dependence triggered by high amount of debt operates as a disciplining mechanism on the labor by increasing worker dependence and thereby reducing the possibilities for collective resistance. However, I have also argued that due to different of perceptions of fairness—the difference that derives from the politics of production—

workers may differently experience this dependence in a way that can also allow for emergence of collective resistance. In other words, different perception of fairness in relation to earnings had an impact on workers' ability to risk their jobs and, in turn, their dependence to repay their debts.

Workers have different understandings of fairness in their working conditions. While the mobilized workers identify fairness in relation to absence or presence of family-like relations at the workplace, the non-mobilized workers' understanding of fairness is limited by being paid regularly and adequately. Aware of the wage structure in the textile and garment industry in the region, the non-mobilized workers believe that their company is exceptional because they receive the highest earnings with overtime and incentive pays whereas the mobilized workers believe that they could earn similar wages at another factory. The "exceptional" company is also associated with its indebted workers, that is, every worker employed there is thought to be indebted. Indeed the every worker I interviewed at this company had credit payments. In order to pay off their debts, these workers considered overtime an opportunity to increase their monthly incomes. They worked excessive hours of overtime not only because their managers ordered them to do so but also this was an "opportunity" to gain more money. Similarly, the bonus scheme which is very rare in the textile sector strengthened their view of the company as "exceptional" and "fair" in terms of earnings.

The other company's workers however identified overtime as a common practice or routine in the textile sector. Compared to the non-mobilized workers, they, in fact, worked less overtime and less frequently stayed for *sabahçılık*. Rather

than identify as a source of income, they complained about overtime because they were forced to work beyond the normal hours. The fact that they were not recognized the right to reject overtime appeared as their main concern when they talked about working hours at the company. Therefore the way that these workers approach to overtime work is totally different from the non-mobilized workers. They neither perceive overtime as an advantage nor are they willingness to work excessive hours without their consent. On the one hand, these workers did not want to quit their jobs due to the company's fair policy on payments. On the other, they wanted to have a say on their working conditions or to be taken into account about workplace decisions such as working hours and overtime. This reflects the basis of their understanding of being a family at the workplace—a friendly and inclusive environment where administrative hierarchies are less rigid and worker-manager relations are based on respect and kindness.

As a result, the mobilized workers' campaign was primarily motivated by three factors, which I identify as the resources of this mobilization: the composition of workforce, common framing of grievance, and a firm belief in change. The majority of the workers are Kurdish women living in close or same neighborhoods. Common experiences of gender, ethnicity and neighborhood played an important role in the process of mobilization. It was the three women of same ethnic origin living in the same neighborhood that initiated to mobilize other workers at the workplace. In the first instance, long hours of work disabled workers to arrange meetings outside the workplace. Nevertheless, by virtue of "womanhood", these women were able to visit their coworkers in their houses. Although three women started campaigning, they did not undertake a leadership role. In fact, none of the

workers had prior experience of union and this company was the first textile factory to unionize in the zone. The mobilization process did not have a leader as the number of workers that supported organizing increased in a short time and most workers undertook responsibilities. They were mobilized by small groups with whom they could trust. Workers' initial sense of grievance framed in terms of the pursuit of family-like relations at the workplace rather than wage-related issues. The source of this grievance was attributed to the managers and the employer who were thought to be discourteous and insensitive in their relations to workers. Workers believed that the company had always followed a fair policy on payments. Although they considered "fairness" a difficult policy to find in other textile companies, they still thought that they could find another factory with similar wages. Aware of the company's hostility towards unionization, workers therefore accepted the risk of losing their jobs as their belief in change prevailed.

It is worth noting a suggestion for further research. This study identified two cases as similar to each other. These textile factories are indeed similar from technical division of labor to location and from the multinational retailers they produce for to their export revenues. A further focus on the question of "how similar these two cases are" might introduce new arguments to this comparative analysis. One such investigation could be an analysis of the impact of length of service on worker mobilization. The other might be the relationship between age and debt. As seen in the tables[6] showing demographics of the interviewees, the non-mobilized workers are younger and have less work years than the mobilized workers. This can

[6] See "length of service" and "age" in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3

bring new dimensions and questions about, for instance, young people's tendency in going into debt and the implications of length of service for the emergence of worker solidarity for collective action. Although this analysis was not within the scope of the present study, it may well be one of the suggestions for further research.

