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# Labour Movements and State Formation in Turkey: Passive Revolution and Uneven Development (in English)

## **Abstract**

This article aims to apply the theory of Antonio Gramsci to labour-state relations in Turkey. More specifically it seeks to highlight the causes of political instability and the contradictory course of labour politics, mainly in the 1950-1980 period, from a Gramscian perspective. On the basis mainly of the Gramscian studies of Adam D. Morton (2011) and the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci (Gramsci 1971, 1975, 1992, 1996, 2007), the article illustrates how class struggles indicative to the formation of the modern Turkish state, within the conditions of uneven capitalist development, resulted in a political stalemate in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Through the application of such concepts as passive revolution, uneven and combined development and the capitalist type of state, the author seeks to clarify how labour-state relations in Turkey are intrinsically linked to modern state formation. This involves the concomitant co-optation of labour movements and establishment of market relations, rooted in an international uneven and combined capitalist system.

## **Keywords**

Turkey; passive revolution; integral state; uneven and combined development; labour-state relations; parties and trade unions

# *Labour Movements and State Formation in Turkey: Passive Revolution and Uneven Development*

Jonas Sylvest

## *1. Introduction*

Few will deny that the years between 1950 and 1980 were turbulent years in Turkish labour politics – indeed in Turkish politics in general. State policies towards labour movements oscillated between the granting of rights modelled on Western liberal democracies, followed by a revoking of the same rights not long after, and outright violent repression. Moreover, most of these policy changes were, ironically, enacted in the aftermath of military coups. Many have portrayed these developments as the symptoms of a weak democratic system unable to safeguard universal rights, which such a system promises. Such an analysis promotes a perception of the state mainly as a repressive apparatus restraining the rights of the working class, whereas civil society and its organizations are a progressive force for good. It could be argued, however, especially from a labour standpoint, that another perspective on labour movements might help illuminate the repressive structures of state-labour relations in a more fruitful and nuanced manner. With such an aim in mind, this article sets out to clarify the class character of the state, and the inherent bias against labour that this brings with it, through a Gramscian analysis of Turkish state formation with a special focus on labour.

Gramsci's theory seeks to make clear the class character of the state by delineating the institutional separation of society into the two spheres of civil society and state, and, thereby, exposing the underlying structures of state power. In his *Prison Notebooks* he thus states that certain ideas are based on

a distinction between political society and civil society, which is made into and presented as an organic one, whereas in fact it is merely methodological [...] in actual reality civil society and the state are one and the same (Gramsci 1971, pp. 159-60; Q13, §18, p. 1590 of the 1975 Italian Critical Edition).

The adoption by most social scientists of a narrow definition of the concept of the state – as opposed to the comprehensive Gramscian definition – reproduces the perception of the state as something autonomous, or semi-autonomous, and therefore also extends the view that civil society actors are external to the inner workings of the state. Within the field of studies on labour, this results in the analysis taking on a decidedly pluralist view of labour unions as agents external to and in opposition to the state.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, some neo-Gramscian analyses simplify the complex character of the modern state and consequently end up reproducing the civil society-state division to varying extents<sup>2</sup> due to the lack of attention to the inner structures of the integral state complex. The approach to the writings of Antonio Gramsci by Adam D. Morton represents a more class and historical materialist-oriented application of Gramscian theory, and it is the contention in this article that such an approach brings forth new aspects of Marxist analyses of the Turkish state, as it provides a more rigorous and detailed application of such Gramscian concepts as hegemony, passive revolution and the integral state. Gramsci applied the concept of passive revolution, among other ways, as a “revolution

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<sup>1</sup> Here, for instance, we are thinking of the application of the corporatist / pluralist group theory of Philippe Schmitter by Robert Bianchi in “Interest Groups and Political Development in Turkey” (Bianchi 1984). This seminal work partially focuses on state-labour relations in Turkey. The corporatist-pluralist perspective on state-labour relations attempts to elucidate how the state interferes in civil society and attempts to control pluralist actors. From a Gramscian perspective such a theory presupposes the perception of civil society as something in opposition to and separate from the state. It, thus, reproduces the civil society/state cleavage which obscures the class character of the state, and portrays labour movements as something outside the realm of the state.

<sup>2</sup> A poignant example here is Ahmet Öncü’s *Dictatorship Plus Hegemony: A Gramscian Analysis of the Turkish State* (Öncü 2003), where the state / civil society division likewise is reproduced. It should be mentioned here that state/civil society also represents the aspects of domination and hegemony respectively, so that the integral state constitutes both coercion and consent. It is the whole of society, not restricted to a coercive political sphere that is/should be isolated from the economy. For further analysis of this article and Bianchi’s book above by this article’s author, contact University of Southern Denmark for a copy of the master’s thesis *Labour Movements and State Formation in Turkey – Passive Revolution and Uneven Development*.

without mass participation” and as a “‘molecular’ social transformation” (Cf. the editorial note in Gramsci 1971, p. 46). For the purpose of overall clarification, it should be mentioned that the concept of passive revolution will be applied mainly in the latter sense to illuminate the attempt at integration of subordinate classes through a series of reforms in the twentieth century, as part of the process of capitalist-industrialist state formation in the absence of a fully-fledged hegemony.<sup>3</sup>

As indicated in the title, Turkish state formation, passive revolution and the Uneven and Combined Development (U&CD) of capitalism are here presented as three inseparable concepts when observing the historical development of class relations in Turkey. The concept of passive revolution has a dual character; on the one hand it is based on the historical specificities of capitalist state formation in Gramsci’s own time – the changing and expansive role of the state, with the growing role of civil society, modernization, industrialization, and fascist corporatism – and on the other hand a more general principle deriving from the specific historical observations of the ability of capitalism to reorganize and adapt in the face of organic crises (Morton 2011, p. 38). The former, Gramsci noted in his day, “takes place when, through a “reform” process, the economic structure is transformed from an individualistic one to a planned economy (*economia diretta*) and when the emergence of an “intermediate economy” – i.e., an economy in the space between the purely individualistic one and the one that is comprehensively planned – enables the transition to more advanced political and cultural forms without the kind of radical and destructive cataclysms that are utterly devastating. “Corporativism” could be – or, as it grows, could become – this form of intermediate economy that has a “passive” character.” (Gramsci 2007, p. 378, Q8§236). As we shall see, this description of an intermediate economy fits well for Republican Turkey, both before and after the turn to a multiparty parliamentary system in the 1950s.

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<sup>3</sup> Besides this main focus on the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the article will also briefly serve to highlight the role of the Young Turk Revolution as a passive revolution in pre-industrial capitalist Ottoman Turkey, which is an example of the first type of passive revolution, as a more Caesarist type of passive revolution involving regime change. It is beyond the scope of the article to focus on passive revolution expressed as the attempt by subordinate classes to alter things in their favour.

Passive revolution, in other words, involves both the production and the reproduction of capitalism through a rugged, and at times violent, process of revolution and restoration. In Turkey this process has taken the form of a stunted and delayed development of a bourgeois class, and the attendant attempt by state élites to nurture capitalist development in the face of foreign competition. Political developments in the multiparty era suffered from such developments, as a weak and divided bourgeoisie was unable to establish a hegemonic structure based on market conditions and the predominance of consent. Despite this lack of leadership, the ideological elements that were consolidated during the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the succeeding single-party rule proved very salient among the working classes, and helped partially integrate labour movements into the integral State system of the new Turkish State. This modern state, which is formed from this process of passive revolution, is unique as compared to the pre-capitalist state in that it takes on a specific shape, ultimately resulting from the non-political character of surplus extraction owing to the market mechanisms on which the state is based. The modern state is, thus, based upon the premise of the separation of the economic and political aspect of society, which in turn leads to the reification (Morton 2011, p. 7) of the state as something autonomous and separate from civil society. This reification leads to Weberian theoretical assumptions about the State, confining its role to that of a coercive apparatus. On the other hand, Gramsci's perception of the state as "integral", as a social and relational structure, is an attempt to lay bare its fundamental class character, which is obscured by the above-mentioned separation that endows the State with a perception of universality and impartiality (Morton 2011, p. 20). The relational state is according to Morton "a strategic field in which the relations of production are bound up with political and ideological relations that consecrate and legitimize them" (Morton 2011, p. 7). Thus, the Gramscian state, as opposed to the Weberian one, is defined by both consent (civil society) and coercion (state), because of the mutual contractual exchange inherent to the capitalist mode of production (Morton 2011, p. 72). As the internal logic of the integral state is bound up on market mechanisms, Morton applies the concepts of *a*

*state in capitalist society* and *the capitalist type of state*, which were originally developed by Bob Jessop, to denote the extent to which the state complex is dominated by market mechanisms. The former describes the not yet fully developed capitalist state, where pre-capitalist accumulation is the prevalent mode of production, and therefore surplus extraction is politicized. In this state, the coercive aspect of state actors is dominant, which means that the exercise of power “is more transparently articulated” and therefore the class character of the state is more obvious. This state retains a functional adequacy signified in the ability of the state to reproduce the “requirements of the capital relation” (*ibid*), that is, if you will, the more practical and economic aspect of capital accumulation, whereas, in *a capitalist type of state*, society is dominated by the logic of accumulation, in such a manner that disguises the exploitative role of the owners of the means of production. This state retains formal adequacy that represents the institutional separation of the state and civil society, which is typical for liberal democracy. Bob Jessop notes that “This separation is both real and illusory” (in Wetherly, Barrow, and Burnham (eds) 2008, p. 146), as the modern capitalist state does in fact separate into these two spheres, but it is an illusory separation because it only functions to conceal the fact that the real power is vested in the owners of the means of production. As mentioned earlier by Gramsci, the distinction is “merely methodological” (Gramsci 1971, pp. 159-60; Q13, §18, p. 1, p. 1590).

