The development process of the capitalism has always been in the transformation depends on either the threat on the reproduction of the system as a result of the shrinkages in the profit rates and the disappearance of the stable capital accumulation conditions or the ability of the system to create the structural changes and the re-emergence of the capital accumulation. The transformation in the capitalism comes into exist as a result of the long development periods followed by the long crises periods. In short, the crisis is considered to be an immanent and a structural feature of the capitalism.

It is not possible in the existing social conditions to sustain the existence of capitalism neither does reconstitute the productivity of the capital by getting out the crisis periods which threatens the reproduction of the capital. For this reason, together with the crises, the form of the social relations, the working process of the society as well as the institutional structures begin to be transformed and also restructured. The economical relations are supported by the ideological and political relations in the restructuring process and the role of the state in the economy changes too. The very “transformation” in the capitalism is considered to be the restructuring of the mode of production in such a way that the change in the social relations, the processes, the structures and the institutions would contribute to the eliminate barriers from the perpetuation of the capital accumulation (Arı, 1985: 105).

Along with the crisis, the change in the capitalist production systems, primarily in the mode of production, has influenced the structure of the labour as well as the working class movements.

Although the form of this influence depends on the structural features of the existing crises to a great extent, the change in the labour structure caused by the change in the structure of the labour out of the mode of production and the technological developments can be considered as a general characteristic. The tendency to overcome the crisis that emerge due to the fall of the profit rates, by repressing the wages was also the basic speciality of the 19’th century transformation dynamics. In this context, the crisis that is lived in the transformation period of capitalism are concluded on the one hand by loosing the gains of the labour acquired in the
period of the development, on the other hand, it gives way to both rising consciousness of the working class and also poses the conditions to rise the workers movements (Abendroth, 1974).

The intervention of the working class to the transformation processes of the crises depends on first of all the ability of the workers to have class based organization and also class attitude of this organization. In view of their loss because of the crisis periods, it cannot be awaited from working class in class based attitude moving automatically against the capitalist system. For, while the workers’ reaction are expected in these periods, the capital, while using the state mechanism already in his hands, instead of “worker” identity that combines labour mass, endeavour to other identities to come to the fore more efficiently.

In this context, while the elements that dissociate the working class is put forward such as ethnicity, religion, class, nation; the class consciousness is clothed in the face of negativities produced by capitalism. The organizing is the main means to uncover this cloth and to reach a class conception. Therefore, in crisis periods, the importance of the unions as the genuine organization of the working class is getting more prominent to develop the class consciousness compared to the other times.

In the historical process the different definitions have been made for the unions and the functions load up to the unions have also been determined in the frame of these definitions. No doubt, the most general definition for the functions of the unions has been made by Marxism. According to Marxism the most important duty of the unions is to amendment of the life conditions of the labourers through rising the wages, shortening the working periods, or preserving the existing ones. Whereas, the rising the wages over an explicit level wouldn’t be provided through a struggle carried out towards economical demands from the employers. For, intensification of the capital and the economical crisis in the capitalist system diminish the power of the unions for the struggle. For this reason, the unions have to be the means to carry out a political struggle within the class consciousness (Marx, 1992: 130).

The trade unions, as the organizations against the deep exploitation of the capitalist relations of production over the labourers and accompanying misery, represented the working class in the struggle between the social classes particularly in the second half of the 19’th century (under the influence of Scientific Socialism).

From the early 20th century the union movement made a quantitative development till the 1970’s within the conditions of workers’ struggle in 19’th century; the threat of reel socialism over the capitalist system; the structure of the Fordist production system for the workers’
organization and the availability of the existing accumulation regime for the labour-capital conciliation. Within this period, not only the number of the unions increased but also the unions became widespread in many of the periphery countries.

Nevertheless, this quantitative development gave rise to the disappearance of the class perspective of the union movement which used to be the basis of the emergence of the union movement. Together with the Second International the union movement broke off Scientific Socialism and embraced a revisionist path. In the same period, the union movement being impressed by the structure based on the labour-capital conciliation, moved away a complementary class perspective and got into a compromising attitude with the capital. The unions of this period not only made a compromise with the capital class but also they restructure their way of organization and the other activities in accordance with the available conditions of the capitalist system (Müftuoğlu 2008).

This conciliation and the structuring process to the conditions of the capitalism which took place from the beginning of 20’th century till 1970’s, made the unions so dependent to the capitalist system. This dependency made the unions non-functional and also made them suspend the defence of the working class in the face of the neoliberal policies that put into practice with the crisis in 1970’s intend to abolish the rights of the labourers. In this context the unions along with the “social dialog” and “conciliationism” discourses have become the partner of the neoliberal policies which abolish the labourers’ rights and intensify the exploitation in the production (Müftuoğlu, 2007).