Consequently, this study has drawn and contributed to a variety of literatures which include worker mobilization, organization and workplace studies, social movements, and feminist political economy. With an "arena-specific" comparative analysis, I have explored the processes in which workplace resistance and control are constructed in diverse, and in some cases, contradictory ways. Although this study has limitations in terms of representativeness as a common concern for "case studies", however, as Lee (1995: 379) suggests, "actor oriented" and "arena-specific" research enhances our understanding of how broader processes work in actual settings and experiences.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Questions

1. Background questions: age, ethnicity, marital status, educational attainment, household profile

2. Working life, job definition

2.1. How long have you been working at your present job?

2.2. How did you find this job, by yourself or through contacts?

2.3. What is your scope of work?

2.4. What is the approximate women-to-men ratio at your division?

2.5. Do you live in close or same neighborhoods with your coworkers?

2.6. How could you define a typical work day on the shop floor?

3. Workplace relations

3.1. How often do you meet your coworkers outside the workplace? For instance, do you visit them in their houses?

3.2. Are there any restrictions on your communication with other workers during working hours, breaks or anytime inside the workplace?

3.3. What do you usually talk about when you come together with other workers?

3.4. Are your supervisors usually male or female?

3.5. How do you describe your relations with your supervisors, managers or employers?

3.6. Can you compare managerial attitudes towards men and women workers?

3.7. What are the difficulties of or challenges for being a worker and woman at the same time?

3.8. How do you individually deal with your typical problems at the workplace?

4. Questions if workers talk about labor unions or unionization at the workplace

4.1. Have you ever been represented by a labor union?

4.2. Have you ever sought collective response to your common issues at the workplace?

4.3. Would labor unions be a solution to your problems at work?

4.4. Do you think that your working conditions will improve anyway?

5. Questions if workers are involved in organized labor activity

5.1. What were the working conditions that you had found most problematic?

5.2. How did you decide to organize against your working conditions at the workplace?

5.3. How did you contact with the textile union?

5.4. What were the difficulties you had during the process of collective mobilization?

5.5. What have you learnt during this process? In which ways, do you think, has mobilization contributed to you?

6. Is there anything you would like to add, change or ask before we conclude (or move on)?

APPENDIX 2

Interviewee Demographics, Cyntex

Name/ Pseudonym	***Age***	***Ethnicity***	***Marital Status***	***Children***	***Educational Level***	***Division***	***Length of Service***
Aynur	35	Kurdish	Married	2	Primary School	Packaging	6 years
Gülcan	25	Kurdish	Single	_	High School	Sewing	1 year
Halide	30	Kurdish	Married	1	Primary School	Sewing	3 years
Nuran	35	Kurdish	Married	_	Primary School	Yarn Cleansing	9 months
Perihan	32	Kurdish	Divorced	_	Primary School	Sewing	6 years
Saadet	30	Kurdish	Married	_	Primary School	Intermediate Pressing	4 years
Serap	28	Kurdish	Single	_	High School	Packaging	8 years
Sevcan	25	Turkish	Married	1	High School	Sewing	1 year
Sevim	30	Kurdish	Single	_	Primary School	Sewing	5 years
Sibel	26	Kurdish	Married	_	High School	Quality Control	4 years
Suzan	33	Kurdish	Married	1	Primary School	Cutting	1,5 years
Zeynep	30	Turkish	Single	_	High School	Yarn Cleansing	2 years

APPENDIX 3

Interviewee Demographics, Mobitex

Name/ Pseudonym	***Age***	***Ethnicity***	***Marital Status***	***Children***	***Educational Level***	***Division***	***Length of Service***
Aylin	27	Kurdish	Married	_	High School	Cutting	6 years
Ayşe	30	Kurdish	Married	1	High School	Quality Control	4 years
Ayten	41	Kurdish	Married	2	Primary School	Quality Control	16 years
Fatma	32	Kurdish	Married	1	Primary School	Quality Control	4 years
Mürvet	25	Kurdish	Single	_	Primary School	Quality Control	3 years
Nazan	28	Kurdish	Married	1	High School	Cutting	4 years
Nermin	28	Kurdish	Single	_	High School	Cutting	5 years
Nezhiye	38	Kurdish	Married	2	No Diploma	Quality Control	12 years
Nur	25	Kurdish	Married	_	High School	Packaging	4 years
Selma	34	Kurdish	Single	_	Primary School	Quality Control	7 years
Sevgi	32	Kurdish	Married	2	Primary School	Quality Control	6 years
Şükran	35	Kurdish	Married	2	Primary School	Cutting	7 years