Although the “goal” is to create conditions that nurture the basis for the deepening of capital accumulation, while disguising or mystifying the capitalist nature of the state, this is not always the outcome. It is worth quoting Jessop at length here:

Nonetheless formal adequacy does not guarantee the material adequacy of the capitalist type of state in the sense that the mere presence of this state form ensures that it secures the economic and extra-economic reproduction demands of the capitalist mode of production. On the contrary, extending the argument that form problematizes function (Offe 1984; Jessop 1982), we can say that *formal adequacy problematizes functional adequacy*. Because forms are the strategically selective medium through which the contradictions and dilemmas of the capital relation develop, there is a permanent tension between form and content. This tension calls for action to ensure that form and content complement each other and are

thereby functional for capital accumulation and political class domination” (Jessop, 2008, in Wetherly, Barrow, and Burnham (eds) 2008, pp. 137-38).

It should therefore be borne in mind that the establishment of the functional adequacy of capitalist production does not automatically lead to formal adequacy or a capitalist type of state, and inversely the formal adequacy can lead to a crisis in the functional adequacy of the integral state.

The concept of passive revolution is an oft-cited concept within the social sciences. It is the assumption here that the concept cannot be divorced from the historical roots of capitalist state formation and social relations. Passive revolution as state formation is the attempt by domestic élites to establish a capitalist hegemony through the implementation of reforms imported from abroad, while co-opting subaltern classes. The spark that ignites this process is the uneven relations of global capitalism. The historical aspect of passive revolution is, thus, in Gramsci’s theory, intrinsically linked to the dialectics of the historically U&CD of global capitalism. Scholars such as Adam D. Morton, Jamie C. Allinson and Alexander Anievas have thus pointed to the continuity and compatibility between Gramsci’s theory and Lev Trotsky’s concept of U&CD, and as argued by Allinson and Anievas, “Trotsky’s theory helps make explicit assumptions present in the *Prison Notebooks*, but never fully thematised” (Allinson and Anievas 2010, p. 474). To be clear then, Gramsci never explicitly refers to U&CD, but the centrality of uneven and combined spatial and temporal historical processes of capitalist development in Gramsci’s writings has been clearly observed and illuminated. An element central to the theory is the mimetic exercise that peripheral élites embark on in the quest to catch up as a result of the combined character of global capitalist development, which amalgamizes local and international forms of development. It is, according to Allinson and Anievas, exactly this combined element, which is the defining character of capitalist development. The capitalist state is the result of the “expansionary nature of capitalism’s ‘rules of production’” (Allinson and Anievas 2009, pp. 56-7), which forces capitals and nations into intense competition with each other.



What the U&CD attempts to describe then, is the unfathomable forces that were unleashed by the capitalist modes of production, and how this development forced this new system into a direct antagonistic relationship with other older modes of production. U&CD describes capitalism's "tendency to exacerbate the inherited unevenness of social development whilst simultaneously unifying its parts into a single ontological whole" (*ibid.*, p. 55). In other words, there is an inherent conflict between the tendency of capitalism to differentiate while unifying societies of the international system. This means that uneven societies are placed in increasingly direct opposition with each other – a situation that results in the simultaneous existence of social groups at different developmental stages within the same system. This dialectical amalgamation of international development means that the less developed borrow from the developed and are able to skip intermediate developmental stages – what Trotsky termed the "privilege of historic[al] backwardness" (Trotsky 2008, p. 4).

This intertwining of developed and backwards elements is, thus, an expression of the attempt of local élites to adapt imported ideology to local circumstances through the granting of concessions to strategic social groups, which is in return part of the process of passive revolution, where dominant social groups attempt to forge a web of alliances in order to establish hegemonic rule. In order not to lose sight of the class character of the state, the real starting point of the analysis is, thus, the local élites. As noted by Gramsci: "the line of development is towards internationalism, but the point of departure is 'national'" (Gramsci 1971, p. 240; Q14, §68, p. 1729). A dialectical and scalar tendency therefore presents itself, where international inequality is increasingly transferred to the domestic sphere, as capitalist development takes hold, whereas this development is being initiated from the domestic sphere by local élites, again as a response to external pressure. The temporal and spatial combined unevenness domestically, within the concept of passive revolution, is evident in the way Gramsci perceived it as a so-called blocked dialectic of new and old classes, vying for state power in the quest for hegemonic predominance (Morton 2011, p. 19), in other words a tendency exacerbated by the general amalgamation of old and new technology, policy and modes of

production. In the words of Gramsci, it is a situation where “the old is dying and the new cannot be born” (Gramsci 1971, p. 276; Q13, §34, p. 311). This temporal unevenness within the process of capitalist state formation is the result of accelerated capitalist development, spurred on by the contingencies of international market mechanisms.

The amalgamation of the combined element of U&CD is itself evident in the way in which the concepts of consent and coercion, hegemony and passive revolution, and *a state in capitalist society* and *the capitalist type of state* are applied. As noted by Morton, these concepts are not to be understood as absolute categories, but rather as “two points on a continuum” (Morton 2011, p. 21), so that the state complex is never “neither nor”, but always somewhere in between. In other words, it is a constant dialectical oscillation between the old and the new, existing simultaneously within the same system.

With this in mind we now turn to a description of the historical process of state formation in the pre-multiparty era.

## 2. U&CD and passive revolution in the pre-multiparty era

### 2.1 *The sick man of Europe*

The following section will sketch out a history of the uneven and combined character of capitalist state formation – one of the earlier mentioned aspects of passive revolution – in the late Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. We illustrate how the capitalist development of the modern Turkish state is rooted in the reforms of a Western-oriented nationalist state bureaucracy, acting as the entrepreneurs of capitalism in the absence of a strong and independent bourgeoisie.

As regards the U&CD of the nascent modern Turkish state, two important developments should be emphasized. First, the tributary character of the Ottoman Empire resulted in a centre-periphery dichotomy non-existent in Europe. This dichotomy resulted in delayed commercialization, as the bureaucracy retarded the development of local centres of power. Therefore, at the time of early capitalist reforms, Turkey was markedly agrarian, and generally unaccustomed to

private property in the countryside. The top-down, élitist rule of the mostly urban bureaucrats of the pre-multiparty era was thus unable to ideologically incorporate the agrarian masses. Second, there is the role of the state bureaucracy as the instigator of capitalist integration, in the absence of a developed bourgeoisie, which in its turn is rooted in the blocked development of a feudal landed class, and hence the absence of commercial agriculture. The latter of course signifies the amalgamation and skipping of stages that are characteristic of the combined aspect of capitalist development. The stunted development of the early Ottoman bourgeoisie, stemming from the tributary character of Ottoman social reproduction, and the subsequent emergence of the Young Turks, was an expression of the weakening of the Sultanate resulting from reforms implemented to save the Empire. Last, we shall deal with the establishment of nascent nationalism and anti-imperialism as the *sine qua non* common sense of the modern Turkish state.

During the eighteenth century, the military prowess of the modern European armies inflicted crushing defeats on the Ottoman armies, due to technical and economic advantages of capitalist development, which made clear the growing unevenness of the global order. The Ottoman palace bureaucracy came to realize that they were forced to implement political, military, and economic reform, if they wanted to avoid the dissolution of the Empire in the face of increasing European encroachments (Keyder 1987, pp. 27-28). “Under the whip of external necessity”, to use Trotsky’s phrase (Trotsky 2008, p. 5), the uneven global order was being felt as they were under increasing pressure to modernize in order to compete internationally. As we shall see, though, this wish to mimic European development also entailed an integration of the Empire into a European capitalist state system, and thus the simultaneous disintegration and finally dismemberment of the Empire that the reforms sought to protect.

Like Russia, the Ottoman Empire was in economic respects a backward country, and mostly an agrarian society at the eve of capitalist reforms. This was a consequence of the tributary system, inherited from the Byzantine era, where the central state bureaucracy would collect a single annual tax from a mainly independent, non-proletarianized, subsistence-based agricultural sector, cultivating state owned

land. Because of this fiscal arrangement, the bureaucracy was opposed to industrialization of the peasantry, as this would set in motion centrifugal processes through the privatization of agricultural land, and thus the loss of tax revenues and political control (Keyder 1987, pp. 11-12). Because of the decreased horizontal conflict between ruling elites, which was the opposite case in the feudal system, there was less impetus for technological development and productivity gains. Local centres of power were less inclined, and had less opportunity, to put the squeeze on peasants or invest in new technology. This resulted in better conditions for the peasants, who had no strong desire to rebel against a system that for the most protected their basic interests (Bromley 1994, p. 49; Nisancioglu 2013, pp. 335-6). As opposed to the feudal structure in Europe, where the horizontal conflict between different fiefdoms were predominant, in the Ottoman Empire it took on a more vertical character between the central palace bureaucracy and rural peripheral forces. Most of the Ottoman era can thus, to a certain extent, be seen as a struggle between the rural periphery and the central palace bureaucracy. The latter attempted to contain the development of peripheral centres of power, preventing local landlords from accruing revenues independently of the center (Keyder 1987, pp. 8-9). The emergence of the Ayans, local landlords who were gaining increasing power, but whose insurrection was quelled by the central state with the help of the British, is a poignant example (Keyder 1987, pp. 14-19).

According to Simon Bromley, the Ottoman Empire was highly dependent on the conquest of new land in order to keep up tax revenues, because of the above mentioned lack of incentives for endogenous growth, for instance through productivity gains (Bromley 1994: 48). When the Ottoman “Plunder machine” (*ibid.*) began to slow down, as Britain and France began to dominate the battlefields with their modern armies, the Ottoman economy soon found itself in grave need of finances. This resulted in increased taxes and the taking up of loans from foreign powers, while at the same time restrictions on exports of raw materials were loosened. The latter encouraged economic activity outside the purview of the central state apparatus,

and thus undermined the power of the central bureaucracy (Bromley 1994, pp. 49-51).

