FROM A PROFESSION TO A STRUGGLE: THE PRECARIZATION OF SOCIAL
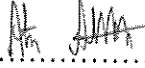SCIENTISTS IN FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES

by
ELİF BİRCED

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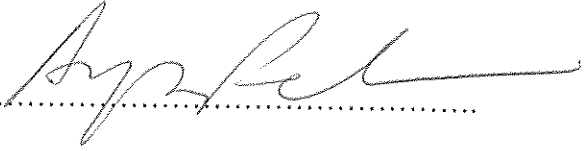Sabancı University
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FROM A PROFESSION TO A STRUGGLE: THE PRECARIZATION OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS IN FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims to explore how social scientists in foundation universities experience precarization. The literature on academics in the advanced capitalist countries and in Turkey has approached the problem of rising labor insecurity of academics with a particular focus on the changing nature of capital-labor relations with the decline of the welfare state regime and the extension of the logic of market to different spheres including the academia. Without neglecting the reflections of the recent marketization wave on the universities all around the world, this study contributes to the existing literature by analyzing the role of the government's capacity to make interventions to the university regarding its own political interests in discussions of labor insecurity experienced by the academics in Turkey. In order to have a better understanding of how both recent marketization wave and the government can serve as a source of precarization for academics, this thesis focuses on the experiences of 40 social scientists (22 professors and 18 graduate student assistants) who were working at five different foundation universities in Turkey. By drawing on Standing's (2011) framework for different forms of labor insecurity as well as Buğra's (1997) and Keyder's ([1989] 2015) analysis on the development of the relationship between state and business people in Turkey, it provides, first of all, an analysis of the multiple ways in which social scientists suffer from precarization in their universities. In addition to looking at the academics' struggle to survive in an environment where economic and/or political concerns can dominate the academic ones, this study also discusses in detail the obstacles and opportunities for a struggle against precarization of labor.

ÖZET

BİR MESLEKTEN BİR MÜCADELEYE: VAKIF ÜNİVERSİTELERİNDEKİ SOSYAL BİLİMCİLERİN GÜVENCESİZLEŞMESİ

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Anahtar sözcükler: güvencesizleşme, güvencesiz emek, vakıf üniversiteleri, akademisyenler

Bu tez vakıf üniversitesinde çalışan sosyal bilimcilerin güvencesizliği nasıl deneyimlediğini incelemeye çalışmaktadır. Gelişmiş kapitalist ülkelerdeki ve Türkiye'deki akademisyenler üzerine literatür, emek sermaye ilişkilerinin refah devleti rejiminin ortadan kalkmasıyla değişen doğasına ve piyasa mantığının akademiyi de kapsayan farklı alanlara doğru genişlemesine odaklanarak, artan emek güvencesizliği sorununa yaklaştı. Son zamanlardaki piyasalaşma dalgasının tüm dünyadaki üniversitelere yansımasını göz ardı etmeden, bu çalışma, siyasi iktidarın kendi çıkarları için üniversitelere müdahale etme kapasitesinin rolünü analiz ederek Türkiye'deki akademisyenlerin deneyimlediği emek güvencesizliği tartışmalarına katkı sağlamaktadır. Hem son zamanlardaki piyasalaşma dalgasının hem de siyasi iktidarın akademisyenlerin güvencesizliğine nasıl hizmet ettiğini daha iyi anlayabilmek için, bu tez Türkiye'de beş farklı vakıf üniversitesinde çalışan 40 sosyal bilimcinin deneyimine odaklanmaktadır (22 profesör ve 18 lisansüstü öğrenci asistanı). Standing'in (2011) farklı emek güvencesizliği çerçevesinden, aynı zamanda Buğra (1997) ve Keyder'in ([1989] 2015) Türkiye'de siyasi iktidar ve iş adamları arasındaki ilişkinin gelişimine dair analizinden yola çıkarak sosyal bilimcilerin güvencesizlik yüzünden nasıl farklı biçimlerde mağdur olduğunun analizini sunmaktadır. Ekonomik ve politik kaygıların akademik olanlara üstün geldiği bir ortamda akademisyenlerin ayakta kalma mücadelesine bakmanın yanı sıra, bu çalışma emeğin güvencesizleşmesine karşı mücadelelerin engellerini ve imkanlarını detaylı bir şekilde tartışmaktadır.

To Mehmet Fatih Traş and all precarious academics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since January 2016, or in other words, since the public declaration of the Academics for Peace (Barış için Akademisyenler, BAK) initiative, labor-related security issues of the academics have become a more salient problem in Turkey. Regarding the ongoing state-violence, serious right violations, curfews and deportation of Kurdish people in the provinces where Kurdish population constitutes the majority; initially 1128 academics and researchers working on and/or in Turkey signed a petition, titled "We will not be a party to this crime!", to demand the government to facilitate an appropriate environment for negotiations and to create a roadmap for bringing peace to the region (Academics For Peace Petition, 2016). Right after the press briefing of the initiative, the president of the Republic, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who criticized these academics stridently by identifying them as pseudo-intellectuals and ignorant[1], and different public figures turned the academics from BAK into a target. As a result of their critical stance, these academics had to deal with investigations, suspensions, dismissals and various forms of threats. In fact, four of these academics received imprisonment and stayed in prison for 40 days, because, after the initial reactions of the state representatives, these four professors made another statement to the press on the behalf of all academics in the initiative in which they mainly concluded that they will stand behind their initial petition. Although 494 academics lost their jobs, 101 academics were suspended and 505 academics were subject to disciplinary investigations in the aftermath of BAK's public declaration (Academics For Peace Report, 2017)[2], this problem was discussed more with an

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[1] http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/13975/erdogan-baris-icin-akademisyenler-i-hedef-aldi-aydin-degil-cahilsiniz. Accessed on 17/07/2017

[2] https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/314. Accessed on 17/07/2017

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emphasis on the limited freedom of speech in Turkey, and less with an emphasis on the labor insecurity of academics.

According to the report prepared by BAK in March 2016[3], while signatories in public universities were subject to different forms of intimidation such as suspensions, disciplinary investigations, forced resignations and, particularly in small cities, threats of death; they could not be easily dismissed due to their status as civil servants. Unlike their colleagues in public universities, signatories working at foundation universities[4] were subject to the Worker Law and decisions on their dismissal as well as on their recruitment are taken by the members of the board of trustees which constitutes the highest body in the managerial structure of foundation universities in Turkey. Despite the legal boundaries for founding private universities in Turkey, the dominance of members with a corporate background in the decision-making mechanisms, the university's unique organizational structure as well as its dependency on tuitions as the primary source of funding lead the foundation universities to stand at the intersection of public institution and private enterprise. According to BAK (2016), as a result of the aforementioned in-between position of foundation universities, signatories working at these universities have encountered more easily unexpected dismissals[5] in addition to other labor-related security issues experienced by their colleagues in public universities. Until the declaration of a state of emergency following the coup attempt in July 2016[6], it would be not wrong to conclude that academics in foundation universities constituted the most insecure and vulnerable component of the academic labor in Turkey.

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[3] https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/141 Accessed on 17/07/2017

[4] According to the report prepared by BAK in March, 2016; 216 of the 1128 initial signees were working at foundation universities in Turkey. Source: https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/141. Accessed on 17/07/2017.

[5] According to the data collected between January and August, 2016; 43 signatories (14 from public universities and 29 from foundation universities) have lost their jobs in the aftermath of BAK's public declaration. (Academics For Peace Initiative's Data Set, 2016)

[6] Since the coup attempt, huge numbers of academics working at public universities have been dismissed and banned from public service with the statutory decrees. According to the report prepared by the Academics for Peace initiative, until July 2017, 364 signatories from public universities and 8 signatories from foundation universities have been banned from public service with the decree laws.

I started with the case of Academics for Peace because this case changed how I approached labor insecurity in this thesis. In the beginning, my aim was to explore the labor insecurity experienced by the academics in Turkey, especially in the aftermath of "a [global] emphatic turn towards neoliberalism" (Harvey, 2005, p.2). To achieve this goal, I wanted to focus, particularly, on the academics working at foundation universities, because their different legal status and organizational structure turn the foundation universities into an ideal place to observe the impact of worldwide neoliberal transformations in higher education on the universities in Turkey. In order to understand the issue of labor insecurity experienced by the academics in foundation universities, my initial departure point was the impact of the neoliberal political economy on the qualified labor in general. My former understanding of state's role in shaping labor insecurity was limited to its capacity to regulate the capital-labor relations by making necessary legal arrangements. However, the case of Academics for Peace challenged my pre-existing conceptual framework for answering the major research question of how and why academics in foundation universities have been exposed to different labor-related security issues.

I made interviews with a group of graduate student assistants and professors coming from different social science disciplines in the period between August 2015 and April 2016. My field work coincided with the period in which the petition signed by the Academics for Peace Initiative became a very hot issue in Turkey. Although apart from one interviewee, none of the interviewees were signatories, a number of professors referred frequently to the reactions of political actors to the petition, the administrations' attitude towards signatories and the issue of freedom of speech while talking about their own sense of insecurity as an academic. As you will also see in the following chapters of this thesis, political actors' capacity to utilize state institutions and the relations between the state and business people for their own political interests was also an important source of labor insecurity for, particularly, the professors in foundation universities. In addition to the experiences of the signatories, the conclusions of the interviewees led me to ask new questions: Can we explain labor insecurity experienced by the academics in foundation universities only by looking at the neoliberal restructuring of capital-labor relations? Is the government-related labor insecurity of the academics as well as other workers a conjectural issue or a structural issue?

How do insecure experiences of academics in Turkey as a developing country differ from their colleagues in advanced capitalist countries?

The literature on academics in advanced capitalist countries as well as in Turkey has approached the problem of rising labor insecurity of academics with a particular focus on the neoliberal political economy and its implications for different components of the academic labor (Ni Laoire and Shelton, 2003; Gill, 2009; Çolak, 2014; Brownlee, 2015; Ivancheva, 2015; İlengiz and Şen, 2015; Önen, 2015; Taşdemir-Afşar, 2015; Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015). Without neglecting the reflections of the neoliberal political economy in the universities in Turkey, this study takes a further step by analyzing the role of political actors' capacity to make different interventions to the university in discussions of labor insecurity experienced by the academics. As well as being a regulator of capital-labor relations by implementing policies and legal regulations; the government can become an active actor in the academic workplace by shaping the labor process of academics as well as the employment relationship between the management and academics both in direct and indirect ways. By utilizing particular state institutions such as the Council of Higher Education (Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu-YÖK), the government can have a control over all universities in Turkey which has implications not only for the academics in foundation universities but also for those in public universities. The additional ways in which academics working in foundation universities can suffer from precarization depend strongly on the relation between the state and the business people in the university administration. The historical development of the relation between state and business people in Turkey enables the government to intervene further in the academic production process and in the relations in production at the university in an indirect way.

