

FROM A CLASS TO A TRADE UNION: HAK-İŞLect. Kemal TEMEL* **ABSTRACT**

In late industrialized countries, the principles of social differentiation have tended to be projected in divisions in trade unions. Trade unions in Turkey have been largely affected by the dynamics of the modernization adventure and the unique aspects of industrialization and proletarianization. In this process, divisions in trade unions have overlapped with social cleavages. The present study addresses the establishment and growth of the Turkish Confederation of Hak-İş Trade Unions (Hak-İş) relying on class differentiations. While the formation of the social structure underlying the idea of Hak-İş is discussed within the Bourdieuan theory of class, its establishment and organization processes are scrutinized within proletarianization and the design and change of industrial organization. Thus, it may be claimed that the formation of the confederation has been initiated by the class-cultural divisions that dominate Turkey's social sphere rather than the culture and identity-based organizations considered grounds for classlessness claims. The rise of Hak-İş is discussed in relation to union practices that are all compatible with the conditions dictated by the new industrial regime. Finally, the paper focuses on the confederation's struggle practices in industrial relations and the class consciousness of workers adopting a religious identity. In this regard, it may be asserted workers develop alternative resistance strategies apart from their collective class identities.

Keywords: Proletariat, Islamism, Hak-İş, Culturalist Class Analysis, Trade Unions.

Jel Classification: J51, J82, Z13.

SİNİFTAN SENDİKAYA: HAK-İŞ**ÖZET**

Geç endüstrileşmiş ülkelerde toplumsal farklılaşma ilkeleri, sendikal bölünmelere yansıma eğiliminde olmuştur. Türkiye'de de sendikalar gerek modernleşme serüveninin dinamiklerinden gerekse endüstrileşme ve işçileşme sürecinin özgün koşullarından derin bir biçimde etkilenmiştir. Bu süreçte sendikalar arası bölünmeler toplumsal yarılımlara uyumluluk göstermiştir. Bu çalışmada Türkiye Hak İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonunun oluşum ve gelişim süreçlerini sınıfsal farklılaşmalardan hareketle değerlendirilmektedir. Hak-İş'in inşasına dayanak oluşturan toplumsal tabanın oluşumu, Bourdieuyen sınıf yaklaşımıyla ele alınırken; kuruluş ve örgütlenme süreci ise işçileşme biçimi, endüstriyel

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Makale Geçmişi/Article History

Başvuru Tarihi / Date of Application : 25 Temmuz / July 2022

Düzeltilme Tarihi / Revision Date : 30 Kasım / November 2022

Kabul Tarihi / Acceptance Date : 10 Aralık / December 2022

örgütlenmenin yapısı ve değişimiyle iç içe değerlendirilmektedir. Böylelikle konfederasyonun oluşumu, sınıfsızlık iddialarına temel teşkil eden kültür ve kimlik temelli örgütlenmelerden ziyade Türkiye'nin toplumsal uzamına hâkim olan sınıf-kültürel bölünmelerin sonucunda gerçekleştiği iddia edilmektedir. Hak-İş'in yükselişi, yeni endüstriyel rejimin koşullarına uyumluluk gösteren sendikal pratiklerle ilişkili olarak ele alınmaktadır. Son olarak konfederasyonun endüstri ilişkilerindeki mücadele pratikleri ve dini kimliğe sahip işçilerin sınıfsal bilinci değerlendirilmektedir. Bu bağlamda işçilerin kolektif sınıf kimliklerinin dışında alternatif direnme stratejileri geliştirdikleri ileri sürülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İşçi Sınıfı, İslamcılık, Hak-İş, Kültüralist Sınıf Analizi, Sendikalar.

Jel Kodları: J51, J82, Z13.

1.INTRODUCTION

This paper adopts a class perspective to address the establishment and organization process of the Turkish Confederation of Hak-İş Trade Unions (Hak-İş), one of Turkey's three major workers' organizations. Turkish social sciences literature has little tendency to investigate the sociology of labor markets and their institutional economic actors, namely trade unions. Apart from a few studies (Koçak, 2008; Makal, 2007), the social history of the labor movement is also underestimated. Research on trade unions primarily focuses on investigating the historical background of these organizations (Mahiroğulları, 2016; Koç, 2003; Pıçak and Kadah, 2018) or the union-politics relations (Algül, 2015; Çelik, 2010 Öztürk, 2018; Arıcan and Şen, 2017; Arıcan, 2018). Moreover, the organizational strategies and reflexes of trade unions (Şahin, 2018; Kılıç et al., 2018) and their political identities (Deli, 2010) previously attracted more research attention. Albeit, Streeck (2005: 259) points out that the sociological study of unions has become more connected than ever before with the historical analysis of collective employment relations.

Two fundamental factors may explain the interest of this paper in Hak-İş. Given the ideological standings of trade unions in Turkey (Kutal, 1968), the scholarly interest in Hak-İş, representing the Islamist wing, remains low (Arıcan, 2018; Temel, 2018) when compared to Türk-İş, the central union of the political spectrum (Yirmibeşoğlu, 2007; Sezer and Çavuşoğlu, 2016) and DISK - the symbol of the left of the center (Tartanoğlu, 2007; Man, 2009; Algül, 2015; Çelik, 2010). In this sense, being the second largest confederation in Turkish industrial relations with more than 700 thousand members, serving in different domains of the industry - from heavy industry to local governments - (Öztürk, 2018), and its claim for alternative unionism have become the prominent factors in the selection of Hak-İş as a research topic. Moreover, being the largest representative of the most organized labor section in the Islamist movement in Turkey (Öztürk, 2018: 470) requires questioning how Hak-İş has built and grown its organizational network.

This study seeks to determine how the conditions evocating Hak-İş and the class processes leading to these conditions are reflected in the organizational structure. Unlike the economic sociology of labor markets, the political sociology of trade unions requires integrating micro and macro sociological perspectives (Streeck, 2005). Moreover, to be able to portray the social base on which the confederation is built, this study recognizes the issue of Islamism in Turkey as a social movement and discusses it from a culturalist class perspective. In this regard, the first part of the study touches upon the class's ambiguous terminology, claims of classlessness, and the differences between counter approaches. On these subjects, the paper adopts the culturalist class approach of the new generation class theorists who are inspired by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's work, *Distinction*, and claim a new class and Thompson's definition of class. In this respect, while the establishment of Hak-İş is interpreted from its relationship with Islamic political and social movements, the accompanying class processes are discussed from the perspective of the culturalist class. Thus, it is claimed that Hak-İş is a reflection of the Islamist habitus in the labor organization within proletarianization. The last section uncovers the strategies in organizational practices based on class-cultural processes in the organization of Hak-İş. In addition, it digs into the confederation's relations with industry and how it implements its struggle practices in cases of conflict.

The chairpersons of the two trade unions affiliated with Hak-İş, three members of one of these unions, the secretary general of the confederation, and the chief advisor to one of the chairpersons were recruited for semi-structured interviews.¹ While the interviews with the administrators were held at the headquarters of the specified trade unions, the spaces away from the employer's influence (e.g., coffee shops, parks, and tea shops) were preferred for the interviews with the workers. The interviews with the workers yielded that they have class consciousness, in contrast to the lack of class consciousness primarily attributed to the Turkish proletariat (Yirmibeşoğlu, 2007; Durak, 2011; Cengiz, 2013).

This paper aims to contribute to the relevant literature as an attempt to construct a sociological analysis of a trade union by tracing the "sociological reality underlying the search for alternatives in the union movement" (Akpınar, 2016) of Hak-İş in Turkey.