The increasing trade between the Ottoman Empire and the three empires of Britain, France and Russia simultaneously increased the uneven economic condition between the two sides, and drew them closer together in an intertwined and, although uneven, also interdependent relationship. As pointed out by Bromley, one of the main preconditions for the development of capitalism in the West was the presence of a vast market in the east from which to buy and sell goods “without hindrance” (Bromley 1994, p. 56).

The agents of this increasing European trade, who were overwhelmingly Christian and Greek or Armenian, were more interested in religious rights than appropriating state power, which meant that private property reforms and a general push for political representation was never really on the agenda of the majority of the bourgeoisie (Keyder 1987, p. 77). As a consequence, a strong bourgeoisie never emerged in the nineteenth century. Additionally, the state bureaucracy’s deliberate suppression of local landlords meant a landed élite never really developed in the Turkish part of the Empire, and, thus, halted feudalization, which could have led to mechanisation and industrialisation (Keyder 1987, pp. 10-11; Bromley 1994, p. 51). For these reasons, the bureaucracy was able to retain power throughout the nineteenth and most of the first half of the twentieth century – the bureaucracy’s dominance started to wain from 1950s onwards, with the introduction of democratic governance and emergence of bourgeois politicians who, to a great extent, were organic intellectuals of the bourgeoisie.<sup>4</sup> This laid the ground for a “statization” of the economic developmental trajectory indicative to the process of passive revolution as state formation (Morton 2013, p. 149). It is a situation where the bourgeois capitalists were not “playing their assigned roles” (Allinson and Anievas 2010, p. 471), and thus a situation where the state felt compelled to take upon itself the role as the progressive force

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<sup>4</sup> Organic intellectuals in the sense defined by Gramsci as the strata of intellectuals created with the emergence of a new class (Gramsci 1971, p. 5; Q12, §1, p. 1513). Süleyman Demirel for instance, one of the great figures of Turkish politics and the leader of the Justice Party, is a poignant example, as he was an engineer by education and worked for an American transnational company before entering politics (Heper and Sayari 2002, pp. 88-9).

for capitalist development. As Gramsci noted, a passive revolution may be characterized by a situation where “a state replaces the local social groups in leading a struggle of renewal” (Gramsci 1971, pp. 105-106; Q15, §19, p. 1823). All this took place within an international atmosphere, in the period leading up to WWI, of protectionism and nationalist ideologies. The financial crisis of 1873 had furthered these tendencies (Keyder 1987, p. 3), and the social and economic changes brought on by the Tanzimat reforms<sup>5</sup> caused considerable social upheaval and delegitimized the rule of Abdülhamid II. E. Attila Aytekin has thus analysed how increased and individualised taxes spurred substantial tax revolts throughout the reform period. As urbanization took hold, the revolts changed from being rural peasant in character to being urban partially bourgeois in the early twentieth century (Aytekin 2013, pp. 328-9). Coupled with centrifugal forces of the increasing export of raw materials and the authoritarian methods of the authorities, the weakened legitimacy of the central palace authorities paved the way for new actors to make their move. This was the moment of the Young Turks. In the late nineteenth century they had sprung out of the westernized segments of the bureaucracy that had emerged as parts of the modernizing reforms with the establishment of universities and military after western models (Keyder 1987, p. 28). They were firm believers in reform, nationalism and republicanism, and therefore, demanded the institutionalization of a constitutional monarchy, thereby abolishing the Ottoman Caliphate. With the Young Turks enjoying considerable support within the junior officers of the military in the early twentieth century, Sultan Abdülhamid II was forced to surrender to their demands in 1908 (Öncü 2003, pp. 311-12). This seminal event, known as the Young Turk revolution, marked a decisive turn in Turkish history, as Ahmed Öncü notes, for now the Empire had effectively abandoned the sultanate, which was based on religious authority, in exchange for the establishment of the political rule of a secular bureaucracy (Öncü 2003, p. 312). In a sense it also demonstrates the transforming power of capitalism, since feudal

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<sup>5</sup> The Tanzimat was a series of reforms implemented between 1839 and 1876 as an attempt, initiated and implemented by “Europeanized Ottoman bureaucrats” (Cleveland 2012: 82), to modernize the Ottoman Empire politically and economically following the European model.

Europe and the tributary Ottoman Empire had existed side by side for hundreds of years without changing the fundamental system of either. But with the power unleashed by the capitalist mode of production, all this changed, as it forced the Ottomans to reform themselves in the face of highly unequal power relations.

The Young Turks embarked on a campaign of protectionist economic policies aimed at developing a national economy and bourgeoisie independent of European powers (Ahmad 2008, p. 29). Central in this regard was the abrogation of the capitulations<sup>6</sup> during WWI (*ibid.*, p. 29). As noted by Feroz Ahmad, during its only ten years in power the Young Turks managed to develop a weak, albeit independent national bourgeoisie. The Young Turk state, thus, played the role as the entrepreneur of a bourgeoisie, which was a process to continue under the Kemalists in the interwar years (Ahmad 2008, pp. 58-61).

The Young Turks, in a way, seized and directed the scattered and disorganized demonstrations of discontent by parts of the masses into a conservative reform project. Thus, Gramsci noted, when studying Italian history, how “‘progress’ occurs as the reaction of the dominant classes to the sporadic and incoherent rebelliousness of the popular masses – a reaction consisting of ‘restorations’ that agree to some part of the popular demands and are therefore ‘progressive restorations’, or ‘revolutions- restorations’, or even ‘passive revolutions’” (Gramsci 2007, p. 252; Q8 §25, p. 957). The constitutionalist and parliamentarian aspect of the Young Turk revolution was, thus, a progressive attempt to soothe political and economic discontent from below, while at the same time restoring, or preserving, the power of the dominant groups through capitalist reforms. The nineteenth century political history of the Ottoman Empire can, therefore, be perceived in large part as a struggle between modernizers and conservatives, resulting in a long line of reform / restorations<sup>7</sup>. The westernized bureaucracy – first the Young Ottomans and later the Young Turks – can be likened to the liberal constitutional reform movements throughout Europe in

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<sup>6</sup> For Gramsci’s brief comment on the topic of the capitulations, although mainly pertaining to Egypt, see Gramsci 1996, Q2§63 (pp. 218-9 of Valentino Gerratana’s 1975 Critical Edition).

<sup>7</sup> The reform movements had, for instance, already in 1876 managed to press through the implementation of a constitution and parliament, but it was pulled back again by the sultan just two years later in 1878 (Taglia 2015, p. 4).

the nineteenth century. Indeed, as will be discussed below, these bureaucrats were directly inspired by these very European movements which Gramsci called “the form of ‘passive revolution’ specific to the nineteenth century” (Gramsci 2007, p. 378; Q8, §236, p. 1089).

As we have seen, the Young Turks’ movement was mostly a bureaucratic and military one that emerged out of the Ottoman palace bureaucracy. Young Turks distinguished themselves, by being mostly European educated, many of them hailing from military academies. These western-educated individuals came together with one specific goal in mind; to save the “fatherland” from extinction in the face of the encroachment of foreign powers (Taglia 2015, p. 29). As the membership increased rapidly, the party named the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was established in 1889. The CUP, from the beginning, was marred by a schism between a liberal rights-minded faction and a more social conservative nationalist faction. Ernest E. Ramsaur notes how the international ideological currents of this period were against the more culturally liberal outlook of the former faction. Nationalism was advancing throughout Europe, and in the face of both the slow disintegration of the Empire, through separatist movements in the Balkans and Armenia, and the threat of imperialist European powers, a Turkish-Islamic and nationalist state central ideology seemed like the better fit. The nationalist Turkist faction, therefore, won the favour of the members of the CUP, and this would become the *de facto* ruling state élite of the Ottoman Empire until the end of WWI (Ramsaur 1957, p. 129). This process of ideological import by the Young Turks, well describes the tendency noted by Gramsci that the importers of ideology in the absence of “a local economic development” (Gramsci 1992, p. 229; Q1, §150, p. 133) are not the productive classes, but “the class of intellectuals” (*ibid.*). In this sense, then the Young Turk bureaucracy functioned as “the ‘intellectuals’ of the bourgeoisie” (Gramsci 1992, p. 150; Q1, §44, p. 53), just as Gramsci noted that the old feudal classes in Germany and England did (*ibid.*), in the sense that both were classes in themselves, but at the same time functioned as organic intellectuals for another class. The bureaucracy is the incumbent “old classes” (*ibid.*) bent on preserving the prevailing order through a process of reform /



restoration. There is, however, an inherent contradiction in the way that the Young Turks sought to save the Empire, and by extension preserving their own role in it, by intending to create a hitherto non-existent bourgeois; on the other hand the inevitable outcome of this process was the weakening of the central state bureaucracy itself. The bureaucracy thus “produces [...] its own grave-diggers” (Marx / Engels 1992, pp. 15-16), to use the words of Engels in a modified sense.

The Young Turk era, although relatively short lived, would lay the foundation for a central feature of the nascent Turkish state, which would prove to be quite salient among labour movements, namely an especially entrenched nationalist and anti-imperialist ideological outlook. Murat Kaya describes this as a “siege mentality”, which permeated the Young Turk movement and elicited the feeling that the state could be overrun by foreign enemies at any moment. It is worth quoting Kaya (2014, p. 142) at length here:

since this siege mentality and security perception, together with a strong scepticism and anxiety toward the West among the Young Turk generation, were intertwined with the emergence of Turkish nationalism, they would evolve into one of the main pillars of Turkish collective memory and remain one of the everlasting features of Turkish nationalism and Turkish nationalist discourse.