A peculiarity of this study was the range of disciplines the interviewees come from, which involved social science disciplines including sociology, anthropology, political science, international relations, economics, and psychology. On the one hand, my initial motivation behind focusing on the experiences of social scientists was that social science departments have been seriously affected by the worldwide commercialization of higher education[7] since the "last marketization wave" (Burawoy, 2014) starting from the 1970s. As

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[7] The issue of commercialization of higher education will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. So, for now, I will provide a brief definition. While certain scholars like Bok (2003) focus on increasing significance of selling the work of universities for profit in his discussion of commercialization of higher education, particularly with a focus on the United States; I will

the number of social science departments and the financial resources allocated to social scientists have been reduced globally, studying social scientists in foundation universities can serve as a case study for understanding the increasing precarization and degradation of the academic labor as global phenomena with the implementation of neoliberal policies. On the other hand, despite the differences in their approaches to and experiences of precarization which are also in relation with their research interests, disciplines, and seniority, experiences of Turkish social scientists also reveal additional ways in which academics in social sciences might be more vulnerable in the work place. Compared to their colleagues in other disciplines, social scientists can be exposed to different insecurities in the workplace due to their research interests or scholarly activities, which are usually more prone to conflict with the political interests of the government. As a result of the combination of state's regulatory role with its capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the university, this thesis argues that social scientists working in foundation universities can be exposed to varying forms of insecurities intensively in the workplace.

While discussing labor insecurity of the academics, this study focuses on the experiences of both professors and graduate student assistants. The previous studies on the labor insecurity of academics (including the studies on the academics in foundation universities) focus on the impact of the neoliberal restructuring of the universities on each component of the academic labor separately (Ni Laoire and Shelton, 2003; Gill, 2009; Çolak, 2014; Brownlee, 2015; Ivancheva, 2015; İlengiz and Şen, 2015; Önen, 2015; Taşdemir-Afşar, 2015; Vatansever and Gezici- Yalçın, 2015). Even if, a number of studies (Taşdemir-Afşar, 2015; Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015), focuses on the insecure experiences of both components, only Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın provide a partial analysis of how neoliberal political economy could affect the relations between graduate student assistants and professors. The authors only point out briefly how collegial hierarchy between different components of the academic labor in foundation universities can serve as a crucial means of precarization of the relatively unprivileged in this hierarchical relation (Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015, p.150). They leave the relation between the collegial hierarchy and labor insecurity without any further analysis. This study aims to provide an analysis of how

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approach the notion of commercialization from a broader perspective. In this thesis, commercialization of higher education refers to increasing domination of business methods and concerns of the corporate people in shaping academic workplace since the last several decades.

the neoliberal restructuring of the academic workplace has been affecting the relationship between the professor and the graduate student assistant, and in what respects their experiences of insecurity are related to each other.

In the following pages, I will provide first of all a theoretical framework for understanding the neoliberal political economy and its impact on the academic labor. Afterward, I will look at different approaches to the issue of labor insecurity and precarization in the literature. Then I will provide an overview of higher education institutions in Turkey. Following this section, I will concentrate on the political actors' role in shaping labor insecurity by looking at political actors' means of intervention to the university. While concluding the introduction, I will give an outline of this thesis.

1.1. A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Neoliberalism and Insecure Academic Labor

To analyze the changing nature of the academic workplace as well as increasing labor insecurity experienced by the academics all around the world; understanding the proliferation of the market mechanisms in different social spheres is crucial. The extension of the logic of market to new areas is not unique to the period in the aftermath of the oil crisis in 1973, or more widely known as, the neoliberal period, "since markets have always moved through periods of expansion and contraction" (Burawoy, 2014, p.36). Periodic increases and decreases in the dominance of the self-regulating market economy are related to the emergence of counter movements[8] to reduce the damaging impact of marketization as well as to the laws of capitalism. The logic of capitalism which prioritizes the infinite accumulation of capital has led political actors to bring market fundamentalism to the stage in order to overcome the crises of capital accumulation in different historical periods (Burawoy, 2014, p.38). In that sense, Harvey considers neoliberalism more of "a political

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[8] These counter movements include working-class movements to gain right to vote and to limit the working hours of factory workers in the late nineteenth century as well as the emergence of welfare state and protectionist policies implemented in different countries to stabilize national economies in the post- World War I period (Buğra, 2007, p.3; Burawoy, 2014, pp. 38-39).

project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites" (2005, p.19).

Burawoy (2014) defines the periodic increase in the impact of market mechanisms in shaping different spheres of society as a "marketization wave". While Polanyi (1957) provided an analysis of the first (1795-1834) and second (1914-1933) marketization waves with their corresponding counter movements, Burawoy focuses additionally on the period following the oil crisis in 1973 as a new wave of marketization. What each marketization wave shares in common is the commodification of different factors of production (land, labor, and money) which Polanyi defines as fictitious commodities. Unlike a commodity-an object produced under competitive conditions for sale on the market- factors of production are obviously not commodities. However, with the subjection of land, labor, and money to a supply-and-demand mechanism during the first and second marketization waves, they have been treated as commodities which is defined as the fictitious commodification of these factors of production by Polanyi (1957, p.72).

What is problematic about fictitious commodification is the destruction of the ways in which labor, land, and money can reproduce themselves. As Polanyi asserted, in order to contribute to the capital accumulation process as well as to reproduce life itself, these fictitious commodities should not be left alone to the mechanisms of self-regulating markets. To articulate, when people have been deprived of all means of subsistence apart from money wages, they can sustain a living as long as they are demanded in the labor market. In other words, labor can reproduce itself as long as it can sell its labor power. However, if people can be hired and fired at will and the wages fall below the minimum level to maintain a living; people cannot be productive. As a matter of the logic of infinite (capital) accumulation which shapes how self- regulating markets operate; a total commodification of the labor will also result in weakening social bonds, fracturing communities and destruction of the social reproduction process all of which will bring the collapse of the society (Fraser, 2013, p.6; Vatansever and Gezici- Yalçın, 2015, p.41). Similarly, in an international business environment where money is subject to unregulated exchange, the value of money fluctuates which can destabilize national economies and lead to a financial crisis. Finally, the commodification of nature results in destroying the ways in which land, as well as other parts of nature such as water and air, reproduce themselves.

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The last marketization wave starting from the 1970s involved a transition from an industrial economy to a knowledge-based economy which turned knowledge as an important factor of production. While Polanyi identified fictitious commodities with respect to industrial capitalism, Jessop (2007) and Burawoy (2014) take a further step by taking knowledge as a fictitious commodity in the contemporary knowledge-based economy.

Today, knowledge has not only a central role as a commodity but also as a capital which leads the academic labor to have a contradictory position (Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015, pp. 42-43). To articulate, while the academics own knowledge as a potential means of production and, in that sense, as capital; by using her knowledge directly in the lectures or in her research projects, she exchanges her knowledge in return for a particular gain in the labor market such as to be employed in a university or for her promotion. According to Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, what is problematic behind the aforementioned commodification of knowledge is the reduction of knowledge accumulation process to the accumulation of a particular form of knowledge which can offer an immediate gain to the academics (2015, pp.43-47). In an environment where universities' organizational structure has been converging to the organizational structure of the private enterprises in terms of increasing importance of cost efficiency and accountability, academics may not have enough time and energy to accumulate any additional knowledge which would not provide any gains in the short run, but could serve as a means of production in the long-run. Destroying the ways in which knowledge can be reproduced in the long term will result in the collapse of the knowledge accumulation process as well as the collapse of the academic profession.

As Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın highlighted, the real danger behind leaving knowledge and academic labor (or labor, in general) to the control of self-regulating market system is beyond commercialization of higher education or being increasingly exposed to various labor-related insecurities in the academia (2015, p.39). The subordination of different spheres including the academic sphere to the logic of market "could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society" (Polanyi, 1957, pp.3-4). So, the real danger lies in the destruction of the ways in which the labor and knowledge can reproduce themselves, and, in this respect, the collapse of the both.

1.2.   A Discussion on the Concepts of Precariat and Precarization

In the aftermath of the oil crisis in 1973, a process of increasing fictitious commodification of labor, nature, money, and knowledge has started. To extend and deregulate markets, a number of policies have been gradually implemented by different countries: (1) Elimination of social and political mechanisms through privatization and withdrawal of the state from various spheres of social provision, such as education and health; (2) a shift to more flexible organization[9] of production at a global level and, in this respect, (3) increasing flexibility in the working conditions[10] of workers even in the countries where the welfare state structure was well-established like European countries. (Bora et. al., 2011, pp.15-16; Castells, 2008, p. 487; Harvey, 2005, pp.2-3; Vatansever and Gezici- Yalçın, 2015, p.35)

Despite the heterogeneity among its members in terms class locations, gender or nationality; the recent marketization wave has created a growing labor force which, first of all, does not have any labor market security which can be defined as the existence of an adequate number of income-earning opportunities (Standing, 2011). Secondly, this group suffers from commodification of public goods and services (Candeias, 2005) at different levels depending on their level of social income which constitutes of enterprise benefits, state benefits, value of support provided by family or local community and ability to make savings in addition to the salary/wage level (Standing, 2011). As a result of first two conditions, this particular group within the labor force might lose everything in an unexpected crisis. What the particular segment of global labor force also shares in common is that in order not to become totally excluded from the labor market and to continue providing a living, they are likely to find themselves in a process of accepting, internalizing and giving consent not only to the exploitation and violation of their rights in the work place but also to an unstable and

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[9] According to Göztepe, flexibility should not be understood only as a flexibility in the labor market. By emphasizing the increase in the flexibility of transnational companies in terms of moving their factories to different geographies in order to achieve cost efficiency, he points out the emergence of global supply chains which is another layer of the flexibility in the neoliberal era (2012, pp. 22-24).