2. THE NEW AGENDA OF "CLASS" FROM MATERIAL ASSETS TO CULTURAL RESOURCES

Class analysis is among the prominent conceptual tools of sociology in uncovering social divisions. Division of labor-oriented analysis effectively determined the agenda of class sociology from a conventional class perspective, particularly until the last quarter of the 20th century, when Fordism dominated the production structure. However, significant changes to the nature of contemporary capitalist communities that drive many of Weber's and Marx's views on social inequality questionable

¹ Since the interviews were carried out in June 2015, the study lacks ethics approval from an ethics committee. In any case, TR Index criteria do not require retrospective ethics approval for papers utilizing data collected before 2020.

(Turner, 2013: 76) significantly shattered the effectiveness of the above-mentioned analysis by gradually alienating the “class” from its traditional predecessors. The multi-layered structure in the organization of production and the space occupied by consumption in social life were reflected in the distinctions between social classes, which, in turn, led to questioning the efficiency of class analysis.

The arguments that class analysis has lost its validity are tied at three points. The first marks the withering away of the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat, which relies on the argument that the destructive power of the crowd is often eroded when joining the capitalist system thanks to welfare gains. The second is middle-class discussions: it is argued that groups located in the middle of a bipolar class pendulum leave the proletariat in the minority and that the divergence of interests among these groups undermines collectivity-based organizations. The third is the culture and identity politics of post-Marxist and post-modernist theorists (Beck, 2019; Bauman, 2000). According to post-Marxists, class-based social structures do not produce class solidarity. A “people’s alliance” that enjoys different cultural identities would constitute a destructive power. On the other hand, post-modernist theorists argue that reflexivity-based cultural identities replace class identities in a social space where everything is fluid (under the conditions of ontological insecurity and risk society). In these conditions, it seems impossible for a class to exist with a fixed identity.

The juncture of these debates points out that class has lost its influence in contemporary societies. Class theorists, on the other hand, attempt to respond to these criticisms to embody the position of the middle classes in the social hierarchy and to adapt the class theory to contemporary conditions. Among these, the class approaches of the American sociologist Erik Olin Wright (2016) - centered on oppression and exploitation - and of the British sociologist John Goldthorpe (1992) - centered on employment relations - produce noteworthy arguments for the threats in class analysis, albeit they have failed to yield a comprehensive class notion of the structural problems determining the fate of the analysis. At this critical juncture, the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s (2017) new class analysis, relying on the concepts of habitus, field, and capital², and focusing on the theory of practice, has revived class studies. Bourdieu ideates a robust class conception of how classes are differentiated/similarized through the routes of agents in social space, as well as the volume and composition of various types of capital (Emirbayer, 2014: 62). Bourdieu (1996) advocates that class struggle actually exists wherever it is rejected and that it is needed to focus on the principles and mechanisms leading to the actual social differentiation. His arguments are also based on a dynamic class struggle, not a fixed one. In addition, class emerges in relational processes, and daily life and lifestyles assume a key role in the Bourdiean analysis.

² Habitus, as necessarily embedded in the body (Bourdieu, 2017: 255), embodies class identity as the dialectic of the agents’ subjective desires and objective opportunities (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2014: 121), capital explains the construction of class positions of tangible and intangible resource types, including economic, cultural, social, and symbolic, and space expounds the analysis of the diverse social spaces structured by the unequal volumes and combinations of the types of capital and the forms of struggle in these spaces.

As the course of the post-Bourdieu class goes on a culturalist ground, a group of academics in England has attempted to expand the culturalist class analysis. A new generation of class theorists (Savage et al, 2005a), who proposes to concentrate on the distributions of capitals, assets, and resources [CARs] in social classes, argue that class consciousness exists, contrary to what is claimed, and that people maintain their class culture and identity. These theorists also advocate that the public appearance of class may be observed in more subtle ways despite changes to its functioning (Karademir Hazır, 2014a: 237). Accordingly, class structures require rather sophisticated qualitative, ethnographic research-based analysis. For example, according to Savage (2003: 536), although people no longer have the kind of collective class consciousness that would allow mentioning classes as social actors, classes survive in individualized forms and relational confrontations. Indeed, not only in England but also in Germany (Vester, 2005) and Belgium (Prieur and Savage, 2013), culturalist class research reveals that class shapes tastes and preferences, social behaviors, and lifestyles. Some of these studies focus on the proletariat against Bourdieu's criticism of neglecting the lower classes (Savage et al, 2005b; Vester, 2005; Skeggs, 2003) and conclude that the class consciousness of the proletariat is quite high, albeit in paradoxical forms. Thus, the new route of class analysis suggests that culture and identity-based clusters are located within the class rather than outside (Savage and Devine, 2000).

Does traditional class analysis offer an adequate framework for interpreting the relations of social transformation and struggle in Turkey? In other words, does the conventional interpretation of class possess the tools to analyze the Turkish stratification structure? The limitation of the class, the efficient means of sociological analysis, to an occupation-oriented division of labor leads to estimations that some groupings in social structures with unique conditions are classless. Arguments that class divisions have lost their influence in Turkey also suggest that social groups rally together around identity-based structures, not class, in line with global trends, which may be evident around ideological groupings (Öztürk, 2018; Arslan, 2017). Its embodiments may be the argument that Islamist groups erode class consciousness around identity-based organizations. This argument is based on the claim that culture and identity-based lifestyles have proliferated in the social sphere where postmodernity has hindered class-based formations, heightening identity-based formations by throwing social classes away from class-based formations in Turkey (Arslan, 2017: 109). Thereby, Islamic identity replaces class-based identities, which further expounds that the effort of Islamist workers to organize through Hak-İş is the product of cultural identity, not class (Öztürk, 2018).

If Islamism is essentially a cultural construct, it needs to be clarified how Islamists can struggle with the economic opportunities by the class discourse (Öztürk, 2018). If it is a class formation rather than an identity-based one, what may be the processes of their class? For this, it is needed to dwell on the question of what would justify calling a social group a class (Wright, 2017: 27). Bourdieu (2014: 199) states that the answer to the question, "what makes a social class?", can only appear in an

investigation attempting to reveal the fundamental principles of differentiation. To grasp collectivities entirely rather than being ‘historical artifacts,’ it may be necessary to identify the principles and mechanisms yielding ‘social divisions’ (Weininger, 2014: 141). Such an attempt would help reveal the processes of class formation. In this respect, it may be needed to focus on the reference or classification of the class struggles in the social space, not from a perspective that occupation, division of labor, or production relations determine classes in a mechanistic order in a narrow framework.

3. THE POLITICIZATION OF NON-CONSENT: THE CLASSISM ADVENTURE OF ISLAMISM IN TURKEY

It seems only feasible to utilize the relationality between social space, habitus, and struggles for the examination of the Turkish social stratification structure by historicizing the social formation. Bourdieu (2012: 375) claims that “groups are not found ready-made in reality... They are always the product of complex historical construction work.” In *Distinction*, the philosopher, who scrutinizes the historical construction of a specific social space forged by various types of capital, discusses that the formation of symbolic capital (the sphere of power) in the social space and the objective conditions determining the dominant and subordinate positions are of critical importance in the formation of class boundaries and fields of struggle. Concentrating on the conditions governing the dominant and subordinate positions in Turkey’s social space and building the formation of the Islamic habitus is considered necessary to investigate the manifestation of this class in the industrial sphere (Hak-İş).