This mentality was mainly the result of economic encroachments of the West and the loss of the Balkan territories. Especially the latter, according to Kaya, elicited a sort of psychological trauma, as they felt betrayed by the West who tacitly supported the Balkan nationalists, while also making the Empire ethnically and religiously more homogenous (Kaya, p. 137).

In a sense, the uneven and combined characteristics of capitalist development is evident in the paradoxical process, that the Young Turks, and Ottomans before them, in order to become independent of the woes of western encroachments were forced to develop along western lines, and thus become further entangled in western influence and kept in an economically inferior relationship with it. This represents, in other words, the paradox inherent in U&CD: that the wish to equalize and separate, results in the opposite, namely unevenness and combination.

In the liberal atmosphere that ensued in the aftermath of the reinstatement of the constitution, under the nationalist rule of the Young Turks, several labour unions emerged mainly in the three urban centers of Istanbul, Izmir, and Salonica. During the highly unstable years of WWI and the years leading up to it, 46 strikes broke out. The CUP reaction to these strikes was by and large repression, with occasional incidents of mediation by the high ranking CUP members. In general, the CUP had functioned as the implementer of pro-business reforms and they would not allow the goal of national development and reform to be hampered by troublesome workers. According to Karakışla “both the Ottoman government and the Committee of Union and Progress were under the strong influence of national and foreign entrepreneurs.” (Quataert and Zurcher 1995, p. 33). The Young Turks, thus, during their time in power did not have the “luxury” to attempt to incorporate labour movements into the state structure through concessions. This is indicative of the temporal unevenness with which Turkey was developing. Political ideologies were imported from abroad, while the landscape of productive relations which had encouraged those ideologies abroad were entirely different in Turkey. Nationalism, emerging out of the Western industrialized countries as a method of popular integration and consent-building, were in Turkey applied to a by and large rural and non-commercialized society. The Turkish state was not yet dominated by market relations and, as a consequence, surplus extraction took on a distinct political and coercive character.

## *2.2 Kemalists, emerging industrialization and anti-imperialist common sense*

In the interwar period the independence movement would come to consolidate the Republic of Turkey under the rule of General Mustafa Kemal. During the first decade of Kemalist rule, until the Great Depression in 1930, the Turkish economy was mostly an open economy, exporting basic agricultural goods. The new nation was still at this point almost entirely of an agrarian character, and the new regime did not embark on any significant restructuring of the economy during

this period. It was not until the 1930s that industrial policies were implemented, as a response to the Great Depression. The mimicking aspect of U&CD, which had spurred on nationalist state development since late Ottoman times, took the form of the emergence of a nationalist corporatist state ideology in the newly formed Kemalist state. Thus, according to Çağlar Keyder (1987, p. 89)

[n]ationalism was a modernizing ideology, specifically concocted for purposes of 'late-comer' states in the nineteenth century Europe. World War I and the League of Nations had ratified it as *the* state-building ideology for the many political units carved out of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.

The aim of this new nationalist regime was to “catch up with the level of contemporary civilisation” (Balkan and Savran 2002, p. 30). It was, however, not until the 1930s that such a nationalist corporatist state ideology would become formally institutionalized. As noted earlier, Gramsci perceived corporatism to be one form of passive revolution in the twentieth century, because, in David D. Roberts’s phrase, it represented “a kind of halfway house” (Roberts 2011, p. 249) between the old liberal and highly individualistic economy and the modern organized economy. The corporatist industrialization policies also entailed the early attempts at controlling and integrating the working class, through the establishment of state-sponsored apolitical labour unions and confederations. As described by Feroz Ahmad, one of the first of these was the Association of Industrial Workers of Izmir, founded in 1932. This kind of state-sponsored unionization would become the norm, and anti-class, apolitical tendencies would become entrenched within the labour leadership until the 1960s (Quataert and Zurcher 1995, p. 92).

At the end of the decade, the world entered WWII during which “agrarian and merchant capital emerged with unprecedented rates of accumulation” (Gülalp 1985, p. 336). This was in large part due to increasing external demands for products, and Turkish exports grew in consequence (*ibid.*, p. 336). The increase in economic activity and exports, however, was attained through wide use of forced labour under state-of-emergency measures. The most poignant example was the activity in the Zonguldak (Mello 2007, p. 212) and Ereğli (Quataert

and Zurcher 1995, p. 140) mines on the Black Sea coast. In this period, enterprises had ample opportunity to increase productivity without having to worry about labour rights. This, for instance, resulted in deplorable working conditions in the coal mine of Ereğli, while productivity per worker and as a whole increased. Thus, coal production increased from 3,019,458 tons per day in 1940 to 3,559,848 tons per day in 1944 (*ibid*, pp. 140-41). The widespread existence of forced labour, especially during WWII, was indicative of an economy, which had not yet fully internalized the logic of the market, but was dependent on state repression for the accumulation of profits. As will be clear, the following period, with the implementation of multiparty politics in 1950 would represent the emergence of rapid industrialization and the growth of a market economy, resulting in the development of an increasingly extensive civil society. Before turning to this, however, we need to consider the ideological basis of the multiparty era, which was established in the inter-war years.

Through the brief historical analysis below it will become apparent how the Kemalists managed to establish nationalist and anti-imperialist developmentalism as a common sense<sup>8</sup> of the modern Turkish state through a nationalist state ideology and strategic international alliances. The mimicking element within Kemalism, which perceived development along Western lines as the best and most effective way to escape subordination to the very same Western nations, is intertwined with anti-imperialist notions. As expressed by Sencer Ayata and Ayşe-Güneş Ayata (2007, pp. 214-5),

Kemalists look favorably to the West as a source of inspiration and as a model for cultural change, while at the same time blaming it as a source of imperialist conspiracy threatening Turkey's independence, sovereignty, and national unity.

Special attention will also be paid to the question of how anti-imperialist and nationalist developmentalist discourse became prominent in various labour movements throughout the Republican period, thereby opening up for the notion that national economic develop-

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<sup>8</sup> Common sense is here understood in the Gramscian sense as, to use the words of the editors of (Gramsci, 1971), "the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common" in any given epoch" (p. 322).

ment should be prioritized over class struggle (Boyras 2012, p. 112). We shall illustrate how the dissemination of the Kemalist ideology of the dominant classes was more or less successful in reproducing itself, and how this was dependent on the ability of the dominant classes to include ideological elements acceptable to the subaltern classes: ideological concessions, if you will. The ability to make such concessions successful hinges especially on the ability of an ideology to contain contradictions without disintegrating. The capability of the dominant classes to create a hegemonic discourse that can accommodate contradictory ideological elements, and present them in a universal manner, is paramount since the successful integration of subordinate groups into an ideological discourse depends on the ability of the hegemonic class to incorporate elements from the world view of subordinate classes. Thus, according to Carnoy (1984, p. 70), citing Giroux (1981, p. 23),

The dominant fraction does not impose its own ideology upon the allied group; rather, it “represents a pedagogic and politically transformative process whereby the dominant class [fraction] articulates a hegemonic principle that brings together common elements drawn from the world views and interests of allied groups”.

As noted by Murat Belge, Turkish socialism and communism “grew up in the garden of Turkish nationalism” (Belge 2009, p. 7), and the nationalist independence movement quickly gained the support of workers’ and socialist movements during the War of Independence in 1919 and into the early 1920s. The workers’ support for the nationalist movements, and later the Kemalist government, was legitimized by the Communist International (Comintern), which supported the Kemalist cause, as aid in the anti-imperialist struggle at the Congress of the Peoples of the East in 1920. This gave the official stamp of approval to Kemalism by the leading authority within socialism and communism at the time, as a means to fight imperialist powers. Later in 1921, Turkey and the Soviet Union even signed a treaty “committing both countries to ‘the struggle against imperialism’” (Samim 1981, p. 63). This alliance endured even when the Kemalists would later on ban and persecute communism. Thus, despite the clear anti-communist policies of the Kemalists, the Soviets viewed the Kemalists as a central

instrument in the fight against imperialism (*ibid.*, p. 63). In this alliance, thus, nationalism and anti-imperialism served as the common ground on which socialist movements and Kemalists converged. A clear sign of the commitment of the workers to the nationalist struggle is the example of the Workers' and Peasants' Socialist Party of Turkey, founded as early as 1919, and an important and active protagonist in the struggle for independence. According to Feroz Ahmad, the party organized May Day protests against foreign intervention in 1921, and on this day, anti-imperialist and socialist slogans could be heard in the streets of all the major Turkish cities against the French, Greek, and British invaders (Quataert and Zurcher 1995, p. 79). Later, in the 1930s, a more theoretically well founded leftist Kemalist movement saw the light of day. The Kadro movement, consisting of a group of leftist intellectuals officially supported by Atatürk, were proponents of a form of non-capitalist development, where the surplus would be directed by the state for national development and popular prosperity (Belge 2009, p. 9). Cemil Boyraz (2012, p. 64) notes how

the principles of anti-imperialism and national developmentalism were usually deprived of the anti-capitalist character. This means that *Kadro's* étatist path to development was actually a capitalist type of accumulation project although they considered it as a 'third way' and 'peculiar' type of developmentalism different from socialist and capitalist types.

The main struggle was not between classes, but "between oppressed and oppressor nations" (*ibid.*) in the international arena. Likewise, the Turkish Communist Party, established in 1920, under the influence of Kadro and the Soviet Comintern, supported the Kemalist state, as a force against imperialism (Belge 2009, p. 10). The anti-imperialist and nationalist character of Turkish labour movements were, thus, present from the earliest days. The simultaneous birth of the Turkish nation and the labour movements coupled with legitimization for the Kemalist rule by foreign powers and the ideological common ground between anti-imperialism and socialism, and, thus, labour rights, engrained nationalism and anti-imperialism into the DNA of Turkish labour movements. In other words, international and domestic factors

intertwine spurred on by the intense pressure of capitalist forces to form a whole new amalgam of imported techniques and ideologies.