[10] What I mean by 'increasing flexibility in the working conditions' is that an employer can be more flexible while deciding for how many workers he will employ and working conditions of the worker depend highly on the employer. As a result of the elimination of regulatory mechanisms in the labor market, employers can hire workers with temporary job contracts in accordance to the existing fluctuations in the demand and employment relation becomes more irregular. (Oğuz, 2011, p.9)

precarious life. This process of "habituation to expecting a life of unstable labor and unstable living" (Standing, 2014; p.1) is called precarization (Oğuz, 2011, pp.9-10; Vatansever, 2013, p.7).

Standing (2014) defines this particular group within the labor force who has been subject to precarization, as the "precariat" which is the combination of two words: Precarious and Proletariat. Although the term was first used by French sociologists in the 1980s[11] to identify temporary or seasonal workers, the concept has been used also to refer to the jobless people who have lost their hope of social integration (particularly in Germany) (Standing, 2011, p.9). However, it would be not wrong to conclude that the concept of 'precariat' has drawn the attention of a broader audience with Standing's book, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* which was published in 2011.

Standing considers the precariat as a distinctive group of workers with particular relations of production, relations of distribution and relations to the state (2014, pp.1-2). In his discussion on the distinctiveness of labor relations of the precariat, he predicated on the long-term employment of the industrial workers in advanced capitalist countries where welfare state was well-institutionalized. While acknowledging that casual labor is not a recent phenomenon, the employment insecurity in the form of working under fixed term contracts or having an indirect employment relation with the employer via agencies or brokers has been recently internalized and normalized by a fragmented group of workers which distinguishes precariat from the proletariat according to Standing.

In line with his understanding of "distinctive relations of production", his definitions of "distinctive relations of distribution" and "distinctive relations to the state" are based on similar a comparison with the conditions of the industrial proletariat of the welfare state era. To articulate briefly, what he means by "distinctive relations of distribution" is actually a reduction in the sources of social income because of the reductions in the enterprise non-wage benefits or state-provided benefits as well as due to rise in individualization which emerges as a result of the former reductions in social income. He points out that the precariat is more vulnerable because of its high dependence on his money wages. For instance, despite

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[11] Although the term 'precariat' has been used since the 1980s; various sociologists have been studying on the issue of precarity since the 1960s. The word 'precarity' has its etymological roots in the Latin word 'precor' which means 'to pray'. In that sense, precarity refers to an uncertain condition in which the individual has to rely on praying for salvation (Oğuz, 2011, p.11). The issue of precarity was first emphasized by Bourdieu (1963) to distinguish between permanent workers and contingent workers (cited in Barbier, 2004, p. 3).

earning a relatively high level of income, certain members of the precariat may still have a more disadvantageous position compared to the people who benefit from traditional forms of community support despite their lower income. To sum up with Standing's own words, "a feature of the precariat is not the level of money wages or income earned at any particular moment but the lack of community support in times of need, lack of assured enterprise or state benefits, and lack of private benefits to supplement money earnings" (Standing, 2011, pp. 10-12).

Lastly, Standing defines distinctive relations to the state as "fewer and weaker civil (equality before the law and right to protection against crime and physical harm), cultural (equal access to enjoyment of culture and entitlement to participate in the cultural life of the community), social (equal access to forms of social protection, including pensions and health care), political (equal right to vote, stand for elections and participate in the political life of community) and economic rights (equal entitlement to undertake income earning activity) than others in the pecking order of average income" (Standing, 2011, p.14; Standing, 2014, p.2). In this regard, Standing finds the situation of the precariat similar to that of denizens of the Roman Empire who had limited rights compared to a citizen.

To provide a more systematic framework, Standing uses the term 'precariat' to define people who do not have several forms of labor-related security:

> **Labour market security**: Adequate income-earning opportunities; at the macro-level, this is epitomised by a government commitment to 'full employment'. **Employment security**: Protection against arbitrary dismissal, regulations on hiring and firing, the imposition of costs on employers for failing to adhere to rules and so on. **Job security**: Ability and opportunity to retain a niche in employment, plus barriers to skill dilution, and opportunities for 'upward' mobility in terms of status and income. **Work security**: Protection against accidents and illness at work, through, for example, safety and health regulations, limits on working time, unsociable hours, night work for women, as well as compensation for mishaps. **Income security**: Assurance of an adequate stable income, protected through, for example, minimum wage machinery, wage indexation, comprehensive social security, progressive taxation to reduce inequality and to supplement low incomes. **Representation security**: Possessing a collective voice in the labor market, through, for example, independent trade unions, with a right to strike (Standing, 2011, p.10)

Without trivializing the empirical validity of the proliferation of precarization to different segments of the working class, Standing's conceptualization of the precariat has

been mostly critiqued due to his Eurocentric conceptualization of the precariat (Oğuz, 2011; Bailey, 2012; Seymour, 2012; Frase, 2013; Munck, 2013; Hacısalihoğlu, 2015; Kutlu, 2015). As I mentioned in the previous paragraph, although Standing pointed out from time to time certain features of the precariat, such as casual labor, are not a result of neoliberalism, his reductionist view on the proletariat which he takes a base while conceptualizing the precariat has been shown as a problem in his conceptual framework which I also agree. However, despite taking conditions in the advanced capitalist countries as a basis in his conceptualization of the precariat, Standing's analysis involves a multi-dimensional approach to the issue of labor security. He does not reduce to insecurity of workers to the type or duration of their contracts. Secondly, while several forms of labor security introduced by Standing may not present the conditions of industrial workers in the late-industrialized countries during the welfare state era, some or all of them can be utilized by another stratum within the working class such as the professionals. In that sense, we can still benefit from his framework while discussing what has changed for the more (relatively) protected segments of the working class in these developing countries in the aftermath of neoliberalism.

In his discussion of the precariat, Standing also points out this fact. A widening group of qualified workers- workers who have graduated from the universities or workers who have done post graduate studies- have been entering into the precariat which is "historically unique" according to Standing (2014). With his own words, "the precariat is unlike the old proletarian in having a level of formal schooling that is well above the level of job he or she is expected to do" (2014, p.1). In *Why the Precariat is not a Bogus Concept?,* Standing refers to the qualified labor more clearly while considering educated people "who are denied a future, a sense that they can build their lives and careers after being promised their qualifications would lead to that; […] and [who] experience a sense of relative deprivation or status frustration" as an important component of the precariat in addition to "those falling out of old proletarian communities" in advanced industrialized countries, migrants and ethnic minorities (2014, p.4). Therefore, as Isabel Lorey summarized eloquently, what is new for today is that "existential precariousness[12] can no longer be entirely shifted through the construction of dangerous others and warded off as precarity" (2015, pp.14-15).

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[12] By drawing on Butler's conceptualization of precariousness and precarity, Lorey (2015) distinguishes between existential precariousness and precarity. Butler (2009) approaches the existential precariousness as the shared experience of the general precariousness of life and vulnerability of the body, rather than as a threat or danger from which human beings should be

In line with Standing's observations, according to Ercan and Oğuz (2015), both the professional strata of public employees and professionals in the private sector have been losing their protected positions since the recent marketization wave in Turkey. While commodification of labor of public employees has been shaped by the privatization of public services and increasing external borrowing from private capital markets; the adoption of a new Labor Law in 2003 played an important role in increasing the precarization of the qualified labor in the private sector (Ercan and Oğuz, 2015, p.126 and p.129). With this law, the legal recognition of part-time, temporary and contract labor legitimized flexible work. Introduction of the new labor law enabled additionally employers to fire workers collectively by showing 'economic crisis' as a reason. As Ercan and Oğuz stressed, an important consequence of an increase in the subjection of qualified labor to the demand side since 2003 was "the creation of a new generation of workers whose first job in the labor market were precarious […] [and who] are being pushed into work in areas unrelated to their own training-generally in unskilled, part-time white-collar jobs, in the service sector such as call centers, fast-food chains, shopping malls, etc. Even if they find jobs in the areas related to their training, they do not have [employment] security, so they internalize the potential precarity into their consciousness" (2015, p.129).

The increase in the labor-related security issues of academics and precarization of their labor as a global phenomenon are simply reflections of the worldwide degradation of qualified labor. With extension of market mechanisms to the academic sphere which I will discuss in detail in the following chapter, Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın concluded that academic labor both in Turkey as well as in other countries has been facing all forms of labor-related security issues Standing (2011) pointed out, more intensely in last years (2015, pp. 53-54). In their path-breaking study on the degradation of the academics in foundation universities, Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın based their analysis upon the impact of re-commodification of labor and commodification of knowledge on the labor insecurity

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protected. Although this shared experience of precariousness augments our dependence "on others, on institutions and on sustainable environments" (Lorey, 2015, p.20), people can never be totally protected as the institutions or the amount of wealth are incapable of completely eliminating the possibility of danger of death or risky situations. In discussions of precarity, Butler stresses the relation between domination and precariousness. To elaborate this relation, she recalls Hobbesian state theory which takes the shared experience of precariousness as a danger. To put it in different way, by turning existential precariousness into fear against others who may cause damage and, in this regard, from who people should be protected; domination of protectionist policies of the state is legitimized. This domination can express itself as "the differential distribution of symbolic and material insecurities, in other words, precarity" (Lorey, 2015, p.21).

experienced by the academics. However, as I mentioned in the introduction of this section, the role of the government in Turkey is not limited to providing a legal framework in order to proliferate flexible, short-term employment relations. By relying on its capacity to make interventions to the foundation universities, the government can become an active participant in the relations in production which creates additional sources of labor insecurity and precarization experienced by academics in Turkey.

Before making a detailed analysis on how the government can become a source of labor insecurity for the academics in foundation universities, I want to provide a brief overview of higher education institutions in Turkey. Such an overview will enable us to have a better understanding of the government's capacity to make interventions to the foundation universities.

1.3. An Overview of Higher Education Institutions in Turkey

In Turkey, universities are either public or foundation universities. According to the data base of YÖK (2017), there are 114 public and 65 foundation universities[13]. It is important to highlight that neither foundation universities nor public universities can be considered homogenous institutions[14]. Both public and foundation universities vary in terms of their research-orientation, their degree of institutionalization, financial sources and adequate physical and technological infrastructure for research and teaching activities.

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[13] Source: https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/ Accessed on 20/08/17.