Islamism emerges as a consequence of a class struggle against Western-style modernization and the development paradigm with deep cleavages between classes (Gülalp, 2005: 53). Given apart from its intellectual roots, processes leading to Islamism include a collective consciousness, political reforms, and modernization-led transformations. Then, the conditions governing the dominant and subordinate positions in Turkey’s social space depend on the institutional and non-institutional types of cultural capital as well as the volume of economic capital. The dynamics of Turkish modernization have been influential in constructing social differences based on class, religion, ethnicity, and rural-urban origin (Keyder, 1998; Özyeğin, 2017). By extension, the variables blowing social distinctions rely on cultural capital, social origin, and religion (Tanülkü, 2012). In particular, the social position of religion and the symbolic significance of rural origin are considered signs of class position in social space. While the Westernist route of the modernization experience is the basis for drawing class boundaries on the axis of lifestyle, and migration and urbanization born with industrialization lead to social divisions through rural-urban segregation (Karademir Hazır & Kalaycoğlu & Çelik, 2016).

As a holistic project covering all the cultural elements that modernize Europe (Keyder, 1998: 29), modernization in Turkey is profoundly influenced by the Western cultural world (Mardin, 1995: 269). Accordingly, the political practice of modernization works in the way of attempting to affect people’s lifestyles and daily life practices (Göle, 1994: 73). According to Keddie (1973: 255), the elite in Turkey

prefers the secular lifestyle to the traditional heritage of Islam to shows up an identity with the West, which radically alters almost all domains of daily life (Kandiyoti, 2017: 24).

In this direction, nation-building rising on the Republic's conception of the desirable citizen tends to include the publicity of cultural roots. Just as in the classical notion of bourgeois culture that the proletariat should be educated as rootless, uncivilized, and vulgar (Erbaş, 2017: 17), cultural publicity is imposed on large segments (Üstel, 2008; Göle, 1994; Keyder, 1998). Then, the related sociocultural policies not only help reproduce proponent classes but also become the source of cultural inequality in the social sphere (Arun, 2014: 189).

The value and meaning-laden policies attached to Western forms pave the way for the formation of a hierarchical class-cultural path in the public sphere (Arun, 2014), which corresponds to a widely accepted hierarchy between the European style acknowledging Western cultural forms and styles and the distant Alla Turca (Karademir Hazır, 2016: 5; Üstüner and Hold, 2010; Rankin et al., 2014). While the symbolic white Turkish status consists of the highly educated and secular upper-middle classes with Alla Franca taste, the segments adopting the Alla Tucka lifestyle include Muslim lower-middle classes migrating from the countryside to urban areas and having traditional life values. Then, European cultural forms have always been attached to a higher symbolic value than Ala Turca forms, and the Western lifestyle has been a means of pushing away the relationship with the traditional as a constant status/class threat (Karademir Hazır, 2014b: 17; Üstüner & Hold, 2010: 52-53; Bora, 2008). It arises from a distinction arising from religion's position in society's symbolic space. Particularly in the early republican period, the restriction of religion to the private sphere by purging the public sphere of religious symbols had the function of stigmatizing the traditional body³ (Akçaoğlu, 2018: 36).

The divisions in the class-cultural sphere appear as the product of the "socio-symbolic asymmetry" (Wacquant, 2019: 153) between the city and the countryside built around the dynamics of Turkish modernization (White, 2002; 2017; Karadağ, 2010). The robust homology between the privileged social position, which requires the realization of both economic and cultural capital, and Western taste and lifestyle preferences, has much less impact on the non-elite of the state's cultural project, particularly in the rural and eastern parts of the country (Rankin et al., 2014: 162). The intellectual tension between the dominant political philosophy of the Republic and the religious sphere has eroded the ties between culture and politics, which has then alienated a significant part of the population from the official ideology (Temel, 2018: 56). At this point, although religion has been identified with traditional and rural values, modernity has become a symbolic capital function for groups adopting the Western lifestyle and identifying themselves with anti-traditional progressive forces (Yavuz, 2005: 360; Göle, 2011: 102). It puts a difficult-to-close gap between the disjointed and diverse

³ The studies by Bora (2018) and Karademir Hazır (2016) reveal that hijab not only symbolizes religious belief among women but also becomes a symbolic indicator of the rural, lower-class position.

Muslim groups and the new regime. The gap has then become the basis of future representation relations between dispersed and unorganized Muslim groups and political entrepreneurs. In this process, Islamism is framed and internalized as part of historical struggles (Akçaoğlu, 2018: 28-38).

The urban mobility of social groups has ensured the permanency of the reproduction of the stigmatized traditional body in a demographic structure forged by proletarianization and immigrant mobility (particularly in the social topography of metropolitans). Considering the size of the cultural capital and the (class) differences between those adopting a Western lifestyle and those not, immigrants from Anatolia have always been stigmatized as the absolute other by the middle-upper class groups of the city and have become a means of redefining class boundaries (Öncü, 2013; Erder, 1999; Ünal, 2017). Indeed, Bora (2018: 140) proposes that the modern/traditional or village/city divide built around the consequences of modernization has created a solid discourse in Turkey where the class difference is expounded and made sense of. Accordingly, newcomers to the city have symbolic subclass practices by adopting a traditional lifestyle (e.g., “leaving shoes at the front door” (Özet, 2019: 264), “hanging laundry (Üstüner & Hold, 2010) or carpet (Karademir Hazır, 2014c: 687) on the balcony,” or “sitting on own legs” (Danış, 2001: 158). Thus, the local urban elites subject the newcomers to symbolic violence over the inequality of cultural capital (Erder, 2002). The “masked wounds” of symbolic violence have been influential in the “designation” of the class in Turkey.

The way the experience of social differences assigns, a.k.a sense of position, the place of the classes; thus, confrontations in relational processes produce class consciousness (Thompson, 2006: 25) and give birth to the collective sensitivities of large segments about their positions in the social space. Groups deprived of capital distinguish their class interests in their implicit struggle with middle and upper-class groups, particularly in the process of migration and urbanization (White, 2002: 69). In this process, Islamism assumes a cultural appearance through the prism of class interests. According to Keddie (1973: 255), Islam in Turkey “becomes largely a class phenomenon with the traditional religion followed by the majority of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie but rejected or radically altered by the further educated classes.” Here, the fact that the mass has a familiar set of symbols of Islam in interpreting the world (Sarıbay, 1995; Yavuz, 2005) leads the excluded groups to classify the opposition discourse under the umbrella of Islamism (Saktanber, 2010).

On the other hand, not only the uneasiness by the moral code but also being excluded from socioeconomic and political developments have been determinants in Islamism’s gaining a class identity in Turkey (Keyder, 2010). The dominant economic model advocated by the center-right and left-wing parties between 1960-1980 (privileging the construction of an internal market through the protection of the industrial bourgeoisie) and its political requirements hindered supporting social groups lacking resources (a broad spectrum of traditional small capital, urban slum populations, and merchants and farmers), which invited Islamic political parties (National Order Party (MNP), National Salvation Party (MSP), and Welfare Party (RP)) to fill this gap. Keyder (1998: 215) utters that the speed of economic

transformation has brought about division and polarization due to the growing resource distribution problems and fortified alternative movements to respond to the demands of neglected social groups. Identical social conditions among these groups have popularized political behaviors compatible with the class model.

Nevertheless, the formation and development of the Islamic political field have brought a considerable impact. As the field of economics has become integrated with capitalism, the rapprochement between the losers of the new order and the Islamic political field has surged, and this rapprochement has turned into a political representation bond thanks to the relations between the movement and slums in big cities (Akçaoğlu, 2018: 40). Production relations around slums and the contact with local politics have been one of the surest indicators of social promotion. Networks and expectations of those living in slums have then gained a class character. In this sense, White (2017: 224) proposes that the close ties between the urban poor and the Islamic political movement bear a class issue. The political sphere influences the urban poor's voting behavior by bringing the issues they react to on their political agenda. At the same time, the Islamic social sphere also assumes functional roles in slums. The Islamic social sphere mediates the transfer of the marginal opposition from the edge of the social and political sphere to the center (Göle, 2011: 105). Thus, the relationship capital between society and these spaces offers significant opportunities for social mobility (Yavuz, 2005: 116).