*3. Passive revolution of the Turkish capitalist type of state – democracy, populism and formal adequacy; a new type of integration*

In what follows we shall analyse the further formation and consolidation of the capitalist state and the concomitant refinement of the integrative techniques of passive revolution, and the role of labour movements therein. Attention will be given to how the ideology of the dominant classes, Kemalism, changed in accordance with the change away from an étatist accumulation model and towards a mixed Import Substituting Industrialization (ISI) economy, involving a growing private sector, civil society and accompanying civil rights. The state became more popularly founded and in general the use of consent as a tool of power became more prominent as labour unions were increasingly wooed by the political élite.

As described earlier, the developmental distinction between a state in capitalist society and the capitalist type of state is subject to the historical circumstances of U&CD, and a clear distinction between these two is, therefore, practically not possible. As with coercion and consent in a Gramscian framework, it is more a question of which theoretical aspect is most dominant. The modern state will never be completely modern, as there will always be remnants of old forces mixed with new. The following section, therefore, sets out to chart the emergence of the capitalist type of state in Turkey and the degree to which the modern integral state was dominated by the institutional separation of the political and economic.

With the new constitution of 1961 an ISI-regime was fully institutionalized in Turkey (Demiralp 2015, p. 6; Keyder 1987, pp. 150-51). ISI is “an economic strategy based on the sequenced expansion of manufacturing industry, with the objective of replacing imports” (Saad-Filho and Johnston 2005, p. 222). Central to this type of economic development is, thus, the nurturing of a domestic market, which can be partially achieved through the raising of living standards and wages through such measures as labour rights – collective

bargaining and strikes – and increased social benefits (Keyder 1987, pp. 149-51). This is the basis of the so-called “social state”, which was implemented after the coup in 1960 (Mello 2007, p. 218).

As the development of formal adequacy depends partially on the development of the rule of law, which upholds the image of equality before the law, and thus, formally eliminates the monopoly of power by any specific social group, we shall here draw attention to the development of important legal reforms in the multiparty era. In addition to this, the existence of associations outside the immediate realm of the state (civil society) is another important part of formal adequacy, as it strengthens the institutional separation between civil society and the state. The new legal reforms of the 1960s were a result of a desire by the army to prevent the strong majority governments, which had been characterized by the Democrat Party (DP) era of the 1950s, and of the desire to bolster the new ISI-oriented economy with a strong domestic market to create demand for the industrial bourgeoisie. The former was attained through the establishment of a bicameral parliamentary system, with low electoral thresholds, and the latter through the granting of rights to organize freely in labour unions and the rights to strike and to collective bargaining (Bianchi 1984, p. 115; Keyder 1987, p. 149). The latter pluralist reforms had major effects on the development of a civil society that was institutionally separated from the state. To trace this development thoroughly, we need to go back slightly further than the multiparty era. As parts of the regime’s efforts at slowly opening up the political system, in order to partially stem a tide of growing domestic discontent with authoritarian single-party rule and to appease Turkey’s international partner, the US (Mello 2007, p. 213), the Law of Associations was implemented in 1946. With this piece of legislation in place, it was suddenly legal to establish associations based on social class, although it was still illegal for labour unions to engage in political activities. It was a “pre-emptive strategy” (Kus and Ozel 2010, p. 5) carried out by the government in order to control and integrate the labour unions that were already emerging into the political system (Kus and Ozel 2010, p. 5; Mello 2007, p. 214). Turkish associational life before the period beginning in 1946 was thus mainly characterized by the prevalence of sporting



clubs, concentrated in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. As noted by Richard D. Robinson “In the case of the Anatolian villager, the individual generally belongs to no organization other than the family-village community, the village mosque [...] and the Nation” (Robinson 1951, p. 431). He further explains how in Gaziantep, a city with 70.000 inhabitants, there were no other organization than the two political parties, the Republican People’s Party (CHP) and DP (*ibid.*). This changed, however, with the new law, as the number of associations multiplied eight times to reach over 17,000 nationwide in 1960 (Bianchi 1984, p. 155). According to Bianchi, “the number of associations per million people grew from 40 in 1946 to over 100 by 1950, to 620 in 1960, and then to 1,200 by 1970” (Bianchi 1984, p. 155). With the constitution of 1961 and the trade union act of 1963, associability experienced further hikes, as the latter piece of legislation granted the right to freely establish labour unions, and the right to collective bargaining and strikes, as well as “allowing the formation of local unions at the work place, federations of unions in the same branch of industry, regional labor unions, as well as national confederations” (Kus and Ozel 2010, p. 7). The nature of the associations established were many fold, and under the rule of the DP government religious organizations and the Imam Hatip schools<sup>9</sup> proliferated greatly (Jacoby 2004, p. 113). As we shall see many new political parties, political labour unions, and employer unions also appeared between 1950 and 1980 as a result of these legal reforms.

With the implementation of the above mentioned labour laws, the formal adequacy of the state was strengthened, as collective bargaining was implemented and coercion excluded from the immediate organisation of labour. Orhan Tuna describes how labour / employer negotiations prior to 1963 were virtually impossible, because labour did not have any leverage in the form of the right to strike, and contracts up until this point were mainly individual, further weakening bargaining leverage of the worker (Tuna 1964, p. 427). With the implementation of the new labour law of 1963, collective bargaining and the right to strike were institutionalized, and hailed by leading politicians at the time as an integral part of democracy (Jackson 1971,

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<sup>9</sup> Imam Hatip schools are state secondary schools for the education of public Imams in Turkey.

p. 71). This new legislation was meant to level the playing field between employers and employees, and thereby live up to the new constitution as laying the foundation of the “social state” (Mello 2007, p. 218). Employees were no longer dependent on the mercy of the employer; as Tuna (1964, p. 429) notes

Most of the employment practices that were unquestionably within the unilateral decision-making area of the employer in the past, such as the power to discipline and punish, safety and health provisions, overtime work, etc., have been brought under the joint administration of workers and management.

These reforms of the modern Turkish state transpired within the uneven characteristics of capitalist development in Turkey, taking a distinct East-West expression, which revealed itself in both spatial and temporal terms in the period in question. The combination of pre-capitalist and capitalist production is illustrated poignantly in Keyder’s (1987, p. 119) remark that

One report by an American expert deplored the gap between isolated examples of “twentieth century industrial technology” in state enterprises, and agricultural techniques which dated from Hittite times.

Even with the influx of US aid under the Marshall plan in the 1950s, uneven development persisted as 63% of the investment was channeled to the already prosperous Marmara region and 12% to the Aegean region, both located in the west of the country. This tendency reinforced an East-West divide in Turkey, which has shaped the economic development of the modern Turkish state. The eastern regions have, since the seventeenth century, been characterized by large-estate feudal-like land ownership. In the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the U&CD was expressed through the simultaneous and ongoing primitive accumulation in the eastern, predominantly Kurdish regions, dislocating peasants from their land, as mechanization took hold of agriculture (White 1998, pp. 150-51), and the capitalist profit accumulation mainly in the coastal and western regions. Such developments were strengthened by geographically integrating and connecting Anatolian cities through the construction of extensive road networks in the

1950s (Keyder 1987, pp. 127-28), which served as the “geographical expansion of capitalist society” (Morton 2011, p. 71).

With the increasing monopolization of agriculture, 18-20% of cultivated land was controlled “by large-estate capital” by 1957, and according to Bianchi 3% of landowners controlled 30% of cultivated land in 1973 (Bianchi 1984, p. 64; Jacoby 2004, p. 107). The growing landless peasantry either migrated to urban areas in the hope of securing occupation or became agricultural wage labourers. The comprehensive urban migration experienced in this period accentuated the clash between rural and urban cultures. Peasants arriving in the cities, many of whom were Kurds, retained their rural identities and organized themselves along ethnical and regional lines, instead of developing a sense of class (Jacoby 2004, p. 108-9; Keyder 1987, pp. 136-7 and 206). Likewise, many of the employers of the industrial bourgeoisie in the 1950s and 60s had their recent roots in the agricultural sector or as provincial merchants, and were not used to command a workforce. As a consequence they retained “an individualistic mentality and [...] did not sympathise with workers’ problems.” (Tuna 1964, p. 422). Such a mentality was expressed through a very confrontational attitude towards organized labour of the earliest private sector employer organization, TISK. It resulted in protracted lockouts, labour riots and a great deal of instability (Bianchi 1984, p. 264-67). It was not until 1971 that the geographical unevenness between rural and more modern industrial mentality of employers was partially overcome, as a more mature group of bourgeois industrialists saw the light of day. They found common ground in the establishment of the employer organization TÜSIAD, which consists of 90 of the biggest industrialists in Turkey. These entrepreneurs had grown to a size where they were increasingly focused towards exports to international markets, and were highly emphatic on the importance of joining the European Economic Community (EEC). They, therefore, perceived the aggressive approach applied by TISK as provoking unnecessary class antagonism and volatility thereby “jeopardizing Turkey’s chances of entering the Common Market with a Western-style democracy.” (Bianchi 1984, p. 269). Bianchi states that they represented a new current of “progressive conservatism” that sought

to moderate the authoritarian style of TISK (*ibid.*). In addition they proposed to deepen industrialization in Anatolia in order to decrease the extreme concentration of industry in Istanbul and to show greater concern for social justice and welfare (Bianchi 1984, p. 269). TÜSIAD, therefore, represented an attempt by parts of the big industrial complex to influence the political authority into a more accommodating approach to labour issues, as the labour-business conflicts were creating political havoc, thus jeopardizing capital accumulation. The above-described developments represent a refinement of the process of passive revolution through the increasing internalization of the logic of the market of the integral state and the adaptation to a recognition of certain concessions – in the form of democratic rights, and increased economic distribution – as means to secure more stable conditions for accumulation of profits. The two employer organizations of TISK and TÜSIAD, however, continued to pursue their individual political paths throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

Another temporal aspect of the passive revolution of especially the 1960s and 70s, which illustrates the uneven divisions within the bourgeois class, was the intra-class conflict between the “old” trading bourgeoisie and the nascent industrial bourgeoisie within the umbrella employer organization Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, or Türkiye Odalar Birliği (TOB). This ongoing conflict revolved around the accruing of import licenses, and thus, scarce foreign exchange reserves. The support of the export-oriented DP governments of the 50s tilted in the favour of the traders, whereas the industrialists received more political support in the ISI period after 1960. Even though the industrialists gained political support, the TOB, which had the right to allocated import licenses after 1960, was dominated by traders. The frustration of the industrialists within the TOB led to several open conflicts and divisions during the 1960s and 1970s, and in 1969 a “rebellion” within the TOB, initially instigated by the Anatolian merchants and later joined by many industrialists, nearly split the organization in two (Bianchi 1984, p. 255-7).