[14] One of the important reasons for the variation among higher education institutions in Turkey is related to the high demand for higher education. Before foundations were legally allowed to open universities, different governments tried to overcome the problem of demand-supply imbalance in higher education by opening public universities without having a necessary number of qualified academic staff and adequate infrastructure for research and teaching. In order to stress the lack of academic quality in these public universities, Tekeli compares the increase in public universities in the period between 1960 and 1980s with the increase in squatting in the same period (2009, pp. 57-59). Similar higher education policies can be also seen during the early 1990s and early 2000s. Again in order to satisfy the demand for higher education, universities, particularly in different Anatolian universities, were established without having an adequate number of qualified faculty members and the facilities that are necessary for research or teaching activities (Demir, 1995; cited in Tekeli, 2009, pp.153-154). According to Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın (2015), while there was "an inflation" of public universities in the early 1990s, there was a significant rise in the number of foundation universities in the period between 1995 and 2003 (pp.68-69). Therefore, the establishment process of universities serves as an important reason for the variation in the academic quality of universities in Turkey.

In 1983, foundations were legally allowed to open universities which are not permitted to have any profit motive, under the control of the state in order to meet the demand for higher education as well as decrease the quota pressure on the public universities (YÖK, 2007, pp.1-2). Foundation universities are established often by people outside the academia such as members of trade associations or by business people under the name of the non-profit foundation they run. These universities are distinguished from the public universities in two aspects: In their managerial structure and in their source of funding.

The managerial structure of the foundation university is divided into two groups, namely its academic part and its administrative part (YÖK, 2007, p.9). Similar to the public universities, faculty councils and faculty board of directors are responsible for managing academic activities at the faculty level, whereas the university senate and board of directors managed the academic activities at the university level. Responsibilities of all of these governing bodies are shaped with respect to the Higher Education Law (no: 2547) as well to the related legislations.

One of the most important differences between the two types of institutions lies in the administrative part of the university management. The board of the trustees is the main authority to decide on the employment of the academic staff, salaries of academics and budget-planning. While the president is a member of the board of trustees, he/she is responsible for implementing the decisions taken at the meeting of the board of trustees rather than being the top authority in the management structure. The selection procedure of the president in foundation universities is also different than the process in public universities. While the president of public universities is approved and assigned by the president of the Turkish Republic, in foundation universities, there is no need for an approval of the president of the Turkish Republic for assigning the selected university president. In the case of foundation universities, the board of trustees only takes the opinion of YÖK in the selection process of the university president (YÖK, 2007, p.9)[15]. If we consider that board of trustees consists mostly of non-academic members from trade associations, companies or from NGOs who established the foundation, dominance of the non-academic components in the administrative decisions cannot be neglected.

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[15] This has very recently changed. In the selection process of the president, the board of trustees has to get the approval of the President of Turkish Republic. Source: http://www.diken.com.tr/vakif-universitelerinin-rektorlerini-de-erdogan-atayacak/ Accessed on 20/08/2017.

Foundation universities have three different sources of funding: Contributions of the foundation, tuitions paid by students and state subsidies. According to YÖK's report on Turkey's Higher Education Strategy shared with the public in 2007, there are two groups of foundation universities in terms of their major source of funding (2007, p.66). The major source of funding for the first group is the foundation. For the second group, tuitions constitute the greatest amount of the university's income. In this report, YÖK concludes that most of the foundation universities belong to the second group where tuition fees play a significant role in the university budget.

While there are several ways to categorize foundation universities such as by looking at the percentage of the students with a scholarship, students' performance in the national university entrance exam, the size of the university or its level of institutionalization, this study will divide the foundation universities into two groups: Research-oriented foundation universities or teaching-oriented foundation universities. The distinction was made by drawing on the interviewees' responses to my questions on research-teaching balance, the performance level expected by the school and the opportunities provided by the school to improve the academic skills of the professors, for example, in the form of financial support for conference participation.

One of the major differences between research-oriented and teaching-oriented foundation universities is the number of courses the professors are required to teach in a year. Unlike research-oriented foundation universities where professors are required to teach 4 courses in a year, teaching-oriented foundation universities have heavy teaching requirements varying from 4 to 7 courses per semester which significantly reduces the amount of time an academic can spare for research. As Interviewee 38, a professor who had a chance to work both in teaching-oriented and research-oriented foundation universities, highlighted, the administration pretends to expect publication from faculty members, but teaching requirements like lecturing 24 hours per week pose an important obstacle to the professor while finding time for research in and outside the workplace.

The expectation of publication constitutes another important difference between the two types of foundation universities. Research-oriented foundation universities expect a certain number of publications, preferably in indexed journals, per year and fulfillment of this expectation determines the promotion they will receive, the continuity of their job

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contracts and the number of courses they will be required to teach. As all of the interviewees working at research-oriented foundation universities confirmed, the publication is the major factor for the continuity of academics' employment in these universities. On the other hand, in teaching-oriented foundation universities, the publication is not considered as the most important criterion in the performance evaluation of the professors. In that sense, continuity of employment depends on less the number and quality of publications.

In my sample of five universities, two universities are research-oriented. One of them is close to a research-oriented foundation university in terms of the course requirements from the professors and research-teaching balance. However, the continuity of employment does not strictly depend on publication and publication requirements do not have a dominance over other criteria like in other research-oriented foundation universities. The remaining two universities are teaching-oriented universities.

1.4. Government as a Source of Labor Insecurity

In Turkey, the government serves as a source of labor insecurity due to its capacity to make interventions to the management of university as well as to the academic labor process. While it is able to make interventions with the help of particular state institutions such as the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), both current business relations between the business people in the board of trustees and the state, and the historical development of state-capital relations enable the government to have a control over the relations in production in foundation universities in an indirect way.

In order to understand under what circumstances the government can serve as a source of labor insecurity, first of all, I want to look at the degree of instrumentalization of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) for the political purposes of the government in detail. Afterward, I will talk about the historical development of state-capital relations in Turkey and its impact on the insecurity of academic labor in foundation universities.

To elaborate how the government can have a direct control over the administration and production processes in both public and foundation universities, I want to start with the

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establishment of YÖK in 1981, following the military coup in September 1980. As a result of several powers that YÖK can exercise over the universities, academics in all universities can be exposed to government-related labor insecurity depending on the government's capacity to shape YÖK's decisions with respect to its own political interests. To exemplify, while the president and the deans were chosen by the faculty members before YÖK, the assignment of presidents became a responsibility of the president of Republic and YÖK became responsible for the assignment of deans (Altıntaş, 2015, pp. 66-67). Again depending on the government's capacity to shape YÖK's decisions in accordance with its own political concerns as well as on the president's degree of independence from the ruling political party, the government can have a direct control over the decision-making processes in the universities. As the people in the university and faculty administration can affect the research and teaching activities of an academic, the government can try to restrain academic labor process and scholarly activities via the president and the dean which is not impossible. In order words, with the help of YÖK government can serve as a means of job insecurity for the academics.

In order to understand how the government can affect the decision-making mechanisms of the administration as well as academic labor process particularly in foundation universities based on its dominance over the business people in the board of trustees, looking at the historical development of state-capital relations is a good departure point. In Turkey, the development of the relation between the state and the business people differ from the process in the advanced capitalist or advanced industrialized countries which are not technologically dependent on other countries due to their capacity to develop their own (production) technologies (Buğra, 1997, p.34).

The underdevelopment of a Turkish (Muslim) bourgeoisie class was strongly related to a change in the core-periphery relations in the aftermath of the industrial revolution[16] as

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[16] With the increasing control of Europe over the Ottoman Empire, non-Muslim bourgeoisie gained certain economic privileges which increased its dominance in the commercial activities during the nineteenth century. In the meanwhile, the rise of nationalism as a global dominant ideology posed an obstacle for development of a powerful capitalist class which could have instrumentalized the state for its own economic interests. Both the Turkification policies implemented by the Young Turks and rise of nationalist upheavals among the ethnic minorities in the empire resulted in a forced dispossession and migration of non-Muslim bourgeoisie including Armenians and Greeks of Turkish nationality. In addition to these important factors, World War I and War of Independence affected and changed also the balance of wealth at a significant level (Buğra, 1997, pp. 65-66; Keyder, [1989] 2015, pp. 10-11).

well as to the absence of large-scale land ownership in the Ottoman Empire[17] (Buğra, 1997; Keyder, [1989] 2015). As a result, since the early twentieth century, the state has played an important role in the development of the bourgeois class in Turkey like the other late industrialized countries such as East Asian countries (Buğra, 1997). Between the 1900s and the 1930s, the members of government participated actively in the business world by founding companies or by taking part in managerial boards of joint stock companies which blurred the boundaries between the political interests of the government and private economic interests. In the early republican era, the government also supported the recently established business enterprises by sharing the risk of investment with the employer in an environment where capital markets were also underdeveloped, and by giving subsidies to the business people who did not have enough experience of managing large-scaled enterprises (Buğra, 1997, pp.34-35). Therefore, in line with the arguments of Buğra and Keyder, Yıldırım (2016) concludes that since the early republican era, the state has not served as a means of the bourgeois class who has the power to shape politics with respect to its class interests. To the contrary, the bourgeoisie gained strength in Turkey with the support of the state during the Republican history.

At that point, one may still ask why historical roots of state-capital relations can have still an impact on the contemporary relations between the government and the business people. In other words, how have different governments maintained a dominance over the business people in a case of conflicting interests after early Republican era? Also, it is important to clarify whether the government intervenes to all sectors in order to reinforce its political power or not.

To answer the first question, the autonomy of the business people has been restricted by the state at varying levels which reduced the bargaining power of the bourgeois class in a case of a conflict with the political authorities in different historical periods (Yıldırım, 2016). At that point, the statement of the president of Turkish Business and Industry Association which is the most powerful organization of business people in Turkey, in 1981 shows the level of government pressure on the business people eloquently. With the president's own

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[17] According to Keyder ([1989] 2015), Ottoman bureaucracy owed its privileged position to the underdevelopment of large-scale landownership which could have served as an alternative powerful class to the state. When the bureaucrats in the Young Turk movement came into power, they gave financial support to the commercial bourgeoisie. However, as they also maintained the continuity of small-scale land ownership, there was no dispossession of independent peasants which affected the development of a powerful national bourgeoisie in a negative way (pp.98-100).

words: "[…] For instance, today, all of the business people in Turkey think that although they do not break any law, state can find a way to punish business people, if it wants" (Heper, 2006, pp. 180-182; cited in Yıldırım, 2016, p.76). To exemplify the ways in which state can punish business people for its own interests; Şen stresses that particular governments in the post-coup period punished certain business people who gained power with the help of state subsidies before the 1980s, by utilizing their fiscal apparatuses such as taxes (1995, pp. 52-64).

