

Book Review

Buğra, Ayşe (ed.) (2010). *Class to Class: Working Views Out of the Factory*, İstanbul: İletişim Press.

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Articles in this book consist of collection of studies prepared for the lecture by students who attended the seminars of Ayse Bugra on working life and labour movements. In these lectures given by Bugra, especially focuses on the form taken by working life and workers' life in capitalist society. Processes of loosing control on their jobs and lives with the effect of job and life experiences of people who has to work to live are in the centre of subjects focused on in these seminars.

Most of the students who attended the seminar and therefore who wrote the articles constituting the book, experienced the transformations created by neo-liberalism in the working life and worked in various branches of service sector. The common point of articles mostly is formed in the framework of the concept of being un-property occurring together with the capitalist production process, in other words, quitting the production instruments by producers and by moving here causes the transformation of social relations. Moreover, the commodification of labour and human, both the working life of workers and in general manner current reflections of loosing control on the social existence constitutes common characteristics of afore mentioned articles.

The other subject is also on the concept of "free labour" free from any kind of ownership expressed by Marx, today when labour types observed outside the factory is concerned, becomes open to the discussion. By moving from the obligatory association of capitalism and "non-free labour" today it is stated that the structure of working relations is required to be analyzed in detail.

The subject of flexibility, which comes in the head of outdated discussions on the recent working life, bring problems such as individualization, isolation and also unable to be organized obligatory to take in to consideration. In this framework, it is expressed how the concept of being un-property which can be related with social right losses and enlargement of market logic to any area of life is experienced by different working groups in Turkey. According to Bugra (p. 16) one of the most important contributions of the book is to manifest transformations occurred in the domination of market ideology creating a common fate amongst these aforementioned people.

From the studies constituting the content of articles in the book, neo-liberal market logic can be concluded to converge characteristics of "working relations outside the factory" to each other. It is obvious that most of the workers from seasonal workers to cinema workers, from football players to teachers, from health workers to office workers, today, are in the struggle to gain their control on being decommodification of their labour, having the right to social security and organization, working process, time and their lives (p. 29) again. Precisely at this point, Ayse Bugra expressed that the meaning of the "class" concept is examined in our age and all these struggles oblige a class alliance in a broad sense. Workers, who work to gain their lives only in this way, will have a voice on what kind of a society they will live and work in by coping with threats towards their benefits.

The book consists of four chapters. The first chapter, "On the Road" tells the lives of seasonal agricultural workers and their working conditions. These workers, minimum six months of the year, are far away from home and seem to be foreigners in everywhere they go. Neither they have a right nor do their contracts exist. In this relationship especially, with the effect of positions of mediators, entering the work and leaving the work can not be described within the boundaries of free contract relationship. In this respect, seasonal agricultural workers can be thought as a very typical example of non-free labour category. Because these persons take to the road based on the relationship of trust between the mediators and themselves and get into debt to mediators to cover both their travel expenses and their expenses in months which they did not work in. In this way, they can not wriggle out entirely from the relationships of patronage and nationality which are one of the main characteristics of the "free labour" category. In this sense, rapid expansion of capitalist production relationships has not concluded the result of disappearance of non-free labour forms. In this first article in the book, concept of seasonal agricultural work, which is also formed with the effect of changes in the agricultural policy in Turkey and in the world, was discussed and socio-economic and legal status of these workers was also put forward. With the effect of global policies applied in agriculture, thaw process in the agriculture also in Turkey gained speed and one over five of the working

population separated from this sector. With the reduction of agricultural production opportunities to find jobs for seasonal workers also decreased. On the one hand, current economic conditions worsen the status of workers in this category; on the other hand, again the same conditions also oblige small producers to be seasonal workers. These workers are excluded legally at first as they are not subject to Labour Law. It can be mentioned that they are in the process of exclusion actually both from the view of taking reactions of local public and also they live in the unhealthiest conditions. All of these conditions make seasonal agricultural workers open to abuse of both employers and intermediates and reinforce characteristics which can be included into the category of "non-free labour". In addition, kinship and tribal ties also affects the choice of who will work. It could be mentioned that this condition decreases the freedom of the worker who is not efficient to market his/her labour. Therefore, the writer with the characteristics given in the article expresses that the seasonal workers should be defined as "non-free labour" type in the age of transnational capitalism (p. 63)