From a Gramscian perspective, these struggles between the merchants’ and industrialists’ interests, and the more traditional and conservative TISK and the progressive TÜSIAD, are central, because

they represent the dialectical struggle of the old and new forces inherent to the process of passive revolution. Or as Morton would have it “There is therefore a dialectic of revolution and restoration that becomes blocked in a situation of passive revolution as neither the old nor new class forces become hegemonic” (Morton 2011, p. 19).

### *3.1 Schumpeterian democracy and unionism*

In the preceding section, we saw how the uneven and combined conditions in the domestic arena affected the bourgeoisie, while here we shall analyse how international conditions of U&CD affected labour unions and their tacit support for a specific form of democracy.

The liberal democratic regime emerging in Turkey in the 1940s was embedded within an international cold war atmosphere. After WWII the US quickly realized the importance of Greece and Turkey, as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. The pressing situation in Greece, where a communist insurgency was taking place, made this realization all the more urgent (Kayaoğlu 2009, p. 325). Out of this moment the Truman Doctrine entered the stage. This was a foreign policy initiative, which established that it was the obligation of the “United States to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures” (Kayaoğlu 2009, p. 327). Turkey became the beneficiary of large amounts of aid and military funding, and the US administration praised the Turkish transition to democracy as a victory for the free world. While such praise was given, internally the US administration was more concerned for the stability of the regime and its position as a bulwark against communism (Kayaoğlu 2009, p. 327). Such a two-faced approach to democracy promotion has, according to Morton, been symptomatic for US foreign policy. This direction of policy is rooted in a Schumpeterian perception of a minimal standard of democracy, as an institutional design, which does not allow the rule of the people in the literal sense – this was perceived as leading to anarchy – but instead gives people a restricted choice between competing political elites (Morton 2011, pp. 169-75). This is seen as the optimal way to allow for some sort of

popular influence, while safeguarding the functionality of the system of governance. Such a definition of democracy is, from a Gramscian perspective, a bourgeois ideology, as it reproduces the separation between politics and economics inherent in capitalist relations of production. According to Morton, this “low intensity democracy” discourse has been an integral part of US foreign policy since 1945-1955, and involves the promotion of moderate civil society organizations (Morton 2011, pp. 174-77). In the early days of the multiparty era, this took the form of the promotion of apolitical unionism in Turkey by the American labour union AFL (and as from 1955 the AFL-CIO). The concentration of workers in apolitical labour unions and confederations was perceived as a necessity in order to stem the tide of socialist and communist sympathies and leading members of the AFL were thus instrumental in the creation of Türk-İş (Mello 2007, p. 216). In the pursuit of such aims, Türk-İş right from its founding received considerable amounts of foreign funding and organizational support from international organizations, such as the ILO, the ICFTU<sup>10</sup> and the US. According to Theo Nichols, Nadir Sugur and Erol Demir, Türk-İş received an amount of aid from the US – the Agency for International Development (AID) was especially generous – equivalent to its membership dues between 1960 and 1970 (Bianchi 1984, p. 215; Jackson 1971, p. 74; Nichols, Sugur, and Demir 2002, p. 25). In fact, it has been argued that Türk-İş would not have been able to exist had it not been for the large amounts of foreign funding it received. The AFL-CIO was very active abroad since the very beginning of the Truman Doctrine and the Point Four Program, which was the technical assistance program for third world countries. In 1956, the AFL-CIO leader George Meany stated that “labor will support a program of substantial military and economic aid to other free nations to protect them from being forced to yield to communism” (Hagen and Ruttan 1987, p. 23). Such a policy was not a result of a US Government or CIA program, but was developed as a result of the reformist labour ideology of the founder of the AFL, Samuel Gompers. He was a fierce anti-communist union leader, the promoter of so-called “business unionism”, a form of labour unionism whose

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<sup>10</sup>International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

activities involve solely the improvement of workers' rights within the existing framework of capitalism. Gompers unequivocally stated that "the AF of L stands squarely and unequivocally for the defense and maintenance of the existing order and for its development and improvement" (Scipes 2011, p. 7). Practically, business unionism has been characterized by an absence of any measure to educate its rank-and-file members, an above-party political stand and a lack of internal democracy (*Ibid.*, pp. 4-7). Within the Gramscian framework, then, this kind of unionism reproduces the separation of politics and economics inherent in liberal democracy and political science, and the promotion of such a labour-union ideology among the working classes in developing countries became an important part of US efforts to contain the development of communism among workers during the cold war (Mello 2007, p. 216).

The AFL-CIO was, thus, intensely involved in the establishment and organization of the biggest Turkish labour confederation Türk-İş and, as a consequence, Türk-İş has always been the stronghold of apolitical, conservative, business unionism in Turkey. Practically, this has manifested itself in the acceptance of labour-saving technology and declining employment, a lack of union democracy, a strict hierarchy in which an élite within the working class has attained increased wages through uneven use of collective bargaining, and close collaboration with conservative governments (Bianchi 1984, pp. 234-37). This semi-symbiotic relationship with the incumbent governments and the state bureaucracy is hinted at in its union regulations, which "include a commitment to 'a high level of national democratic secular and social and state structure based on Atatürk's principles and the Constitution' (article 3, TÜRK-İŞ Regulations)." (Nichols, Sugur, and Demir 2002, p. 25). Furthermore, Türk-İş has always made great efforts to distance itself from socialist ideology – up until the 1990s, for instance, it purposely did not use the word "working class", employing the less ideologically charged word "workers' movement" (Bacık and Dede 2012, p. 802).

With the change in political leadership and a complete overhaul of the legal framework of the state in the post-1960 coup era, which signified the further strengthening of the formal adequacy of the state

through the above-mentioned reforms of strengthening plurality, the rule of law and labour rights, new labour confederations emerged. Thus, in the 1960s a new labour confederation called DISK – the Confederation of Revolutionary Labor Unions – saw the light of day. The emergence of DISK, represented a reaction to the employer friendly and apolitical policies of Türk-İş, and a turn towards socialist, political unionism.

In the 1960s and 70s, DISK was the spearhead or peak-association for political unionism. It was founded in 1967 by four labour unions breaking away from Türk-İş in defiance of the latter's dependence on foreign aid and close corporatist relations with the governing parties (Dereli 1968, pp. 221-2). DISK became the flag bearer of political unionism and would signify a general politicization of Turkish unionism, even within Türk-İş. It thus “openly advocated getting involved in political unionism for the purpose of promoting the revolutionary consciousness of workers and supporting the political party which would defend their interests” (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu 1992, p. 721). The tenets of DISK dictated that “There is need, therefore, to reshape the whole economy along socialistic lines and give an end to all forms of foreign and capitalistic exploitation.” (Dereli 1968, *loc. cit.*). As will become evident in the subsequent section, the ability of the CHP, under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit, to promote moderates within DISK resulted in the support for the former by the latter in the elections of 1977. Despite its socialist credentials DISK was, with time, integrated into the orbit of nationalist Kemalist political relations, thus giving consent to the rule of dominant classes.

As established in previous sections, the emergence of nationalism and anti-imperialism as common sense was continuously accepted by labour movements of the multiparty era, partly as a result of foreign intervention. It is thus argued by Cemil Boyraz that the Turkish workers and labour unions in the multiparty era focused on “rapid national economic development” and, in consequence,

due to both peculiarist-essentialist-reductionist theoretical approaches and international inspirations from different struggles in the Third World and the Soviet policies [...] the Turkish Left continued to prioritize the relation with nationalism over class politics. (Boyraz 2012, p. 112)



Furthermore, the business-unionism of the largest labour confederation, partially encouraged by the US, resulted in the reproduction of the division between the political and economic spheres inherent to the modern liberal and capitalist state. Remember that Gramsci noted that this separation was merely “methodological” (Gramsci 1971, p.160; Q13, §18, p. 1590, *cit.*) in the sense that an institutional separation is indeed taking place, but it does not represent the actual power structures on which the state rests – i.e. “This separation is both *real* and *illusory*” (Jessop, 2008, in Wetherly, Barrow, and Burnham 2008, p. 146). Thus, the two above-mentioned factors contributed to the continued reproduction of this separation. According to Gramsci, exactly this separation blurs the class character of the state, and thereby, legitimizes the rule of the dominant groups by portraying certain ideological premises, as beneficial to the labour cause, while they in fact further the cause of the dominant groups. A stumped Schumpeterian form of democracy was thereby indirectly promoted by labour unions.