What makes the competition between classes political is the management style of wealth and resource distributions (Arslan, 2017). The paternalist state model in Turkey has ensured that the class hierarchy has been built not around the factory order (Buğra, 2011) but based on the volume and composition of the capital owned by the groups outside or inside the distribution channels in a moral reckoning with the state. In particular, high visibility of the political economy leads to the conduct of all discussions on income distribution at the state level (Keyder, 1998: 215). Thereby, the way the groups falling outside of the resource allocation in a welfare environment experience deprivation and the opposition to the center gain the Islamist movement a class character (Buğra, 2011). In this process, Islamism emerges within the moral economy of the marginal opposition⁴ (Buğra, 2010: 159).

Until the early 1980s, industrial employment, urbanization, and the dynamics of agricultural production ensured the maintenance of an informal moral economy. The strategic social networks used to break the domination of the urban middle class in the labor markets and the production relations around the slums by immigrant groups then made it possible to build an alternative public. In this context, the process of proletarianization took place as a result of the gradual dispossession of the factory with the migration to the city (Özdemir, 2005: 857), not from a mass that was "dispossessed" and filled to the factory (Üstün, 2011: 234). On the other hand, the fragmentation of land ownership in agricultural

⁴ The moral economy is the behavioral economy of society outside of modern, formal market relations, in which the individual-state relations develop not based on citizenship but on the paternalistic principle of reciprocity. Family solidarity, trust-based ties, and community relations are more praised in this method.

production, the solidaristic relations maintained by the immigrants with the rural areas, and the fact that the majority of industrial employment has consisted of micro or public enterprises outside the factory discipline have created the unique experience of laboring practices in Turkey. Solidarity networks within the Islamic social and political sphere on this course have largely been composed of the proletariat (Akçaoğlu, 2018: 42). In this regard, Çiğdem (2016: 118) asserts that Islamism has become a widespread movement among the lower classes, particularly after 1980.

Overall, Islamist habitus emerges as a result of a cultural exclusion filtered through the mediation of different (economic and political) fields. The group's gaining a class identity has been initialized by class-cultural affinities such as discontent with the inability to assume a share in the welfare and the sociocultural distance imposed by Turkish modernization. In this respect, while the principles behind social distinctions are not a vulgar tradition-modernity, rural-urban, or secular/Islamic opposition (Kandiyoti, 2017) but rather a social origin determining class-cultural differences and lifestyles by the volume and composition of cultural capital, the mechanisms producing the segregation are the inequalities in the distribution of economic capital. The relationship between socioeconomic deprivation and the so-called progressivism characterized by modern or Western values has considerably affected the formation of lower classes' class identity around the Islamist ideology (Sarıbay, 1995: 70).

4. TURKISH CONFEDERATION OF HAK-İŞ TRADE UNIONS

The Islamist movement has not only produced institutional representation in the political arena in the construction of alternative publicity but also has established schools, solidarity organizations, settlements, economic entrepreneurial networks, and employee organizations to fill the gaps in civil society (Alankuş Kural, 1997: 7). Among these, when discussing political organizations (Yavuz, 2005; Sarıbay, 1995; Gülalp, 2005) and business associations (Yankaya, 2014; Özsöz, 2019; Cengiz, 2013; Özdemir, 2014), it is not prudent to mention an adequate academic interest in the movement around workers' organizations. Although few studies have discussed Hak-İş so far, these have only addressed either the possibility of the confederation's Islamic references (Koç, 1995; Işık, 1996; Öztürk, 2018) to have a union identity (Arıcan, 2018) or the ideological and organizational tendency of the confederation and its contribution to the transformation of Islamism (Duran and Yıldırım, 2005). In these studies, it is assumed that Hak-İş was founded to serve a particular political and economic ethos concerning the doctrinal interpretation of Islam (Koç, 1995; Işık, 1996).

On the other hand, union divisions tend to be interpreted on the basis of ideological differentiations. Accordingly, cultural and identity-based differentiations are also reflected in industrial sociology in the post-industrial age where class identities are eroded (Arslan, 2017; Öztürk, 2018). In this context, while the union identity of Hak-İş is analyzed as a political manifestation of Islamist identity rather than a class identity (Arıcan, 2018), it is assumed that its union strategy is based on the erosion of class identities (Öztürk, 2018; Kılıç et al, 2018). This assumption relies on the argument that

the ideological polarizations of the 1970s in Turkey initiated Hak-İş (Tokol, 1994; Deli, 2010; Buğra & Savaşkan, 2015; Arıcan & Şen, 2017; Doğan, 2018), which points to the distinction between ideological and class identities. To put it another way, it is argued that ideological struggles occur outside of class identities. However, Thompson (1978: 150) states that classism appears in ideological and institutional expressions. In Turkey, “the struggle in the cultural sphere produces implicit forms of ideological struggles between social classes” (Swartz, 2015: 187), which causes class boundaries to be observed in ambiguous forms. Class differentiation consists not in rural-urban, modern-traditional, or Islamist-secular cultural dichotomies but in the “polarization of opposing interests and the corresponding cultural dialectic” among social groups clustered around these ideological perspectives. And yet, just as the Islamic political movement is the political manifestation of the Islamist sociology/class (Yılmaz, 2005), Hak-İş can confidently be assumed as its reflection in industrial organization.

Lipset (1983) argues that the trade unions’ characteristics are largely influenced by the status system of societies. It is equally affected by inherited culture and expectations and the way inequalities are experienced. Lipset (1983: 16) argues that workers’ behavior, dispositions, and sets of actions are profoundly influenced by the pace, extent, and pattern of industrial development or how well the social and economic situation “fits” into the Marxist two-class model of society. The dominance of small and medium-sized businesses in the manufacturing industry in Turkey, the predominance of public economic enterprises (PEE) in industrial employment until the 1980s (Buğra, 2011), the continuity of the peasant-worker typology (Makal, 2007), the labor experience and recruitment processes in PEEs, and recruitment processes outside of formal conditions around the moral economy of society (Buğra, 2011) have led to a unique development of the culture and identity of the proletariat. Thus, the practice of proletarianization and class segregation has tended to develop outside the dynamics of the division of labor, which in turn, has determined a unique route for the structure of workers’ organizations.

Late industrialization and related proletarianization and the dynamics of the modernization adventure provide specific colors, shapes, and characteristics to different social strata, which shows up in union divisions (Demirel, 2001: 3). However, it should be noted that the above phenomenon is not unique to Turkey. In most late industrialized countries, trade unions have developed as part of a labor movement with a political and industrial wing. According to Streeck (2005: 267), union divisions in these countries have often tended to reflect the dominant social divisions; trade unions have followed the divisions dominating the social space and the industrial and proletariat structure in these countries. Therefore, the organizing practices of the unions have closely been related to the underlying conditions and the roots of these practices.