As a result of the government's capacity to create pressure on the business people by using various state apparatuses, the capital takes into consideration not only its own economic interests, but it may also take the government's political concerns while shaping its employment relation with the labor depending on the sector. In that sense, the government can intervene to the relations in production by increasing pressure on the employer with the help of different state apparatuses. At that point, it is important to highlight that certain areas such as education or media are more at the target of the government due to their capability to produce public consent for its ongoing policies and its interests. Therefore the government wants to have more control over the labor process of particular forms of labor who may serve as a potential threat to its authority and its capacity to manufacture public consent for its particular interests. Academic labor has been one of the potential targets of the governments since the medieval times (Altbach, 2001). Besides academics in Turkey, the academics who work on socially and politically sensitive topics that criticize the existing regime have been subject to various forms of pressures of the government in other developing countries[18] as well.

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[18] In his discussion on academic freedom in developing countries, Altbach (2001) provides an analysis of the conditions which can enable and have enabled governments to intervene to the university in different developing countries. To start with, political crises or social unrest constitute one of these conditions. During such times of crisis, governments can increase the pressure on the academics by placing serious restrictions on their freedom to express their views on social or political issues in different public spheres as well as on their research and teaching activities. For instance, during the Tiananmen Square Crisis in China in 1989, the Chinese government increased its pressure on the universities in general (Altbach, 2001, pp. 211-213). Secondly, in the countries like North Korea, Syria, and Iraq, the government can restrain the academic labor process because universities are "an integral part of a governmental apparatus that is itself repressive" (Altbach, 2001, p.211). In such a context, restrictions on the universities are a part of the academic system rather than a result of political crises or social unrest. In Africa and a number of Asian countries, the dependence of universities on the state support serves as an important reason for government's ability to make interventions to the university. Lastly, Altbach shows the absence of democratic traditions in certain developing countries as another factor to explain the restrictions of government on the academic freedom and the autonomy of universities. As a result of one or more than one of these conditions, academics whose work are considered politically or socially sensitive such as ethnic or religious studies, environmental research, studies on social class and social conflict, can be subject to different forms of labor insecurity such as job losses or being subject to penalties and informal warnings (Altbach, 2009, p.23). In fact, in African countries, a critique of the ruling regime in power might result in receiving imprisonment (Ibid) in addition to job losses.

In the discussion of precarization of the academic labor in foundation universities, these universities may seem, at first instance, as unaffected by state- capital relations in Turkey, because they are established by non-profit foundations. On the other hand, the dominance of the members with a corporate background or from the bourgeois class, in the board of trustees can make foundation universities to give importance also to political interests of the state in their decision mechanisms. Depending on the academics' level of engagement into the politics in their scholarly activities or outside the workplace, academics can be subject to precarization in additional ways due to the particular relation between state and social classes in Turkey. So, in the case of foundation universities, academic labor can be exposed to different insecurities as a result of a potential conflict not only with the business people in the board of trustees but also with the government. In this regard, government serves not only as a contributor to the precarization of academic labor- by implementing policies and introducing legal regulations for the neoliberal restructuring of the universities-, but also an important source of precarization for the academics in foundation universities.

1.5. Methodology

1.5.1. Research Design & Research Process

In order to understand diverse experiences of insecurity and the interrelation between these experiences, I conducted face-to-face interviews with both graduate students and professors. My sample consists of 40 academics (22 professors and 18 graduate student assistants) who were at different stages of their academic career in five different foundation universities in İstanbul (3) and Ankara (2).

Table 1. Distribution of the interviewees in accordance with their academic title and gender

Academic Title of the Interviewees	Total	Female	Male
Instructor	2	1	1
Assistant Professor	13	6	7
Associate Professor	4	2	2
Professor	3	2	1
Ph.D. Student	6	5	1
Master's Student	12	5	7
Total	40	21	19

According to the data of the Center for Evaluation, Selection, and Placement by 2015, there were 69 foundation universities in 12 different cities of Turkey, but 70% of these universities were established in Istanbul and Ankara. Therefore I chose the universities from these two cities. Apart from one foundation university, I conducted interviews in universities where graduate student assistants were employed in return for their scholarships.

Initially, my aim was to do my field work only in the universities where the aforementioned type of graduate students dominated the population of graduate student assistants. On the one hand, according to the rules of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), all universities should have a certain number of full-time assistants who are affiliated with YÖK, in each department depending on the size of the department. On the other hand, a number of foundation universities introduced an informal and flexible form of employing additional graduate student assistants under the name of assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship in order to increase the number of assistants in a cost-efficient way while satisfying the requirements of YÖK. The informal employment relation between the university management and the assistant increases the subjection of assistants to their relation with particular professors in terms of the continuity of their employment and/or their working conditions. Due to the fact, I chose these universities to have a better understanding of how the extension of the logic of market to the academic workplace has been influencing the relation between the professor and the graduate student assistant, and in what respects one side's experience of insecurity can affect the other side's experience. Therefore I conducted interviews with graduate student assistants in four foundation universities, two of them in Ankara and the remaining two in İstanbul, where assistants were not considered full-time employees. However, among 18 interviewees, two interviewees had prior experienced full-

time graduate assistantship in a public university as well. By drawing on the conclusions of these interviews as well as the observations of the other interviewees on the working conditions of YÖK assistants, I had a chance to compare the experiences of full-time YÖK assistants with the graduate student assistants who were working in return for their scholarship.

During the research process, I had a chance to meet an academic who was currently working in the university where graduate student assistants are YÖK assistants, but who had a chance to work at several foundation universities which have been already included in my sample. Therefore, I wanted to include our interview in my thesis and, therefore, the number of universities in my sample increased from four to five, but I made no interviews with graduate student assistants in this particular institution due to my aforementioned aim.

The interviewees came from a wide range of social science disciplines including sociology, political science, international relations, economics, psychology, and anthropology.

Table 2. Distribution of the interviewees in accordance with their discipline

Discipline of the Interviewee	Total
Economics	5
Political Science	11
International Relations	13
Sociology	4
Psychology	6
Anthropology	1
Total	40

As the contact information of professors was available on the university web sites, I was able to contact professors via email and made interviews with those who accepted to participate in this study. While I got a response from 88 professors (42%) out of 210 emails; 51% of the responses (45 professors) were positive. As a result of several factors- inability to find a suitable time for both sides, lack of communication after the first email or unexpected changes in the schedules of professors- I could conduct interviews only with 27 professors. Considering 5 interviews as plot studies, I included experiences of 22 professors in the analysis. On the other hand, due to their ambiguous status between an employee and a

student, graduate students' contact information was not available on their department's website, therefore the interviewees were chosen by using snowball sampling. As a result of the aforementioned problems in reaching professors and graduate student assistants, the distribution of the interviewees in accordance with their disciplines and their academic title is uneven which can be considered a limitation of this study.

In order to have a better understanding of subjective experiences of labor insecurity, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with the participants. I prepared interview questions both by using Standing's (2011) and Dörre's (2011) conceptual frameworks as well as by drawing on my own experiences and observations as a graduate student assistant who has been working at a foundation university for three years. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions enabled me to observe the multi-dimensional nature of precarization experienced by the social scientists in Turkey.

Apart from one interview, the interviews were not disturbed by a third person. In this interview, the interviewee was sharing his office with a colleague who came to the room in the middle of our conversation. So, half of the interview was a three-people-conversation. For some questions, the interviewee asked the opinion of his colleague after sharing his own view or sometimes there were short discussions about some questions. In this regard, one of the interviews was more of a focus group study. While I preferred to talk with the participants one-to-one in order to make the participant more comfortable while sharing her experiences, the close relationship between the interviewee and his colleague created a cozy environment which affected the research process in a positive way.

Lastly, the duration of the interviews varied approximately from half an hour to three-and-half-an-hour depending on the experiences as well as the willingness of the participant to share her experiences.

1.5.2. The Issue of Confidentiality

Elif: Are you a member of a trade union?
Interviewee 40 (Male, Assistant Professor): Professor X, she was sent us as a spy by the board of trustees, for sure!
Professor X, Interviewee 40's colleague, and office mate: I knew it, they want to fire us! [Laughs]

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I want to emphasize again [the importance of] anonymity [for me]. Otherwise, I would get into trouble. (Interviewee 38, Female, Professor)

In discussion of the confidentiality, I wanted to start with the statements of these two professors who were working at two different institutions, because their statements reveal the risk they take as an academic- in both cases, the risk of a dismissal- while sharing their work-related experiences with a researcher. This exemplifies both the vulnerable position of the academics in their institutions as well as the level of labor insecurity that could be experienced by an academic in a foundation university.

On the one hand, not every interviewee was uncomfortable during the interview depending on their objective and subjective experiences of insecurity in their institutions. On the other hand, in order to minimize the possibility of being identified as well as ensure the confidentiality for the academics like Interviewee 38, Interviewee 40 and his office mate, I gave each interviewee a number instead of a pseudo-name although identifying academics with a number may most probably seem dehumanizing. While quoting from professors and graduate student assistants, I mentioned also their gender and academic title such as assistant professor or master's student. Different than professors, I also mentioned the source of scholarship for graduate student assistants unless they received their scholarship from their universities.

1.5.3. Positionality and Reactions to Research

Interviewee 26: [We opened a graduate program] in order to provide financial support for outstanding, clever students while making investments for their future. Therefore, I'm aware of your pre-existing bias. However, that's not how things occur in reality. […] Whatever I'm going to tell won't change anything. What you will write has been already determined. If not, it is nice; because…

Elif: That's how qualitative research differs. The conclusions of the interviewees may reshape your already existing hypothesis. Of course…

Interviewee 26: I hope, my conclusions can reshape your argument; because I believe in my fairness. I was also there (Interviewee 26, Male, Professor. Italics added.)

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One of my interesting experiences in this research was my positionality as a researcher, particularly, during the interviews I made with well-established, experienced researchers who have already passed the career path that I'm currently passing. Having already experienced graduate assistantship, or with Interviewee 26's own words, 'being also there' led some of the professors to treat me more as one of their graduate students instead of a researcher. Due to my experience as a graduate student who has been working in return for scholarship for three years, professors could even have already-existing biases about my analysis in this thesis like Interviewee 26 had, although I prepared my questions about the conditions of graduate student assistants in a way that the participants could express their opinions freely and I tried to ask these questions in a neutral way. So, a combination of the collegial hierarchy with my own position as a graduate student led us to have certain moments in our conversation where Interviewee 26 tried to correct my 'misunderstanding' about graduate assistantship by explaining 'how things happen in reality'.