The neoliberal policies including globalisation, privatization, flexibility and the abolishment of the social state, caused unorganized the labour and weaken the unions. As a result of the unions’ non-resistance to the neoliberal policies and instead being a part of them the labourer masses lost their confidence towards the unions which was let the unions lost their power too. The non-functionality of the unions against the policies of the capital in abolishing the labourers’ rights, as well as the collapse of the Eastern Block as an alternative to the capitalism, increased more and more the class power of the capital and enable them not only the owner of the economical and the political hegemony but also the ideological hegemony. Thereby the attack of the capital towards the labourers’ rights has become bitterer. The unions have shown the similar structural characteristics in Turkey which articulated the development process of the capitalism as a periphery country.
Aiming to articulate to the periodical conditions of the capitalism the coups have also been influential on the developments of the unions. In this sense, the union freedom brought about after the 1960 coup, abolished after the coups of 1970 and 1980. Particularly 1980 coup needs to be mentioned here, which aimed at the abolishment of the working class and the unions. As the creation of the coup, the repressive constitution and the laws have subdued the union movement until today. On the other hand, 1994 and 2001 crises which affected Turkey locally functioned crucially in compromising the unions with the system. Especially after 2001 crises due to the economical pressures on the society and also adaptation process to the EU, the unions lost further their representation abilities and their compromising attitude towards the capital became much more determinative. Thus, foremost the labour law, many regulations such as those on flexibility of the working life, inclusively downgrading the most basic rights like health, social security, have been implemented in the reconciliation processes included unions.

Within the period started with 1980 coup and continued with 1994 and 2001 crises, the unions break off both the working class and the struggle. Together with this regress of the unions, in the period of 1999-2008, while the labour productivity (labour exploitation) getting increased the wages degraded (graph 1). Again in this period, while the taxes taken from the capital was diminishing, the tax burden transferred to the society by the indirect taxes. On the other hand while the social expenditures getting decreased, along with the supply-side economy policies the incentives towards the capital reached to the top point. Thanks to these factors, Turkey beat the growth records and the large capital institutions increased their profits enormously. In the face of this hectic growth of the capital accumulation the high unemployment rates couldn’t be drawn down and owing to the flexible and insecure working conditions the poverty also increased substantially in addition to the unemployment.
In spite of the high growth and profit rates Turkey entered into the 2008 crisis period with high unemployment and poverty rates; since the industry based on the foreign market it has been affected directly by the dampening the demand in center countries. In particular, the production has decelerated in high value-added and employment creating sectors such as the metal, the petro-chemistry and the labour-intensive the textile and the construction sectors and the profit rates had tendency to decline.

Since the day the crisis started to be mentioned the capital owners have begun to express the demands devoted to diminish the labour cost and also the pressure of taxation in order to compansate for the decreasing profit rates.

Tohether with IMF and the World Bank, in G20 summit the policies are embraced that overlap with the demands of the capital. As a reflection of this phenomena to Turkey, on the one hand on the grounds that weaken the burdens of the capital that emanete from the employment, both the insurance premiums loaded to the public budget and the wages have been settled to be paid over The Unemployment Insurance Funds under the name of deficient working allowance.
Furthermore, the employment forms such as the temporary employee status or the intern employment have been encouraged and payment of these employment forms preferred to be paid by The Unemployment Insurance Funds. The Unemployment Insurance Funds not only diminish the employment burdens on the capital but also have been used for the wealth transfer directly to the capital.

By reason of all these regulations under the name of the preserving the employment and the reducing the unemployment, the unemployment rate hasn’t been reduced in contrast it rised from 10% to the level of 16%.

The indirect taxes received from the people except for the capital owners has been increased and the social expenditures reduced so that the budged gap that arises from the wealth transfers to the capital under the name of preventing unemployment etc. would be closed. Thereby, the economy policies enforced after 2001 crises as an extension of the neoliberal
policies which has been implementing since 1970’s lead deepen of the unemployment, poverty, unorganization, flexibility and the insecurity issues.

The unions have got two ways approach in the crisis. On the one hand the unions have prepared some programs expressing that “not to pay the bill of the crisis”; on the other hand the unions did not resist the policies like wealth-transfer to the capital through public budgets or through The Unemployment Insurance Funds which consists of the pocket money of the workers. Furher, more some confederations like Turk-Is, Hak- Is and Kamu- Sen together with the capital organizations have become the partners of the campaigns make the labourers consume more by getting into more dept. At the same time the unions like Turk- Metal- Is have agreed the draw back with a great percentage like % 35 the determined amount of the wages by the collective agreement.

Conclusion

As in the previous crisis periods the unions couldn’t resist the capital owners’ impute the burden of the crisis to the labourers, on the contrary they have become a part of the process. For this reason, the labourers have lost their confidence on the existing unions. In addition, the dismissals, being unorganized systematically, the unions have lost both their members and also their power. Under these conditions it doesn’t seem possible for the existing unions contesting the long term crises and representing the labourers against the capital class.

Before anything else, the unions need to overcome their own crises out of their dependency to the capitalism so that they could regain the labourers’ representative ability. This is possible only on condition that they would break off their dependency to the existing capitalist system and begin to clash by retaking the possession of class identity. Whereas one cannot be hopeful with existing union administration that come from the union structure deeply dependent to the capitalism. Neither could it be succeeded to reach the conception change towards a class based union struggle in a single country. What is needed a total change in capitalist countries and also a struggle in an international solidarity.