The intellectual tension with the power during the construction of the Turkish industrial relations system has led to a unique trade union experience (Özügürlü, 2008). The experience of late industrialization perpetuates political pressures on trade union movements (Makal, 2002; Çelik, 2010),

which shapes the relations between trade unions and political spheres⁵. While the institutional structure of the industrial relations regime has been designed according to the public sector (Doğan, 2018: 264), Türk-İş has been shaped by fundamentalist institutional reforms attached to the state and has become the most prominent representative of the proletariat in the public sector or public affiliates. DISK, on the other hand, has emerged largely as a result of internal opposition within Türk-İş (Kutal, 1968; Algül, 2010). In the 1960s, DISK assumed noteworthy roles in the control of employment in the private sector due to the industrial momentum and the increasing number of wage earners and adopted union strategies compatible with the left political parties (Keyder, 1998: 215). In this spectrum, Hak-İş has had a structure (Yirmibeşoğlu, 2007: 173) with workers of rural origin, distant from fundamentalist reforms, and belonging to an Islamic habitus in Anatolia with weak industrialization and strong traditional structures. Established in 1976, Hak-İş emerged as a result of the efforts of seven trade unions⁶ in Anatolia (Sivas, Malatya, Konya, Iskenderun, Ankara, and Istanbul) to rally together under a single roof (Düzenli, 2002: 16). It is noteworthy that the trade unions pioneering to the establish meant of Hak-İş were predominantly composed of social groups in Anatolia lacking various types of capital.

Hak-İş emerged as a consequence of the spatial redistribution of labor with the dissolution of the traditional division of labor during the gradually shifting of the manufacturing industry to Anatolia in the second half of the 1970s. SME-based production in the second half of the 1960s (Doğan, 2007: 190) and the flexible production-led developments after the second half of the 1970s adjusted the demographic changes in favor of the city. In addition, while the decline in agricultural production boosted urban mobility, industrial developments accelerated proletarianization in Anatolia.⁷ The relations of the immigrants with Islamic non-governmental organizations during the proletarianization hold critical importance in the formation of Hak-İş. In other words, the novel industrial localities emerging in Anatolia (Doğan, 2001: 100) brought the workers to the city and Hak-İş to the trade union arena.

Mahmut Arslan, Hak-İş Chairperson, proposes that the confederation constitutes “industrial themes by the Anatolian workers” and that Hak-İş “claims its place in a structural flexibility process that would enliven the new climate, new environment, and new needs” (Acar, 2007: 182). The establishment of Oz Iplik-Is in 1978 to join Hak-İş and the developments in its organization (Düzenli, 2002: 35) may support his claim. Oz Iplik-Is signed its first collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in

⁵ In late industrialized countries, the right to organize trade unions has been chiefly denied to accelerate the progress of the factory system and not to fall behind in international economic and military competition (Streeck, 2005: 267). In Turkey, efforts to organize trade unions were limited by the political sphere as an obstacle to industrial development until the establishment of Türk-İş (Man, 2009).

⁶ These unions are Oz Gıda-Is, Oz Doküma-Is, Oz Yol-Is, Oz Demir-Is, Oz Sut-Kur, Oz Yapi-Sen, and Oz Metal-Is, respectively (Koç, 1995: 131). Oz Iplik-Is, replacing Oz Doküma-Is in 1978, and Hizmet-Is were established to support the establishment and organization process of Hak-İş (Düzenli, 2002: 27).

⁷ While the urbanization rate rose from 35% to 46% between 1965 and 1985, the total labor force increased from 11% to 17% (Urhan, 2005: 60).

1978 in a medium-sized factory in Gaziantep (Düzenli, 2002: 27). Besides, it carried out its initial organizational activities in Mardin, Malatya, Samsun, and Kahramanmaraş.

The founders argue that Hak-İş emerged from the representation gap in the field of industrial relations (Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi 1, 1996: 527). The representation gap refers to the lack of organization to represent workers with Islamic identity. For example, Mehmet Er, co-founder of Hak-İş, claims that they set out with the demand for a trade union where “Muslim workers” would represent themselves: “*Why was this organization established? It was established in Gaziantep. That day, those workers complained about the lack of a trade union to represent them among many ones. Then, they set out to establish a trade union to represent them.*” They thought that the other trade unions did not behave like workers and did not represent workers. They desired to establish a trade union that would share their values.” (Düzenli, 2002: 27). In the statements of Salim Uslu, one of the former chairpersons of Hak-İş, the emphasis on “we” is noted. Uslu states that the establishment of Hak-İş was initiated by the idea, “Let’s have a trade union too” (Hak-İş, 1999: 52).

In the establishment of Hak-İş, statements of trade unionists to organize “people like us” in the labor movement may point to the establishment of classism in implicit discourses. The expressions “representing us,” “a trade union sharing our values,” or “we should have a union too” of both the founding staff of the confederation and trade union executives may indicate the habitus of the class feeling close in spatial distance, which shows that class position has a relational quality, and class identity establishes itself “through its differences from others” (Bora, 2018: 187). Bourdieu (2017: 287) assumes that groups “describe their whole selves with everything that makes them the opposite of other groups and with shared words in which their social identities (their differences) find meaning.” The new generation class theorists also demonstrate with different examples that class identity is expressed through the opposition of “us and them” (Savage, 2016). Expressions such as “we are not like them” (Reay, 1998), “people like us” (Karademir Hazır, 2014c), and “a trade union not like theirs” become verbal indicators of the class identity of social groups in oppositional relations.

Hak-İş emerges not only as a reflection of the Islamist movement on the union organization within proletarianization but also as a consequence of seeking legitimacy and representation in the construction of alternative publicity. There were six workers’ organizations in Turkey at the confederation level in 1976, apart from Hak-İş.⁸ During the interview with Muzaffer, the adviser to the chairperson of Trade Union 3, he was asked why they rally together under the umbrella of Hak-İş despite the said diversity at the confederation level:

⁸ Türk Hür-İş, DISK, MISK, Türk Ulke-İş, Hak-İş, Sosyal Demokrat-İş, Türk-İş (Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi 2, 1998: 282).

“Anatolia was in exclusion... Moreover, nobody took steps to make decisions about its (Anatolia) administration and future. This movement actually started with MNP and then with MSP. Then, some organizations appeared in parallel; Hak-İş was one of them.”

Class consciousness emerges as an oscillatory movement where people experience antagonisms inherent in their class position and where antagonisms are not only limited to class-based ones but also include other non-class social differentiation foundations in society (Erengözgin, 2007: 235). The use of the social exclusion of the Islamic political and social sphere to cover large segments, particularly the urban poor, holds an important role in the Islamist movement’s attaining its class consciousness (Buğra, 2004: 135). The ties with these spheres have shaped the social route and class cultures of immigrants, and class-specific socialization experiences have triggered the consciousness, perception, and action sets of workers. Mehmet Er (co-founder of Oz Iplik-İs) and Hüseyin Tanrıverdi (co-founder of Hizmet-İs) note in their memoirs that their relationship with the İlim Yayma Society during their early youth was of importance in their desire to establish a worker organization with Islamic sensitivity in the following years (Düzenli, 2002: 24).

Necati Celik, one of the former chairpersons of Hak-İş (1981-1995), emphasizes class-based social exclusion in the process leading up to the establishment of Hak-İş: “... Whatever social and political conditions brought the MSP into existence also led to the establishment of Hak-İş. These conditions have also triggered the search for rights of large segments of society, whose worldview, beliefs, and values have always been ignored, opportunities for political participation have been disqualified, and their demands and aspirations have not been voiced in the administration and who have always received the least share from the income distribution.” (Hak-İş, 1995: 27).