Different than my experience with the professors during the research process, due to my own position as a graduate student assistant, we were more like friends rather than a researcher and the participants in my interviews with graduate student assistants. A number of graduate students emphasized the importance of conducting a research on the precarity of graduate student assistants. Even two master's students, Interviewee 11 and Interviewee 45, said to me that the interview was more like a therapy for them which again shows the seriousness of the issue of labor insecurity.

1.6. Outline of the Thesis

> When people who have no experience in the university administration and who have less idea about how a university works, dominate the administration of a university, primary concerns of the administration can be different than academic concerns which cause a great damage to the university […]. When a university has economic or political concerns [rather than academic ones], it is impossible to reach [good academic] outcomes. […] [As a result of the fact], the academic profession turns into a struggle to survive in such an environment. (Interviewee 14, Female, Professor)

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As Interviewee 14 summarized impressively, this thesis will provide a detailed analysis of to what extent social science professors and graduate student assistants succeed in surviving in the foundation universities where the university administration prioritizes their economic interests such as achieving cost efficiency or productivity, and/or having no conflict with the political figures. To achieve this goal, the next chapter will first focus on the concrete implications of the recent marketization wave for higher education at a global level. Afterwards, I will discuss to what extent the emergence of foundation universities was related to these global developments and how they are reflecting a number of global trends in higher education in their organizational structure. In Chapter 3, I will focus particularly on the experiences of the professors while Chapter 4 will emphasize the graduate students' struggle to survive. Lastly, Chapter 5 will discuss the possibility of a struggle against labor insecurity and precarization instead of a struggle to survive.

CHAPTER 2

NEOLIBERALISM AND CHANGING ACADEMIC WORKPLACE:
EXPERIENCES OF THE ACADEMICS IN FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES

Since the implementation of neoliberal policies, higher education institutions have been subject to a remarkable change worldwide. Despite the variations in organization of higher education at a national level, the nature of academia as a workplace has been transformed by several developments including deteriorating financial support from public sources, increasing importance of accountability and managerial controls, decreasing power of academics in the decision-making mechanisms, changing forms of employment in terms of declining number of tenure-track positions, and the proliferation of temporary forms of employment (Altbach, 2000, pp. ix-x). Before discussing each global development as well as their reflections on the foundation universities in Turkey in detail, it is important to focus on the driving forces behind organizational changes at universities as well as the changing academic labor market.

One of these driving forces is increasing importance of higher education as the "major engine of economic development" (Altbach et.al., 2009, p.xii; Leslie and Slaughter, 1997; Bok, 2003; YÖK, 2007). Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, countries' focus on transition to more technologically sophisticated, knowledge-based economy has increased their expectations from national universities who have the major responsibility of producing and disseminating knowledge. To increase their national competitiveness in the global economy, almost in all countries, the restructuring of higher education has been put on the public agenda. (YÖK, 2007, p.13)

Another reason behind the need for reshaping national higher education system lies in increasing demand for higher education[19] which brought the issue of massification (Altbach, 2000; Bok, 2003; Şenses, 2007; YÖK, 2007; Altbach et.al., 2009). Combining amplifying number of students studying at universities with increasing international student mobility resulted in funding shortages. Many countries including Britain, Germany, India, Russia, and countries in sub-Saharan Africa experienced fiscal cutbacks in universities at different levels, meanwhile, student enrollments have amplified (Altbach, 2000, pp. 14-15). Tax revenues did not keep up with the costs of massification which has led to a debate on the sustainability of higher education with public sources. In order to respond to the mass demand as well as overcome financial issues experienced by universities, increasing cost of higher education has started to be shared with non-governmental actors. For instance, students have started to decrease the financial burden on the state by paying tuition fees[20]. The private sector has mitigated the budgetary pressures on the government whether by providing financial support for ongoing research projects at universities[21] or by opening profit-oriented, or, non-profit higher education institutions. In addition to cost-sharing policies, governments have encouraged, particularly, public universities, such as those in Australia and China, to generate their own revenues from the sale of university-related products and consulting

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[19] According to the reports prepared by World Bank, UNESCO and OECD; while between 1985 and 1995, the number of students in higher education institutions increased from 20 million to 38 million students, in 2001, the number was above 85 million. Moreover, these institutions predict that in 2020 this number will be 200 million on average (YÖK, 2007, pp. 14-15). In addition to the domestic demand for higher education, according to the report prepared by Altbach, Reisberg and Rumbley in 2009, more than 2,5 million students were studying abroad and it is estimated that the number will rise to 7 million international students by 2020 (pp.viii-x).

[20] The impact of massification on the students and their parents varies from country to country. While the concept of tuition was not new in the countries like the United States, it has been (relatively) recently introduced in countries including China (in 1997), in the United Kingdom (in 1998) and in Austria (in 2001) where higher education was formerly considered a public good. On the other hand, in certain countries like Finland, Ireland, Germany and France, higher education is still free (YÖK, 2007, p.18; Altbach et.al, 2009, pp. xii-xiii).

[21] After the energy crisis of 1973 and starting from the late 1970s, cost-sharing policies of governments as well as seeking new ways to stimulate economic growth have led them to cooperate more with the private sector. As a form of cooperation, emergence of new research centers can be shown. To give a concrete example from the United Kingdom, university-industry-government cooperation showed itself in the form of new interdisciplinary research centers which emerged in the 1980s. Another specific example can be Cooperative Research Centers in Australia which were established during the 1990s based on the models provided by the United States and the United Kingdom (Leslie and Slaughter, 1997, p.7). A different form of collaboration between the government and the private sector is tax breaks for companies, such as for those in the United States, with an aim to encourage firms to provide more funding for university-based science (Bok, 2003, pp.11-12). From the perspective of companies, collaboration between the government and the private sector is also beneficial, because it can enable firms to build and increase their competitiveness in the world economy. To exemplify from established industrialized countries, after losing shares of world markets to the Pacific Rim countries, multinational corporations in the United States and the United Kingdom have become more interested in investing in new science-based products and technologies to strengthen their competitiveness in the world economy (Leslie and Slaughter, 1997, p.6).

services (YÖK, 2007, pp. 14-21; Altbach et.al, 2009, pp. xii-xv). Moreover, both universities and faculty members have started to engage in for-profit activities such as patenting and licensing agreements in order to secure external money (Leslie and Slaughter, 1997, p.11).

Despite governments' attempt to show massification as an explanation for austerity in universities, it is still important to ask why the flow of public sources to higher education has been decreasing worldwide in an environment where higher education is seen as the 'major engine of economic development'. At that point, the World Bank's policy suggestions to its member countries can provide an answer to this question. The World Bank argues that the social benefit of public primary education is more than public secondary and higher education. To elaborate, a decline in financial support from public sources to universities can serve as a way of improving resource allocation in favor of economically disadvantaged people who are actually financing higher education with their taxes, in most cases, without being able to benefit from it (Taşdemir-Afşar, 2015, p.218). On the other hand, by providing empirical evidence from Turkey, Taşdemir-Afşar challenges the 'social benefit' discourse of the World Bank. A decrease in the flow of public money to universities, and, in this regard, privatization of higher education were brought into the public agenda later than the establishment of private primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in Turkey (p.217). Ercan (1999) takes a further step by asserting that combining 'irrationality of public education' discourse with the 'education as an investment with high returns' perception has resulted in an acceleration of private sector's entrance into the education 'market' (cited in Taşdemir-Afşar, 2015, p. 217). In parallel with Ercan's conclusion, Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley (2009) point out that the proliferation of private higher education, or with their own words, "the private revolution" has been globally one of the most significant developments of the last decades (p.xiv). According to the data provided in their report, in 2009, 30% of higher education institutions in the world are private (Ibid). By drawing on these arguments, it can be concluded that, instead of a way for transferring public resources from one stage of education to another, deteriorating public financial support to higher education becomes actually the latest stage of the privatization series in education.

Similar to the other countries, the transition to knowledge-based economy and the high demand for higher education led YÖK to bring the restructuring of higher education into its agenda. In order to meet the demand for higher education as well as decreasing the

quota pressure on the public universities, foundation universities emerged as an alternative (YÖK, 2007, pp.1-2). On the other hand, the establishment of foundation universities is beyond a means of solving the demand-supply imbalance in higher education. While restructuring higher education in Turkey, foundation universities serve as a role model with its unique managerial structure which I mentioned in detail in the Introduction. For instance, YÖK has been working on the application of the managerial model in foundation universities to public universities since the early 1990s (Çelik et.al., 2017, p. 53). As I will discuss more in detail in the next section, the organizational structure of foundation universities is in many aspects similar to the organizational structure which the neoliberal restructuring of the academic workplace requires. In this regard, the emergence of foundation universities can be considered to be an important step for the neoliberal restructuring of the higher education institutionts in Turkey.

2.1. Reflections of Global Developments on the Experiences of Social Scientists in Foundation Universities

2.1.1. Increasing Importance of External Sources of Income

Foundation universities are not directly affected by fiscal constraints, as state subsidies do not constitute an important source of funding in these universities. However, this does not mean that foundation universities do not face budgetary issues. Tuition fees paid by the students as well as external funding become more crucial as a source of income in these universities. Fluctuations in both financial sources can create budget constraints in those universities.

In both research-oriented and teaching-oriented foundation universities, the traces of budget constraints can be found in increasing demand for tuition fees paid by students. The importance of tuition fees for foundation universities can be observed by looking at rising importance of the number of students for the administration. Not unique to foundation universities in Turkey, if a department is 'incapable' of attracting students, university

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administrations tend to allocate less resources to such departments. As an example of reduction in the resources for such programs, university administrations can decide to close these departments which are preferred by relatively few students. Social science departments have been definitely affected by this fact all around the world. There are recent examples like Japan where 26 universities were planning to close their social science departments and 17 universities announced that they won't enroll any new students with respect to the government's call in 2015[22]. To give an example from Turkey, when I asked Interviewee 43, an assistant professor working in a teaching-oriented foundation university, in what aspects she experienced insecurity in a different way than her colleagues working in other departments, her answer shows clearly the strong relation between the departmental preferences of students, and the difference in administration's attitude towards the department:

> I'm not sure [whether I find my position more precarious at this institution compared to my colleagues], because our department has a *special place* in this university. Because, compared to other social science departments, our department is *one of the most-preferred departments by the students*. […] Therefore this department is a popular department [and, in this regard it] is able to let the administration know about its demands [as well as its issues]. However, the situation may be different in other social science departments. […] [For instance], there are [relatively] few students in the philosophy department. It has been discussed whether the department will be closed or not. (Interviewee 43, Female, Assistant Professor. Italics added.)