The second chapter of the book named as "Under the Stars" and covers the analysis of two different "star" categories, cinema workers and football players in two articles. In the first article, it is expressed that this market had an informal shape with the transformations of cinema sector in Turkey after 1980. The main interests of the writer are sectoral sub-contracting, working conditions and unprovided rights of figurants. In this respect, the critics related to the Union of Cinema Workers are indicated. The writer made an analysis on the experiences of figurants who are the most unprotected fraction of the sector. For this reason, the writer carried out interviews with the figurants in a semi-closed area where they wait with the hope to be taken to the film set. On the wall of the area where the figurants wait, there is a commercial of acting agency to which they are members. Persons interviewed made comments that agency can construct a closed area for them to wait with the money spent for this commercial. This comment constitutes a striking example to understand conditions to be subjected. As these actors work unregistered, a unilateral contract was signed with the workers. Flexible working hours, irregular payment of wages and hard working conditions constitute the other example of informality of the process occurred in the cinema sector. The writer both with the help of her interviews carried out and as the result of her own research mentioned that the Union of Cinema Workers can not be mentioned to be struggling as an organised pressure mechanism. In contrast to this situation, the writer expresses that how effective it is to be organised in the American and European film sector in effecting the negative conditions in the sector. Both policies after 1980 passivating the unions and problems in the inner operation of the union are expressed as the reasons of being ineffective in the sector for the Union of Cinema Workers. The limited number of actors

who are the members of union amongst the actors interviewed is observed. According to the writer, one of the ways for the cinema workers to get rid of hard conditions in which they are; is that the cinema workers should become transparent by increasing the speed of the organization activities.

Another article of the second chapter is on the football players. At the back of the bright images reflecting on the screens, not bright working conditions at all and obstacles in front of the organised struggle constitute the subject of the article (p. 19). One of the most important emphases is on the fact that the football players are also workers. The requirement regarding the problems they live related to working conditions and working relationships should be thought together with the reality of football which should be accepted as a profession constitutes another emphasis. Due to the nature of the work done, working in increasing ages is not possible, working relationship can be very short term and this gives opportunity to performance inadequacy or injury. The writer in this sector describes benefits of being organised derived from the example of Professional Footballers' Association. The writer mentions the necessity of such a union also in Turkey. Such a union will provide benefit to protect social rights and improving working conditions of football players. At the moment in which the writer has completed this article, Union of Sport Workers has been established. The writer has also given part of the interview made with the founder of the union at the end of his article.

The third chapter of the book has a title of "Education, Health and Social Rights". In two articles here in this chapter, the working conditions of education and health workers are subjected. Both articles evaluate the occupational destruction, stratification and transformation which are targeted by the neo-liberal policies. Especially in the first article, emphasis have been put on the negative results that may arise from the school being transformed into a private firm and the teachers transformed into workers, who work according to performans criteria and their efficiency is tested continuously, and education losses its control in the market, and these views have also been supported by interviews carried out by the writer with teachers. An original emphasis in the article is on the relationship between bureaucratization and leaving working environment to the market logic. The dominant view is in the direction to diminish bureaucratic obligations which imprisons the employers into molds by the flexibility effect of market. However, the experiences of teachers put forth an opposite situation. Tests applied towards the evaluation of performans continuously load teachers with a burden beyond their responsibilities and they loose their characteristic of controlling their working time gradually. The process of all these changes transforming the teaching profession and teacher identification has been examined highly in details in the article. It is unavoidable to also evaluate the teachers as employers who have to increase

their performans in competitive conditions in the ratio when education and training move away from an understanding of social responsibility and is transformed into a service type which is bought from the market. Another dimension of the problem also constitutes of the differentiation of status between the teachers. The division occuring between the teachers, some of who are permanent employees and the others are contracted and highly lack social rights, is also one of the difficulties occuring in the working life.