The confederation had difficulties in expanding its base until the 1980s. The administrators of Hak-İş claim that they had around 20 thousand member workers in this period (Koç, 1995: 132). Factors such as the vast organizational network of Türk-İş in the public sector and DISK in the private sector, the political atmosphere of the period, and the rate of proletarianization undoubtedly mediated the low number of members (Cicioğlu, 2013: 55). On the other hand, there seems a series of changes in its discourse and practices in its restructuring process after 1980. The emphasis on Islamic symbols and moral values during the establishment left its place for alternative discourses and practices in trade unionism⁹. The formative experiences changing in the post-1980 period also affected specific dispositions and institutional patterns. Diversity in the member worker base caused the radical discourse in the establishment to be replaced by a more flexible and moderate discourse. Claiming an alternative model to the Turkish industrial relations system in the restructuring process, Hak-İş declared to adopt “service unionism” instead of class and wage unionism. Accordingly, apart from the understanding that

⁹ Statements, such as “employees and employers should unite for a higher ideal on the basis of a devoted employer to great effort and religious brotherhood,” predominated in Hak-İş's early unionism period (Türkiye Sendikacılık Ansiklopedisi Cilt 1, 1996: 528). However, such statements have always remained at the level of discourse and have not turned into practice.

wage increases are at the core of union practices, the organization attempted to develop a model where a range of services could be provided to member workers, such as providing childcare, health, and cheap housing (Duran and Yıldırım, 2005: 236). It is still unclear how effective this model is in the organizational process. However, contrary to the limited number of members in the establishment, member recruiting was accelerated after 1980.

Tablo 1. Trade Union Distribution of the Workforce in Turkey between 1985-2000

Years	Turk-İş	DISK	Hak-İş	MISK	Independent Trade Unions
1985	1,355,528		129,206		204,064
1986	1,438,475		149,153		223,519
1987	1,513,317		162,313		228,997
1988	1,670,897		180,557		259,841
1989	1,421,257		166,597		245,088
1990	1,567,501		189,090		240,253
1991	1,675,301		249,637		205,873
1992	1,766,535	19,378	268,035		200,323
1993	1,815,271	208,266	272,338		189,806
1994	1,967,260	334,767	283,292	5,959	53,141
1995	1,978,035	329,337	295,729	4,209	59,704
1996	2,014,452	313,046	317,265	3,923	60,098
1997	2,047,708	325,404	335,577	1,805	64,128
1998	2,134,593	358,328	356,642	2,864	71.119
1999	2,178,886	368,743	361,415	3,351	75.580
2000	2,245,648	379,804	377,122	3,945	79.783

Adopted from Çalışma ve Sosyal Güvenlik Bakanlığı, Çalışma Hayatı İstatistikleri, Ankara 1999: 104.

The rise of Hak-İş is often considered based on the transition from Islamic moral values to secular, democratic values (Duran and Yıldırım, 2005) or the predominance of class identity in the tense relationship between class identity and political identity (Arıcan, 2018). In the post-1990 period, membership expansion is highlighted within industrial privileges as a result of political exchange (Arıcan and Şen, 2017; Öztürk, 2018). Nevertheless, it may be more appropriate to look for the conditions allowing Hak-İş to expand its membership base in the change of social and industrial developments. The organizational changes in production after the economic restructuring in the 1980s opened room for flexible production. Moreover, the transition from the Fordist mass production system to a flexible one gradually shifted the manufacturing industry to Anatolia (Köse and Öncü, 2000: 79).

Thus, Anatolian capital now stands out as labor-intensive sectors in the national division of labor. Agriculture and craftsmanship are increasingly replaced by the manufacturing industry, particularly in Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, Konya, Kayseri, Denizli, and Çorum (Köse and Öncü, 2000: 85; Özüğürlü, 2008). The changing direction of the industry also altered the migration route after 1990, and these cities have become new places of migration (Tekeli, 2008). While labor-intensive industries took a 31% share of private manufacturing industry production in these cities in 1980, this rate reached 49% in 1996 (Köse and Öncü, 2000: 86). The intensification of organizing activities in these cities by the trade unions affiliated with Hak-İş (Düzenli, 2002: 54) has been among most important factors to contribute to the number of members of the confederation.

In the 1980s, the Motherland (Anavatan) Party's support of Hak-İş against Turk-İş (Duran and Yıldırım, 2005: 233) yielded positive outcomes in the public sector collective bargaining process (Öztürk, 2018: 466). The increase in organizations in the 1980s, especially in PEEs engaged in textile production, facilitated the expansion of the member base (Düzenli, 2002). However, it is debated how effective these industrial concessions were in expanding Hak-İş's membership base since the number of members remained below 200 thousand until the 1990s. In 1997, while Belediye-İs (Türk-İş) was organized in 55% of local administrations, it was 27% for Hizmet-İs (Hak-İş; particularly in Sivas, Kayseri, and Konya) and 14% for Genel-İs (DISK) (ÇSGB, 1997: 92).

The 1980 Coup mandated the termination of the activities of confederations other than Türk-İş. Closed up after the coup, Hak-İş resumed its union activities in 1983. In this process, the spaces vacant from DISK and MİSK provided great opportunities for the organization of Hak-İş (Deli, 2010; Uçkan, 2002). The previous union competition between DISK and Türk-İş before 1980 may have influenced workers to choose Hak-İş instead of Turk-İş (Öztürk, 2018: 462). For example, when the top administration of the DISK-affiliated union in the textile business in Gaziantep decided to transfer to Hak-İş-affiliated Oz İplik-İş, which also led the workers to become members of this trade union (Düzenli, 2002: 32). In addition, the limited ruptures in Türk-İş allowed the union's membership to expand (Buğra, 2004: 140). However, the resumption of DISK in 1992 and MİSK in 1994 but continuing increase in the number of members of Hak-İş may imply that the impact of the member transitions remained limited.

Hak-İş has risen as a national actor in the labor movement in the post-1990 period (Arıcan, 2018). The expansion of the organization network of the confederation in this period is credited to its political transformation (Arıcan, 2018; Duran and Yıldırım, 2005). Yet, Öztürk (2018) focuses on Hak-İş's magazines from its establishment to the first quarter of the 2000s and suggests continuity rather than a change in its political identity. In this sense, it may be asserted that the conditions paving the way for the rise of the confederation are mostly related to the increase in the number of wage workers and its practices compatible with the post-Fordist industrial organization structure. Moreover, maintaining its trade union strategy in line with the conditions of the new regime, Hak-İş offered to purchase state-

affiliated enterprises instead of rejecting the privatization practices in the 1990s, which prevented workers from being fired. Besides, instead of opposing subcontracting - a significant outcome of flexible production strategy - it carries out policies toward organizing and staffing subcontracted workers. In addition, it holds activities to improve the working conditions of women workers and to encourage their participation in working life by focusing on organizing in Anatolian cities (Öztürk, 2018). The fact that Hak-İş has implemented some projects to close the gap of semi-skilled labor in the manufacturing industry confirms the position of Hak-İş in Turkish industrial relations.

The Fordist consensus between mass production businesses and trade unions totally relied on providing economic security for workers and their families against market fluctuations in exchange for standardizing employment and working conditions (Streeck, 2005: 268). In this context, trade unions were modeled as the cornerstone of democratic capitalism, a viable solution to the problem of class conflict (Streeck, 2005). Excluding 19th-century craft unionism and trade union experience (Visser, 2012), trade unions were at the center of the institutionalization of the reconciliation between capital and labor as managers of industrial discontent rather than as institutional actors of class conflict in the strict labor market of the mass production system¹⁰ (Streeck, 2005: 273). However, post-industrial developments undermining the “standard conditions” of labor markets have made the function of collective organizations problematic. The flexible production and accumulation regime has led to deregulation in the labor market, eroding the capacity of trade unions to manage employment relations.

According to Streeck (2005: 260), when traditional class approaches lose their appeal with the change in industrial dynamics, different types of unions begin to be considered elements of different “capitalism models.” In this regard, it is prudent to assert that Hak-İş maintains its understanding of alternative unionism in a framework compatible with the new accumulation and industrial regime. In addition, Özdemir (2005: 859) underlines that Hak-İş’s discourse that rejects conflict should be interpreted within labor relations based on flexible production conditions. It is likely to stem from the human-oriented conciliatory structure of flexible production. Concentrating its organization strategy particularly on precarious subcontracted workers (Arıcan, 2018: 19), adopting a conciliatory policy in worker-employer relations, and its social dialogue practices support the claim that Hak-İş has developed a labor relations model compatible with the conditions of the flexible production system.