### 3.2 *The new bourgeois parties*

With the emergence of representative democracy, and a growing civil society and private sector, the ideological basis of the dominant state classes changed to a more inclusive strategy of social control. The repressive policies of the single-party regime had alienated workers and the rural masses. In this sense, there are indications of a refinement of the ideology of the dominant classes taking place in the face of a crisis of legitimacy after the heavy-handed repression by the government during WWII (Balkan and Savran 2002, p. 34). Two developments will be emphasized here: the development of a more religious, anti-*élitist* discourse by the governing party, and legal concessions for the working classes, as well as political recognition of certain labour organizations.

The subsequent sections will present a more specific Gramscian political analysis of the bourgeois parties and their attempts at estab-

lishing hegemonic alliances, and of the integration of labour unions in the period 1950-1980. The emergence of the DP in the 1940s and its political discourse and tactics of popular mobilization in the periphery of Turkey would become symptomatic for centre-right parties in the following decades; here especially we are thinking of the Justice Party (JP). There was a general tendency within these parties to perceive their popular mandates as an expression of the “national will”, thus attempting to universalize their policies and make them the simple execution of the nation at large. Such an approach was meant to legitimize the sometimes non-accommodating and coercive policies towards labour. Gramsci recognized this, when he noted: “the attempt is always made to ensure that force will appear to be based on the consent of the majority” (Gramsci 1971, p. 80, note 49; Q13, §37, p. 1638). These populist tendencies in praxis resulted in the party élites to neglect the demands and aspirations of minority groups (Heper and Sayari 2002, pp. 78-80 and 99). One such minority group was the working class and the institutions claiming to represent them, such as Türk-İş. The majoritarian democratic tendencies coupled with the fervent anti-communist political lines of these parties prevented them from ideological integrating the working class. Unlike the experience in Mexico, where Morton describes the legalization of the Communist Party and the subsequent merger with other parties, meaning that “the PCM [Partido Comunista Mexicano] [...] effectively dissolved itself while attempting to electorally compete” (Morton 2011, p. 121), the Turkish left and workers’ movements mostly stayed on the fringes of parliamentary politics<sup>11</sup>. At best, the right wing bourgeois parties’ alliances with labour movements were based on piecemeal legal concessions. As will be evident, this was the strategy of both the DP and JP.

The leaders of the DP understood where the CHP had failed during single-party rule in the preceding decades and took full advantage of it. This entailed portraying themselves as the party of the periphery, of Turkish folklore, of the religious and of the private entrepreneurs

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<sup>11</sup> The relative electoral success of the Turkish Labour Party (TİP – Türkiye İşçi Partisi) and its entrance into parliament in 1965 is naturally not neglected or forgotten, but it is simply considered to be outside the scope of the article. However, as described by Erkan Doğan, the internal conflicts of the party led it to dissolve only four years after it entered parliament (Doğan 2010, pp. 324-5).

(Heper 1976, p. 495), which was in stark contrast to the elitist and metropolitan character of the CHP. They referred to the repressive policies during WWII with slogans such as “Artık Yeter” (“really enough!”) (Leder 1979, p. 85), and openly opposed the militant secularism of the CHP (Eligür 2010, p. 52). The latter gained them the support from the Islamic brotherhoods, who helped mobilize significant numbers of voters for a successive line of center-right parties beginning with the DP (Eligür 2010, p. 52). Thus, the ascendancy of the DP witnessed a restructuring of society, both economically, and rhetorically, as producers outside the immediate realm of the state (understood in the non-integral sense) slowly gained ascendancy.

Even though the DP was critical of the élitist, urban and secular character of the Kemalist bureaucracy, it and its successor parties stayed within the confines of Kemalist ideology. The founders of the party were themselves former CHP members and officials in the bureaucracy – some even ministers in the governments of the single-party era (Ahmad 2003, p. 153). The DP could thus not be perceived as an alternative to Kemalism, but rather as a re-interpretation, or refinement, if you will, of the Kemalist ideology of the dominant groups.

With the implementation of the first free elections in 1950, the DP won the elections by a wide margin – 54 percent of the popular vote (Szyliowicz 1966, p. 276). Based on the policies described above, the DP government managed to create a broad alliance of diverse social classes, consisting of the landed élite, the peasants, much of the working class, and the private sector industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, who had grown weary of bureaucratic constraints and domination of the economy (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu 1992, p. 713; Jacoby 2004, p. 104; Mello 2007, pp. 214-5). Consent for DP rule was given by the working classes in exchange for the promise of the granting of the right to strike. However, by 1952, it became clear that such concessions would not be granted. The government was true to its national developmentalist discourse, where economic development of the nation was the primary concern, and anything that would impede the accumulation of capital was out of the question (Mello 2007, p. 215). Instead of the right to strike, the DP government was able to entertain a strenuous alliance with the working class, now represented by Türk-

İş, by incorporating the leadership and offering other piecemeal legal concessions, such as paid weekends, annual leave, minimum wage, and labour tribunals with a worker serving as judge (Mello 2007, pp. 216-7).

This relationship between labour and the DP government was sustained for as long as the economy was kept afloat. With the advent of declining agricultural exports in 1954, the hegemonic alliances established in the elections of 1950 and 1954 began to show serious cracks. As the industrial bourgeoisie grew stronger and more independent, it began to articulate demands, irreconcilable with the patronage-driven and agriculturally-oriented economic policies of the DP lawmakers (Öncü 2003, pp. 317-8). Furthermore, the distribution of scarce foreign exchange, through the control of import licenses, along non-market lines, according to arbitrary criteria, such as political patronage, was creating bottle-necks for the industrial bourgeoisie, to their great frustration (Keyder 1987, pp. 145 and 171). In true populist style, the DP government refused to cut spending despite a mounting trade deficit, and increased money printing, with inflation as the immediate result (*ibid.*, p. 133). This led to increasing dissatisfaction with the government within urban salaried segments, as price levels were rising at a fast pace. Furthermore, the hollowing out of the economic benefits of the bureaucracy under DP rule made them highly unpopular amongst this group (Szyliowicz 1966, p. 278).

The new government's lack of ability to cope with criticism in the face of adversity would become its demise. As criticism was mounting from several areas of Turkish society, which had formerly rallied behind the government, it began responding with increasingly heavy-handed approaches. Civil liberties, such as press freedom, fair and free elections, freedom of speech, and the right to assembly were curbed in order to silence the opposition (Ahmad 1977, p. 53; Szyliowicz 1966, p. 278). The labour movement soon felt this tightening of political power when, in the aftermath of the Istanbul riots, the government seized the opportunity which martial law presented to close down unwanted labour unions that were considered a threat (Bianchi 1984, p. 216). The reaction of the government to criticism from its electorate, is an example of the dominant group that starts to dominate instead of leading. Gramsci noted how "the supremacy of a social

group manifests itself in two ways, as “domination” [*dominio*] and as “intellectual and moral leadership”” (Gramsci 1971, p. 57; Q19, §24, p. 2010). A crisis becomes a crisis of hegemony, when domination comes to the forefront and reveals the self-preserving character of the dominant group. In the years that followed political instability grew and anti-government demonstrations appeared with a steady frequency throughout the country, until the army decided to intervene in 1960 (Ahmad 1977, pp. 57-58). A hegemonic crisis had emerged, severing the ties established between societal groups. The persistent support for the “old” agricultural class, together with economic crisis, had jeopardized one of the central alliances of the integral state system. The military and bureaucracy who perceived themselves as the guardians of the Kemalist “mission” to modernize society had sided with the industrialists (Öncü 2003, pp. 317-18).

The 1960s and 70s witnessed a situation where the growth of the working classes and urban migration changed the demographic landscape of Turkey to a degree hitherto unknown. As many as 650,000 rural migrants settled in the larger urban areas in the mid-1970s (Özbudun and Ulasan 1980, pp. 271-2). This posed a challenge for the bourgeois political parties, who were forced to accommodate the demands of such groups. The establishment of the social state after 1960 encouraged a development within the intellectual political cadres of the bourgeoisie to direct focus to issues of redistribution. On the national scale, the State Planning Organization implemented policies aimed at directing economic activity towards the less developed eastern regions (Özbudun and Ulasan 1980, pp. 73-4). The new parliamentary system, with low electoral thresholds and liberal associational legislation led to a proliferation of different political parties, all emphasizing redistribution policies in different shapes. The conservative center-right bourgeois party, the JP, aligned with the approach of the conservative and militant industrialists within TOB and TISK, employed a discourse of rapid growth now and redistribution later (Özbudun and Ulasan 1980, p. 75). This was reflected in the way that the party attempted to persuade labour leaders to give concessions in the form of reduction of demands for redistribution in return for representational monopolization. This policy was an attempt

by militant industrialists to minimize the rising labour costs, which were a direct effect of the rights enshrined in the constitution, and to isolate the emergence of the more militant unions in DISK. The representation by JP intellectuals of the larger industrialists resulted in a situation, where the demands of smaller businessmen, who were exploited by bigger industrialists, were neglected. The short-sightedness of industrialists represented through the policies of their major representative, the JP, and the inability of JP to solve the conflict within TOB between industrialists and merchants led to consecutive breakdowns in the consent of JP patronage networks within two integral state institutions.

The first occurred in 1969, when Necmettin Erbakan led a coup within TOB with the backing of larger industrialists and smaller Anatolian businessmen. The JP managed to avert the crisis in the end, as allied employers were able to nullify Erbakan's election to the presidency of TOB (Bianchi 1984, p. 256). The second and more profound crisis of legitimacy occurred when labour riots broke out in 1970 as a response by workers from the Istanbul-Izmit area within Türk-İş to perceived injustice at the hands of a conservative leadership and its close ties to the JP government out of touch with the demands of their members. It was the most violent display of workers' dismay in Turkish history, and the army had to be deployed to quell the uprising (Bianchi 1984, p. 202). Not long after, the JP government was given an ultimatum to step down, and thus the second coup of the multiparty era was a reality. When parliamentary governance was resumed in 1973, reforms had been implemented to curtail the range of agency of institutions, notably an amendment restricting associational activity by the technocratic government (*ibid.*, 205).