In relation with the perception of the board of trustees, the dependency on tuition fees may lead to an increase in the quotas of particular departments which attract more students each year, instead of closing less-preferred and less-crowded programs. As Interviewee 32 and Interviewee 33, two associate professors working at different departments of the same research-oriented foundation university, mentioned, the administration in their university considers certain less-crowded programs like natural science programs as departments which reinforce the prestige of the institution. However, when such programs admit only students with scholarship, the money has to come from somewhere else. In order to maintain the continuity of money flow or, with Interviewee 32's own words, in order to "spin the wheel", 90-100 students are admitted to more-preferred departments like management each year. In

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[22] Source: http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/japonya-sosyal-bilimler-fakultelerini-kapatiyor-30295220 Accessed on 18/07/2017.

addition to an increase in the quotas of particular departments, the administration can encourage departments for opening non-thesis graduate programs to admit more students without a scholarship, as Interviewee 34, an assistant professor working in a different department of the same university, experienced.

As a result of the rising importance of tuition fees paid by students, university administrations attribute importance to publicity activities to increase the number of students. At that point, there is a difference between teaching-oriented and research-oriented foundation universities. While none of the interviewees working at research-oriented foundation universities pointed out that advertising activities of the school are considered a part of their jobs, in teaching-oriented foundation universities, academics have to participate in various publicity activities of their institution which can be both in and outside the university. Depending on the place of high school or career fair for high school students, taking part in such activities may not be mandatory. As Interviewee 40 (Male, Assistant Professor) mentioned, at his institution publicity activities include visiting high schools and attending university fairs in different cities of Turkey for which a professor has to spare a great amount of time as Interviewee 39, an assistant professor working at the same institution with Interviewee 40 stressed; but participation is often voluntarily. On the other hand, according to Interviewee 41 and Interviewee 43 who work as an assistant professor in the same university too, participation in career fairs in different cities is awarded in the performance evaluation system. Interviewee 41 highlighted further that in the performance evaluation system, there is no difference between the points of contribution to publicity activities and publication. Moreover, the president can insist on particular professors such as Interviewee 40's colleague who is good at representing the university at career fairs, to go to high school visits.

In addition to tuition fees, increasing weight of external money flows in the university budget can be observed by looking at university's resource allocation for developing academic skills of the professors such as availability of internal research grants and financial support for conference participation. At that point, the primary orientation of the university plays an important role. In research-oriented universities, while the school provides a particular budget for research to professors, they are also encouraged to apply for external research grants. In discussion of the significance of external grants for the university, the

interviewees concluded that although there is an encouragement coming from the management and, as particularly Interviewee 20 (Male, Assistant Professor) pointed out, bringing external grants has been showing an upward trend in Turkey; they do not consider themselves under pressure like their colleagues in the United States[23] or the United Kingdom[24]. On the other hand, in teaching-oriented universities, reductions in the financial support for conference participation or limited internal funds for ongoing research projects clearly show that economic concerns of the institution affect the research performance of a professor relatively more compared to a professor working in a research-oriented institution. To concretize by drawing on Interviewee 38's (Female, Professor) experience, academics may have to engage in a trade-off between their academic development and stable income in a case of participating in an academic conference, because her university subtracts the payment of the days in which professors cannot come to the school due to the conference, from the salary.

2.1.2. Decreasing Power of the Academics over the Governance of the University

With the rising power of external sources of funding, another impact of neoliberalism on higher education at the global level was the diminishing power of the faculty over the governance of the university. While in countries like the United States and Canada, faculty members have already had relatively less dominance in the decision-making mechanisms under the managerial model[25]; with a shift to 'entrepreneurial university model'[26], the power

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[23] By drawing on the observations of Interviewee 37 who is currently working as an assistant professor in a research-oriented university, but also worked as a post-doc researcher in the United States, in some universities in the U.S., academics are paid salaries from research grants they brought to the university. On the other hand, at Interviewee 37's institution, academics' salary does not depend on the external grants.

[24] As Interviewee 13, an associate professor working in a research-oriented foundation university, pointed out, in the United Kingdom, a toxicology professor killed himself as a result of his 'incapability' of bringing grants which affected his performance evaluation in a negative way. For more information: http://www.dcscience.net/2014/12/01/publish-and-perish-at-imperial-college-london-the-death-of-stefan-grimm/ Accessed on 27/04/2017.

[25] Managerial model is vertically-organized management model. The main managerial authority is the board of trustees consisting of members outside the university which chooses the president and determines other managers of the academic units- dean, department chairs, etc.- with the president. (YÖK, 2007, p.25)

[26] According to the report of Council of Higher Education (YÖK) in Turkey, 'entrepreneurial university model' is a model between the 'managerial model' in North America and 'collegial model' in European countries like Finland, Greece, France, Germany, Switzerland and Japan. (2007, p.25) Unlike in collegial model where president, deans and chairs are elected by

of professors has been replaced by the power of external bodies or governing boards consisting of few faculty members in various countries.

Foundation universities serve as a good example to observe the impact of the managerial structure on the academics' level of dominance in the decision-making mechanism. Unlike the public universities in Turkey, the board of trustees constitutes the governing body of the foundation universities. While in the research-oriented universities in my sample, below 45% of the members of the board of trustees consists of people from the business world, minimum 75% of the members consist mostly of business people, but sometimes also of retired high-level military staff or retired high-level bureaucrats in the teaching-oriented universities. Besides two research-oriented and two teaching-oriented foundation universities in my sample, only 14% of the board of trustees consist of members with an academic background in the remaining foundation university which is a mix of research and teaching oriented universities in terms of its organizational characteristics. What is problematic about the dominance of members outside the academia in the management structure is summarized eloquently by Interviewee 14, currently working in a research-oriented university, but formerly had an experience in different foundation and public universities. With her own words:

> When people who have no experience in the university administration and who have less idea about how a university works, dominate the administration of a university, primary concerns of the administration can be different than academic concerns which cause a great damage to the university […]. When a university has economic or political concerns [rather than academic ones], it is impossible to reach [good academic] outcomes. […] [As a result of the fact], the academic profession turns into a struggle to survive in such an environment. (Interviewee 14, Female, Professor)

While I will discuss the impact of political concerns of the administration on the struggle of academic labor in detail in the following chapter, I want to articulate the economic concerns and elaborate the influence of such concerns on the organization of the university as well as on the experiences of the academics.

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the faculty members and where university, faculty and department councils also take part in the management of the university; managerial structure in the entrepreneurial model is divided into two parts: Board of directors which takes administrative and financial decisions, and the University Senate which is the main authority for taking academic decisions. Entrepreneurial university model is applied in the United Kingdom, Australia, Holland, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Japan and Korea (YÖK, 2007, pp.25-26).

The board of trustees is the major authority to decide on the employment of the academic staff, salaries of academics and budget-planning. To start with the hiring process of the faculty members, professors working both in research-oriented and teaching-oriented foundation universities pointed out that professors can be hired directly by the president or, even, without having the consent of the department in a top-down manner. To concretize, Interviewee 41's, an assistant professor in a teaching-oriented university, anecdote with the chair of her department shows the level of dominance of the faculty members in the recruitment process:

> Our chair told me that: 'I don't know, how we were able to hire you. We could not hire any extra person [that we selected]'. [Laughing] It was a great story of success for them. A new position is not often opened. If a position is available, the recruited person may be different than the person who was chosen by the department. The people recruited after me were hired without having the department's consent. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

Similarly, Interviewee 33; an associate professor in a research-oriented university concluded that while the department was formerly the major authority in the recruitment process, it has changed recently in such a way that in certain departments the president directly selects the professors. Similar to hiring processes, ending the employment can also occur in a top-down manner, for instance, to achieve cost-efficiency. By drawing on the experience of Interviewee 34, an assistant professor in a research-oriented university, several instructors of a particular course lost their jobs spontaneously as a result of the administration's cost-cutting policy.

In addition to the recruitment process, continuity of the employment and the renewal of contracts are under the control of the board of trustees. In both research-oriented and teaching-oriented foundation universities, the duration of the contracts is not more than 5 years. Duration of these contracts can depend on the academic ranking, but in general, it depends on the institution itself and vary from one year to five years. Sometimes, the absence of tenure system in foundation universities can be brought to the public agenda like in the research oriented university where Interviewee 32 is currently working as an associate professor. To understand the ways in which members with non-academic backgrounds can have the last word while shaping the employment relation between the professor and the institution, I want to share Interviewee 32's statement directly:

> While deciding about such topics, the board of trustees has the key role. I heard that board of trustees finds the tenure system unusual compared to the

employment structure they are used to [in corporate life]. Although some of the members have some knowledge about the tenure system, they don't lean towards it; [because], in their opinion, such a system is open to being abused by the employees. [They think that if] they do not provide any employment security to their best employees [in a private enterprise], [they don't understand] why they should offer employment guarantee to the academics. It is difficult to explain to them that the nature of academic work is different. […] [For instance], instead of renewal of contracts in 3 or in 5 years, if we had tenure, we could think about and work on longer-lasting research projects. [In this regard], such a system may have contributions to our research (Interviewee 32, Male, Associate Professor).

Interviewee 32's statement reveals clearly how particular values of corporate life like reinforcing productivity and competitiveness at workplace which is an important motive behind the duration of job contracts in foundation universities can shape dominantly the employment relation between the university and the professors; although 55% of the members of the board of trustees have an academic background at this institution. Besides the fact, in parallel with the aforementioned conclusion of Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor); his statement exemplifies how economic concerns can be ahead of the academic ones such as neglecting the contributions of the tenure system to the research process in return for maintaining a certain level of productivity and competitiveness among faculty members.

While the board of trustees' realm of authority is limited to administrative and financial areas, regarding their economic concerns, they can intervene in the academic sphere, for instance in the form of intervening in the course structure or to the course schedule of various departments. In both research and teaching-oriented universities, spontaneous changes in the places of courses or changes in the number of elective courses can be done without asking the opinion of the faculty members or, in fact, without having the consent of the professors. To exemplify from a research-oriented university, Interviewee 34 (Female, Assistant Professor) pointed out an immediate change in the structure of a particular course at her institution. While this course was used to be taught in small classes, it has recently started to be taught in larger lecture halls and the number of lecturers has been reduced by the administration to achieve cost efficiency. Interviewee 34's statement reveals significantly professors' limited control over academic decisions:

While making this decision, [the administration] should have talked with the faculty members. It should have discussed the reasons behind such a change as well as its pros and cons. For instance, without making any explanation about in what aspects the advantages of such a change are in line with the purposes of a

university, the administration implemented its decision. Despite the critical voices, it did not review its decision. (Interviewee 34, Female, Assistant Professor)

In the teaching-oriented universities, traces of optimization can be found in decreasing the number of elective courses in particular departments as well as reducing the number of sections and increasing the number of students in each section.