The second article of the third chapter is leaning on the working life of employees working in this sector as a result of increasing the efficiency of neoliberal policies in the health sector. The transformation occuring in the working relationships, by perceiving the health services as a commodity and starting to submit the services with the understanding of business management not only by the private hospitals but also the public ones, has been examined.

As emphasized in the previous article, the disappearing of the reflex of struggling together against the losses of social rights with the effect of disintegration occuring between people who do the same job constitutes the most basic subject headings of this article too. Examination of the conditions of the employees also comes into prominence when it is obvious that health services which are left to the market operation, do not decrease the health expenses and increase the service quality in Turkey. The writer made ethnographic studies to examine the working conditions of the health employees in an university hospital in which the assistant health employees such as nurses, technicians and patient attendants start to become subcontracting ones, (this excluded assistant health employees for services bought like cleaning, kitchen and security services). The writer conducted interviews with the personel from the different groups of professions and also observed the activities of organized unions in the hospital. The article basically, aims to carry out a discussion on how the workers are affected by the transformation process in the health sector where the government tries to point out what are the expactations from the employees when this transformation is completed. When the entire health reform has been evaluated, the result we can obtain is that where all health employees will be made contractual employees and become cheap manpower with the lack of work assurance in the long-term. In this process, a big difference in terms of social rights between the civil servants and the subcontracted workers and especially for the second group, the negative impact of working conditions will become more sensible.

The last chapter of the book carries the title of "Life is Elsewhere" and in this chapter an article related to the office workers exists. In this article, the discussions carried out include those on how the transformation occured in the post-industrial period experienced by the office workers and how the

rationalization process in the office affects the working culture in the office. The writer carried out interviews in a semi-governmental institute (chosen by the writer). Here, the emphasis is on the fact that the union organization in this institute is common. Questions such as how they carry out their jobs, their control on the job, collective attitudes, how they give meaning to their jobs, social relationships in the office and consent showed the working conditions directed to the persons interviewed within the scope of the research (p. 184). The working environment of the office employees can be identified as a field in which the sense of sharing and solidarity brought by a job carried out collectively is lost, people do not trust themselves and each other and a sense of inadequacy increases exponentially in a continuous sense. All of these conditions which are beyond the common sense of benefit cause individuation and strengthen the efforts for the protection of current situation more than employees sue for. Here, the working process can be defined as a process in which the control is felt very intensively, bureaucratization gets harder due to the performance system and the competition pressure creates divisions between the employees. With the effect of other similar characteristics of the process detailed in the article, the characteristics of the individuals getting isolated are; showing resistance, confronting and the disappearance of developing a common sense. Besides this, in this process, the perception of reality of the employees also disappears and they postpone their plans related to their lives. Working in this sense, is moving out of being a part of life.

As a result, studies in this eclectic calls attention to the very different work forms and conditions carrying collectivity trend and occurrence of social right losses in every sector with the commodification of labour. Providing the appearance of cause and result similarities between the different experiences constitutes the aim of the book and the articles in the book from the fact that, practices of acting in common should also be developed in the extent which capitalism assimilates the characteristics of working people. It can be mentioned that the eclectic submits an important contribution to the working conditions in some sectors (such as the cinema industry and sports) which do not seem as jobs in the traditional sense and to organizational practices in terms of lightening the way. On the other hand, a point to be mentioned here is that the most important condition to gain the dynamic of acting in common, gaining the class consciousness again, which is said to have lost its importance. As the articles in the book pointed out, there is a term in which even privileged sectors in the working life become workers rapidly and serious transformations in the social rights occur. In this sense, it is thought that the "class" should take back its esteem which was lost and the obstacles to becoming organized should be overcome in this way.