The elections in 1973 were won by a revamped CHP. The former corporatist state-party had undergone significant changes since 1965. Spurred on by the loss of intellectual voters to the Turkish Worker's Party, the CHP announced its new status as a centre-left (or social democratic) party. Reformist groups, such as social democrats, were, according to Gramsci, from the point of view of the dominant class a form of passive revolution (Showstack Sassoon 1980, p. 213). Thus, the emergence of Bülent Ecevit as the leader of the CHP in the 1970s

and the CHP's attempts to cultivate social democratic leadership in both Türk-İş and DISK constituted a refinement in the passive revolution of the working class. Until this point, the dominant bourgeois parties had applied a strategy that entailed a non-ideological integration of workers through piecemeal concessions; however, with the emergence of social democratic ideology in Turkish politics, an attempt at integration of workers was made both at the immediate economic and ideological level. The CHP's party programme of 1976 entailed a focus on growth and redistribution, emphasizing that both were possible at the same time, and indeed declaring that responsible development could not occur without the latter. In this way, the CHP attempted to reframe the concept of economic growth, distinguishing between "growth" and "development", claiming that the former entails a myopic focus on economic factors, while the latter is a holistic approach concerned with a whole range of humanistic factors beside the economic (Özbudun and Uluşan 1980, p. 69). Additionally, the CHP had abandoned its adherence to strict étatism, as the party programme stipulated the support for private sector development (Özbudun and Uluşan 1980, p. 68). The CHP's platform of development and social justice were, moreover, garnering a lot of votes from the large urban centres, and the party pushed for policies enhancing local municipal autonomy and increasing allocation of resources for urban squatter settlements (Özbudun and Uluşan 1980, p. 332).

On such a platform, which had been developed in the early 1970s, but not formalized before 1976, the CHP entered governments in 1973 and 1976. The 1970s provided the CHP with a difficult and tumultuous environment for the realization of their hegemonic quest. The effects of the international oil crisis were being felt as remittances decreased, unemployment increased and foreign exchange reserves were hollowed out (Keyder 1987, pp. 185, 188 and 195). This encouraged further activism on the part of TİSK, which had been embarking on consecutive and protracted industry-wide lockouts since the early 1970s. Thus, in 1976 "employers in the metal goods industry united [...] to launch a larger and more successful national lockout that dragged on for nearly two years" (Bianchi 1984, p. 267). On the other hand, the CHP had slightly more success in integrating labour unions

into its political orbit. The continued efforts by the CHP to moderate DISK by promoting social democratic unionists within the confederation, bore fruit when the party gained the support of DISK in the 1973 and 1977 elections (Blind 2008, p. 47).

The rise of social democratic ideology within the CHP encouraged the development of several right wing coalition governments in the 1970s – the so called Nationalist Front governments (Ahmad 1977, pp. 327-54). The fervent anti-communism and anti-socialism of the two major parties in this coalition, the JP and the ultranationalist Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), added to the centrifugal tendencies of the period. The rise of the MHP epitomizes the predomination of coercion attributed to the process of passive revolution. First of all, the party functioned as an institution integrating the petty-bourgeois producer class left behind by the rapid large-scale industrial growth implemented by the JP. In this sense, the MHP functioned as an appendage to the JP which secured the continued support of the groups which had been neglected by the policies of the JP itself. Secondly, the coercive aspect lay in its unofficial affiliation with paramilitary ultra-nationalist groups, which were used to suppress increasing left-wing activism. The JP tacitly allowed and even encouraged such activity (Balkan and Savran 2002, p. 153; Jacoby 2004, pp. 139-40). This development is emblematic of the kind of development described by Gramsci: “A weakened state organization is like an enfeebled army; the *arditi*, that is the private armed organizations, enter the field with a double task: to use illegality, while the state appears to remain within legality, and as a means to reorganize the state itself.” (Gramsci 1992, p. 217; alternative translation in Gramsci 1971, p. 232; Q1, §133, p. 121).

The militancy of left wing groups, who were engaged in a war of movement, in the hope of toppling the bourgeois state through armed intervention, preferably with the help of progressive army officers, coupled with the violent opposition of right wing para-military groups, led to street violence to such a degree that the armed forces chose to carry out its third Caesarist coup in 30 years. This portended the end of the road for the ISI accumulation regime and its attendant political structure, i.e. the social state.



## 5. *Conclusion*

It is the contention of this article that Gramscian theory provides us with illuminating insights into the undercurrents of the deeper power structures of the modern Turkish state. We have attempted to clarify the capitalist origins and nature of the modern Turkish state, emerging as a product of the accumulative relations of capitalist production within a U&CD, which shaped the social, ideological and material relations of Turkish society. Gramscian concepts provides us with insightful knowledge regarding the contradictory labour policies of the period in question, because his approach highlights the highly complex and inherently contradictory nature of the modern Turkish (integral) state. In this sense, one cannot in fact talk of state policies *towards* labour, as if the state was a singular coherent body, as this implies that the state is something extraneous to civil society. The integral state is an amalgam of forces and social groups ripe with contradictions and demands. Furthermore, the integral state, contrary to the Weberian state tradition, is defined as both coercion and consent. This entails that Turkish institutions, such as labour unions, which seemed to be protecting the rights of the working class, in Gramscian theory in fact form part of the integral state, integrating workers through the establishment of consent for rule.

Generally the developments of labour politics of the 1950s, 60s and 70s can be said, from a Gramscian perspective, to be indicative of the inability of the dominant classes to absorb and accommodate demands formulated from below by a rising new working class, and therefore the inability of the dominant classes to serve as a coherent force by forging lasting alliances with subordinate classes, as they attempt to consolidate the rule of the modern capitalist state. The urban / rural division is clearly visible in the support base of the bourgeois parties – with the conservative centre-right parties catering mostly to the peasants and the generally smaller conservative employers of TISK, and the social democratic CHP, catering to the urban working classes and the bigger progressive employers of TÜSIAD. None of the leading parties were able to gain the support from both groups up until 1980.

Furthermore, most of the demands formulated by the working classes were of a nature functioning within the common sense framework of the integral state, as a consequence of the conservative or reformist character of labour unions. Why was this so? Why were the dominant classes unable to absorb demands, and why were the demands of the majority of the working class framed within common sense? As described above, the answer to these questions may be found in the U&CD of capitalism, which fostered the development of a strong bureaucratic class and a weak bourgeoisie. This stunted bourgeois development resulted in a weak bourgeoisie, wracked with internal divisions along temporal / spatial lines. Concomitantly, the early working classes gave consent to nationalist ideology, as they were confronted with the War of Independence. The Soviet support of the Kemalist élite likewise encouraged workers to support the Kemalists. Later on as primitive accumulation took hold in the East, the urban migrants, who were coming to the cities to find work in industry, arrived with a rural mentality, which split workers into groups along regional lines, preventing the emergence of a collective consciousness. This latter factor points to the fact that the relations of production undergirding the Turkish integral state of the period in question, namely the combined character of development, with feudal and primitive accumulation in the eastern regions and capitalist accumulation mainly in the West, led to a large part of the relations of the integral state being based on coercion rather than consent. The above factors led to a blocked dialectic of the old classes (trading bourgeoisie, landowners, and petty producers) and the new classes (the industrial bourgeoisie and workers). These factors were, within the Gramscian theoretical framework, a passive revolution of capital taking place within the U&CD of capitalism. In other words, the bureaucracy imported international modes of production in the face of an absence of bourgeois hegemony. The U&CD of the Turkish integral state was expressed in the rural and authoritarian mentality of the bulk of Turkish industrialists, which made them unable and unwilling to overcome the obstacle to the functional adequacy of the capitalist state posed by the formal adequacy of the new social state. This resulted in a serious crisis of legitimacy of the bourgeoisie in the 1970s.

The above-mentioned developments were part of the development of the capitalist type of state, where civil society and the economy become institutionally separated from the state apparatus. Such an institutionalization took place as laws were implemented that would encourage the emergence of a plethora of institutions, i.e. what is traditionally termed civil society. In itself such a decentralization of society can be perceived as an act of integration by the dominant classes in the sense that it is an accommodation of demands for greater political rights uttered by the subordinate classes, at the same time as continuing the exploitative accumulation of capitalism (Balkan and Savran 2002, p. 34). This institutional separation created barriers for the extraction of surplus of the industrialists, as a range of demands from below now had to be taken into consideration. The increasingly militant working classes, exercising their rights to bargain and strike, were met by similarly militancy from many employers, not inclined to negotiate. The methods employed by the industrialists, in order to overcome obstacles to short-term surplus extraction created by the formal adequacy of the state, were of a coercive character, as they attempted to force labour unions into submission through protracted lock-outs. The bourgeois party, the JP, followed suit, as it criticized newly gained rights. In this sense, it is a case in which form problematizes content, as the system set in place to facilitate non-political surplus extraction and non-coercive capital accumulation resulted in protracted conflict within the integral state, i.e. a situation where the elite groups are dominant instead of leading (Gramsci 1992, p. 136, Q1, §44, p. 41; second draft in Gramsci 1971, p. 57 and note 5, Q19, §24, p. 2010). Furthermore, in this blurring of the capitalist nature of the state “the shortcoming is that state (politics) and market (economics) are taken as ahistoric starting points of analysis” (Morton 2011, p. 170). This ahistoricity ignores the contingent relationship between the modern state and capitalist market forces. In the Gramscian perspective, then, the modern Turkish state is a product of the U&CD of capitalism that propels domestic elites to embark on a mimetic exercise, as they transform the state through the importation of capitalist relations of production, while the combined aspect of development results in a mix of consent and coercion, with emphasis on the latter, emblematic of the process of passive revolution.

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