¹⁰Social-reformist thinking and socialist-anarchist thinking significantly differ by function of a trade union. While the first focuses on the control function of trade unions in the management of employment relations, the second prioritizes the role of trade unions in forming revolutionary class consciousness in the proletariat. However, it should be noted that socialist thinking also bears significant differences regarding the function of a trade union. For example, while Trotsky claims that trade unions are integrated into the capitalist system, Lenin sees them as the school of the socialist revolution. And yet, trade unionism has become a movement shaped by intellectuals beyond an industrial activity, and views on the trade union movement have tended to be driven by intellectual groups with an elitist approach, disconnected from the proletariat (Akpınar, 2019). Indeed, Streeck (2005: 259) argues that trade unions were propagated as a scientific justification for the universal promotion of free collective bargaining as a means of taming class conflict in the post-World War II period.

5. CLASS PROJECTIONS IN ALTERNATIVE STRUGGLE PRACTICES OF “MUSLIM LABOR”

The Islamist wing often adopts a reserved approach toward collective actions when compared to the left, which represents the culture of struggle in Turkey. Hak-İş pursues a policy of advocating a partnership of interest in worker-employer relations instead of conflict, pluralism, and difference of interest (Yıldırım, 1997: 16), the basic assumptions of the traditional industrial relations paradigm. The union administrators state that they desire a fair wage allocation rather than preventing the competitive conditions of workplaces in the market. However, the position of these two poles in production relations is considered the most important obstacle to the reconciliation of their interests (Durak, 2011), which raises the question of how Hak-İş continues to protect the interests of its members despite its union strategy that rejects conflict of interest. Or, despite the union practices incompatible with the interests of the grassroots that Hak-İş represents (Kılıç, Yüksel and Balcı, 2018: 272), why do the members still organize under the umbrella of Hak-İş? Many examples in Turkey where workers revolt when not satisfied with the policies of their trade unions (Öztürk, 2018: 462) require noting the possibility of unions acting against the interests of workers.¹¹

“What concerns me is that one needs to be granted their share of what they produce. That is what we recommend to our members. Employees want their rights to be taken, but they do not want unionists who appear belligerent. Our members force us to get good pay without going on strike since they know what he gets if going on strike.” (Umit, Chairperson of Trade Union 1).

In the interviews with union officials, it was discovered that a relationship upon solidarity and mutual trust, rather than conflict-based struggle, is often encouraged in worker-employer relations. Yet, Salim Uslu’s statement that “Muslims need to accept the reality of class” complicates the relationship between Hak-İş’s practice of union struggle and class discourse (Buğra, 2004). On the other hand, Uslu (1992: 26) argues that Hak-İş’s practice of struggle continues non-confrontational, in line with the historical tradition of Turkish society. During the interviews, Burhan, Secretary of the General Organization of Trade Union 1, credited defending workers’ rights to the words of Caliph Ali, “*One who does not oppose injustice loses his honor along with his right*,” while referring to the Islamic content of the concept of right and what the union’s struggle practice produces through the discourse of “seeking rights.”¹² In his interviews with the administrators of Hak-İş, Özdemir (2005: 843) also draws attention to the fact that the union understanding has been built within the struggle for “right” and protecting the oppressed in Islam. Although Hak-İş claims to have developed a model based on the rejection of the

¹¹ The collective resignation of Hak-İş-affiliated Öz Çelik-Is in a workplace in Iskenderun Organized Industrial Zone may be shown among its significant examples. <https://www.ntv.com.tr/ekonomi/renault-ve-tofas-iscileri-uretimi-durdurdu,yZpp7TBZ80ehmn2N-vpXWw> Accessed: 08.10.2022; <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/437450/tes-is-yuzde-9-zamma-imza-atti-isci-tepki-gosterdi-boyle-sendikacilik-istemiyoruz> Accessed: 08.10.2022

¹² In Hak-İş's 1995 General Assembly Report, it is emphasized that the trade union struggle would not become a conflict of interest but “a reflection of the struggle in the pursuit of justice, truth, and virtue in working life.”

traditional confrontational model in industrial relations, the confederation seems to accept the reality of “class” through the “oppressed-oppressor” discourse. Thus, union strategies are developed that are far from the class discourse but represent the interests of the workers (Öztürk, 2018: 465).

There may be a self-sustaining selective affinity between the traditional tendencies of trade unions and their organizational capacity. Buğra, Adaman, and İnsel (2005) state that values, behaviors, and perceptions hold a critical place in the relations between workers and trade unions. The spatial closeness between Hak-İş and its members grants functional convenience in its relationships with its base.

“The chairperson has stopped by lately... He has a worker origin, so he knows how to treat us, how to talk to workers, and his speech style... You know, our administrators so attached to us” (Zeki, Member of Trade Union 1, 2015)

The fact that linguistic and behavioral practices appeal to Zeki in relationships with union officials indicates the significance of a set of subjective tendencies in relational intimacy. However, whereas Zeki drew attention to some identities with the union administrators, according to him, the importance of a trade union lies in the wage increase the members are granted: “The wage increase accomplished by the trade union indicates its power.” Thereby, it can be assumed that union membership is governed by the exchange between union administrators and workers that shapes the allocation of appreciation, status, and economic rewards.

“Look, I love to have breakfast with tea and bagels. I always look for tea and bagels wherever I go. However, they (he means DISK) know very well how to choose quality wine in a restaurant. How might they relate to the base they represent? I always visit factories and want to meet our members. During these visits, I never allow workers to wipe the oil on their hands to shake my hand” (Umit, Chairperson of Trade Union 1, 2015).

Adopting a language of communication within local cultural habits in the organizing process of the Islamist movement offers functional benefits to the movement (White, 2002: 62). During the interviews, Umit stated that the differentiation of the lifestyles of the unionists from the proletariat adversely affects the workers in union organization.¹³ Accordingly, what distinguishes Hak-İş from other confederations may be the class-cultural affinities with its members. Despite a non-identical lifestyle between union administrators and member workers, they seem to exhibit similar tendencies. It largely depends on spatial proximity based on religious identity, social origin, and volume of cultural capital.

¹³ Class-cultural affinities offer exceptional opportunities for the Islamist movement not only in the organizational strategies of trade unions but also in the organization of political parties. In an interview with workers supporting the Islamic political movement in Ümraniye in the 1990s, White (2017: 208) found implicit lifestyle-based class expressions (e.g., “They live just like us.”) behind the workers’ support for the leading figures of the party at that time.

The workers also emphasized the nuance of class differentiation with union administrators in organizing and representing interests: “If one wears a suit and smokes Parliament brand cigarettes, then they cannot defend my rights” (Ozcan, Member of Union 1, 2015). Thus, it is likely to assert that trade union-member relationships are ruined in the case of an imbalance frustrating the members’ needs and expectations.

“Hak-İş is an organization of humble people with worker origin. Yet, foods may be missing, either salt or consistency, which sometimes symbolically applies to Hak-İş” (Suat, Member of Trade Union 1, 2015).

Some workers complained about not being satisfied with the wage increase in collective bargaining agreements (CBA) from time to time. Although the 20 percent wage increase in the last CBA pleases Suat and Zeki, it is not enough for Ozcan. Ozcan stated that Hak-İş has been organized for two years at his workplace and may think of transferring to another trade union if he recognizes that his current trade union quits defending his rights in the future. Suat also stated that he had previously thought of becoming a member of an “independent union,” but the conditions changed when he became a workplace representative.

Although class-cultural affinities are influential in organizing strategies, workers may think of transferring to a different union in the case of any incidents against their objective interests, which may indicate that the relations between the parties are mediated not by precise determinations but by different impacts. Workers can develop strategic maneuvers in their union preference when their gains are threatened. Thus, union membership is shaped by the allocation of various capital, asset, and resource distributions, including class-cultural affinities, rather than collective, solidarity-based memberships. Workers realize their union preferences (in the absence of asymmetrical employer-trade union relations) by negotiating their class position and possible gains and opportunities.

On the other hand, the class consciousness of the proletariat in Turkey has been reduced to the object of an elitist approach, and its daily living conditions have been maintained as an intellectual discussion topic far from its desires and expectations (Akpınar, 2016: 62). There is a widespread argument that “Muslim labor” is passive and devoid of class consciousness (Durak, 2011; Cengiz, 2013; Şahin, 2018; Arslan, 2017). Accordingly, the workers’ religious identities in labor relations produce nationality (Durak, 2011; Şahin, 2018), which may lead them to consent in the case of any deprivation of economic and social rights. Thus, inequalities in working life are concealed by the religious codes guiding the workers’ perceptions and actions (Durak, 2011: 86; Cengiz, 2013: 339). Buroway (2014: 118) proposes that the proletariat is deemed guilty of being false-conscious with an elitist attitude when its worldview and class consciousness are incompatible with intellectuals’ salvation prescriptions. In this way, the dynamic nature of social reality is left out of consideration thanks to a barrier between the phenomenal world and the world of facts (Akpınar, 2016: 65). However, Bourdieu is of the opinion that

it is due to the class difference between workers and intellectuals. Since class differences lead to differences in perception and understanding between the parties, conditions of exploitation and oppression that are intolerable to an outsider may appear acceptable to workers. Albeit, it does not mean that it in any way excludes the possibility of workers' resistance to existing conditions and practical forms of resistance (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2014: 59). Hence, it may be needed to observe the visibility of traditional struggle practices with the premise that alternative methods of struggle are less visible (Özdemir, 2005: 860).

“90 percent of us are religious. Yet, I am always recommended to be grateful while discussing the wage increase. They say, “Never mind, be grateful....” They are always grateful despite their low salary... They have an expectation... They are always in an expectation. And when their expectations are dashed, they swear more than I do. So, when they say being grateful, I think they know something...”(Ozcan, 2015).

Groups may strategically utilize traditional cultural rituals and practices in active struggle (Foley, 2007: 289). Ozcan's statements reveal that workers fight for their objective interests according to the tendencies in their habitus. The alleged lack of class consciousness stems from a misinterpretation of the distinction between the goals and means of workers' interest strategies. According to Ozcan, the workers' use of religious terminology is not the result of their passive or lack of class consciousness but their strategy to preserve their social position.

The class consciousness of the proletariat in Turkey does not act within the industrial worker consciousness as fancied by the intellectual imagination (Buğra, 2011: 215). The social and historical experiences of the Turkish proletariat lead it to maintain its struggle relations in diverse tracks. At the same time, traditional predispositions can lead individuals to pursue their interests through strategic actions. In other words, workers can engage struggles in alternative ways through original strategies (Swartz, 2015: 102).

“... They sometimes recommend always being grateful. I am also religious, but this has nothing to do with religion. They do so mostly because of the urge to maintain their current position... For example, do you wish a higher wage for more stressful work or a moderate wage for feeling more comfortable in the workplace?... They act upon this juncture... But it does not mean that I will allow my labor to be exploited” (Suat, 2015).

There is sufficient evidence that the potential behaviors of the proletariat mostly rely on rational gains and losses (Offe, 1982). The behavior of agents may occur as strategic improvisations demonstrating different reflexes to the opportunities or obstacles in various situations rather than following the rules or complying with the norms (Swartz, 2015: 144). Rather than collective resistance, strategic improvisations may be considered alternative forms of resistance consisting of silent, subtle, unsystematic, and singular actions developed to obtain direct results and cope with and try to improve

the situation. Thus, it is necessary to consider the intermediate positions beside the dualities, such as submission/rebellion or passive/active, in the ideological role of the subaltern agent (Erdoğan, 2002: 28). Here, the improvisation varies by workers' guide of conduct. Workers may develop situation-specific strategies, which may imply that forms of resistance may not be bound to certain norms and that workers can exhibit alternative struggle practices through a number of strategies.

6. CONCLUSION

The formative impact of historical experiences in changing social structure governs the assignment of social groups in different class affiliations. The expansion in the Turkish middle class, which emerged in the 1990s and became evident after 2000, has significantly transformed the class composition. The dominant nature of the new middle-class structure has led class struggles to take on more dynamic appearances in the cultural and political arenas. Besides, the fundamental criteria governing the social strata have begun to transform, especially with the emergence of a new Islamic culture industry. Thus, the bipolar class-cultural differentiation in Turkey's national cultural repertoire has been replaced by multi-layered appearances, and social divisions have now begun to emerge purely outside of simple dichotomies such as traditional-modern, secular-religious, and rural-urban (Gökarıksel and Mclarney, 2010; White, 2017).

However, Hak-İş seems to be the only worker organization that still represents the Islamist wing. Undoubtedly, the transformation in the structure and roles of the labor force, the declining share of manual workers in employment, and the contemporary conditions of the labor market with heterogeneous employment have led to the differentiation of the interests of the proletariat, which also has weakened the control power of trade unions in industrial relations. The relatively high bargaining power of middle-class employees vis-à-vis employers has also led to declining trade union demands. While traditional class utopias have lost their validity, trade unions have ceased to be the "military schools" of the proletariat (Arıcan, 2018) and have begun to act within the boundaries of more civil and democratic capitalism. Class mobility and the "favorable position" of the middle class in the social hierarchy (Skeggs, 2003) have moved common class cultures away from collectivist associations. And yet, while class divisions are reflected in the diversity of political organizations, industrial organizations still come together under a single roof (Hak-İş).

Hak-İş put forward the discourse of moral values-based unionism in its establishment. After restructuring in 1983, the confederation gradually increased the number of its members by developing union practices sensitive to the changes in the national demographic structure and international division of labor. The increasing pace of these developments in the 1990s and the rise of the Islamist movement in different areas can be considered noteworthy developments that led Hak-İş to reach a considerable base. Hak-İş's industrial practices compatible with the codes of the new production regime and power in local governments are among the factors helping the expansion of its base.

It may not be convenient to claim that the base of Hak-İş today consists of pure “Muslim labor.” However, it does not mean that the conditions mediating the establishment and organization of the confederation emerged outside of class motivations. Although Islamist formations may not adopt class discourse, they tend to develop within class conditions. Thompson (1978: 149) expounds on class formation in his article titled *Class Struggle Without Class*:

“Classes do not exist as separate entities, look around, find an enemy class, and then start to struggle. On the contrary, people find themselves in a society structured in determined ways, experience exploitation, identify points of antagonistic interest, commence to struggle around these issues, and discover themselves as classes in the process of struggling; *they come to know this discovery as class-consciousness*. Class and class consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process.”

Yet, the interaction of Islamism with class gradually assumes a class character in the process of experiencing opposing interests, which tends to reflect not only on political organizations but also on trade unions of the movement. Although the discourse that class has replaced culture and identity-based formations is utilized to analyze the organizational processes of the Islamist movement (Öztürk, 2018; Arslan, 2017), the class approach of the new generation class theorists, which covers cultural processes, imply that class motivations are still alive.

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Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

Çıkar Çatışması: Yazar çıkar çatışması bildirmemiştir.

Finansal Destek: Yazar bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.

Teşekkür: -

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Conflict of Interest: The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

Grant Support: The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Acknowledgement: -