2.1.3. The 'Corporatization' of the Universities

Governments' funding shortages due to massification and, as a result, aggrandizing power of external bodies or governing boards has re-shaped the organizational characteristics of universities worldwide. These organizational changes include efforts to achieve cost-efficiency, use of methods adapted from corporate life such as managerial controls and accountability, and attempts to express matters of value in quantitative terms instead of qualitatively (Bok, 2003, pp.2-3). In this regard, we can talk about 'corporatization' of the academic work place at a global level.

As both Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor) and Interviewee 32 (Male, Associate Professor) stressed, high influence of members with a corporate background in the board of trustees leads to the domination of a 'corporate logic' in foundation universities which has reflections in their organizational structure regardless of the level of research orientation of the institution.

To start with, the corporatization of foundation universities expresses itself in increasing significance of cost-benefit analysis in the decision-making processes. 'Cost-benefit analysis' includes administration's efforts to achieve cost efficiency in addition to increasing money flows to the university budget. At that point, one of the most-debated topics about the foundation universities is whether they have a profit motive or not. According to the Higher Education Law in Turkey, foundation universities are non-profit institutions. On the other hand, as Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor) pointed out, apart from few examples, foundations behind these universities were mostly established by holdings. Interviewee 8, a master's student in a research-oriented institution, took a step further by suggesting that

although foundation universities may not directly make profits, they can contribute to profit-making processes of the companies or business groups behind the foundation:

> I know, it's a foundation university, but it contributes to the profit-making processes [of the company behind this foundation] indirectly. […] For instance, on campus, you go to the supermarket which [is the only market and] belongs to this holding. Your money is in the bank which is another service you have to purchase from the same holding. [In this regard, while being a part of this university], you purchase various goods and services from the companies of that holding. (Interviewee 8, Male, Master's student)

Achieving cost efficiency can be observed at first instance by looking at the ways in which the university treats different components of the academic labor. According to Interviewee 14 who had experience in different foundation universities, considering professors as substitutable leads the academic labor to become more dispensable:

> The biggest problem of foundation universities is not appreciating the academic labor. I have observed this fact in many places. [The administration] thinks that if someone left her job, another person could be found for that position [easily]. Do you understand what I mean? […] It is similar to corporate logic, all of the employees are dispensable. (Interviewee 14, Female, Professor)

The issue of substitutability is related to some worldwide developments such as changing the functioning of the academic labor market. Working conditions of academic labor have been shaped by two global trends: Growth in part-time appointments and creation of full-time, non-tenured posts with some particular time limits (Altbach, 2000, pp.20-21). In line with the global developments, all of the interviewees are working currently under fixed-term contracts without any legal employment guarantee. By utilizing the legal regulations which enable precarious and flexible employment regimes to proliferate, the university administration can make adjustments in the number of professors with respect to the fluctuations in the number of students or in the university income. An important reason behind rising substitutability of the professors is related to the increase in the supply of the Ph.D. graduates, as both Interviewee 41, an assistant professor working in a teaching-oriented university, and Interviewee 6, an instructor in a research-oriented institution, pointed out.

Efforts to achieve cost-efficiency can have different implications for the academics depending on the orientation of the university. While in both types of universities academics can observe the administration's focus on optimization through sudden changes in class sizes or unexpected reductions in course sections; there are some other practices which reflect

administration's attempts of optimization in teaching-oriented universities. For instance, traces of cost-cutting policies can be found in the number of courses a professor is required to teach. In order to satisfy the number of courses which should be offered by a department in order to give an undergraduate degree, with the minimum number of teaching staff, professors can be required to teach 4 to 7 courses per semester. In that sense, instead of considering her institution as a 'university' where academics can conduct research and engage in scholarly activities, Interviewee 38 (Female, Professor) preferred to call her institution a business organization and perceived herself as a worker.

As a part of optimization policies, another practice which is unique to teaching-oriented institutions is wide-range of administrative responsibilities varying from web site design and coordination to being vice-chair[27]. In addition to a relatively heavy teaching load, various administrative responsibilities lead academics working in teaching-oriented foundation universities to engage in a trade-off between the time they spend on administrative duties and for research and other scholarly activities. Spending an important amount of time on satisfying a wide range of administrative requirements is not a common practice among research-oriented foundation universities in my sample.

Another reflection of the corporate logic in foundation universities is increasing significance of accountability. In relation with the shifts in funding and fiscal cutbacks, accountability has become a part of the academic profession worldwide, in the form of measuring the performance of academics in the managerial positions as well as the teaching and research performance of professors. While professors traditionally "have been trusted to perform at an acceptable level of competence and productivity for centuries without any serious measurement of academic work" (Altbach, 2000, pp.13-14); government and private agents require greater accountability; as the worldwide expansion in student enrollments has turned higher education into a more resource-consuming service.

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[27] On the one hand certain administrative responsibilities are not unique to teaching-oriented foundation universities such as serving as the Erasmus coordinator or the vice-chair. Academics in research-oriented foundation universities as well as in public universities can have such duties. On the other hand, as Interviewee 41 who had a work experience in both teaching and research-oriented foundation universities, pointed out she did not encounter certain administrative requirements in two research-oriented foundation universities where she had spent a part of her academic life. For instance, web site design and coordination are outsourced or done by administrative staff. According to Interviewee 41, serving as an advisor of undergraduate students for which a professor has to confirm course schedules of assigned undergraduate students each term, is also an uncommon practice in research-oriented foundation universities.

Research-oriented and teaching-oriented foundation universities differ from each other in terms of their expectations from professors for a 'sufficient performance.' By drawing on the conclusions of the interviewees working in research-oriented foundation universities, the publication is the most important factor for the renewal of job contracts. Although teaching performance and administrative duties are a part of the performance evaluation, they did not have an impact on the employment security of the professors. Besides the faculty members, accountability has started to play globally an important role for the academics in managerial positions such as university presidents. As a form of accountability, annual university rankings prepared by various organizations including *U.S. News* or *Times Higher Education* have become especially more crucial. To increase an institution's accountability, the reason behind the administration's focus on such rankings is explained eloquently by Bok (2003). With his own words:

> Although every college president can recite the many weaknesses of these ratings, they do provide a highly visible index of success, and competition is always quickened by such measures, especially among institutions like universities whose work is too intangible to permit more reliable means of evaluation. (Bok, 2003, pp.14-15)

In the discussion of increasing significance of accountability of the professors in managerial positions, research-oriented foundation universities distinguish from teaching-oriented institutions. Unlike in teaching-oriented institutions, as Interviewee 37, an assistant professor working in a research-oriented institution, highlighted, the board of trustees attributes an importance to these rankings in order to increase external resource flow to the university as well as to reinforce the institution's reputation. On the other hand, the dominance of such rankings in determining an institution's success and performance as a whole has brought the issue of standardization from which social scientists in foundation universities are particularly affected. To elaborate, in discussions of the performance criteria expected by the research-oriented foundation universities, Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor), Interviewee 28 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 33 (Female, Associate Professor) pointed out that as a result of the standardization of the performance criteria, performance system may not be able to evaluate particular requirements of a department. To exemplify, in the research-oriented foundation universities where I conducted my field work, professors are subject to two evaluation processes in order promote to

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associate professorship or professorship. While their work is evaluated by an independent counsel in Turkey and by a group of referees in the United States, evaluation criteria for promotion in Turkey and in the United States may not match. As Interviewee 14 exemplifies, books play an important role in the promotion as well as to be considered for a tenure position in the United States. However, in Turkey, performance evaluation system in the universities encourages academics to work on articles instead of books, for example, by reducing the effect of books on the promotion of an academic regardless of her discipline. According to Interviewee 14, the performance of academics can be considered as insufficient for a promotion; as academics do not satisfy the requirements of international referees due to the differences in the performance criteria between Turkey and the United States.

Compared to the well-institutionalized research-oriented universities, not every university has an established performance evaluation system like the institutions such as Interviewee 38's (Female, Professor) current institution. Some of the teaching-oriented foundation universities may have a relatively established performance evaluation system which measures the performance of the professors similar to the research-oriented foundation universities. However, these two types of foundation universities differ from each other in terms of the order of importance of evaluation criteria. By drawing on the experiences of the interviewees, contributions to the administrative work and satisfying teaching requirements can have a greater importance compared to the research performance. Although academics have to mention their on-going research projects as well as their published work while filling the performance evaluation form each year; according to Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor), professors who have not published any articles for 10 years can continue working at her institution. In parallel with the observation of Interviewee 41, both Interviewee 38 (Female, Professor) and Interviewee 43 (Female, Assistant Professor) argued that although teaching-oriented foundation universities claim that research performance is important, they are aware of the impossibility of sparing time for research in a case of teaching minimum 5 courses each week which is a common requirement in these universities.

The last example of the use of methods adapted from the corporate life is a proliferation of managerial controls in the academic work place. Similar to the case of accountability, research-oriented, and teaching-oriented institutions differentiate at that point. In teaching- oriented foundation universities, academics encounter more visible and

direct forms of managerial controls. For instance, putting turnstiles enables the administration to have control over the working hours of professors. In a different teaching-oriented institution, professors can face managerial controls through their department chair, as Interviewee 42 (Female, Assistant Professor) experienced by herself. On the other hand, in research-oriented institutions, control mechanisms can be observed by looking at certain unwritten rules or, with Interviewee 13's (Male, Associate Professor) own words, by looking at the 'institutional culture'. To concretize, professors are encouraged to keep their salary levels secret in both research-oriented universities in my sample. Not sharing their salary levels in and outside the workplace enables the administration not only to reduce the possibility of potential conflicts within the institution but also to increase its bargaining power in the recruitment process by being able to hire new professors with a lower salary, as Interviewee 6 (Male, Instructor) highlighted.

CHAPTER 3

EXPERIENCES OF PROFESSORS IN FOUNDATION UNIVERSITIES:

A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STATE

With increasing fictitious commodification of labor and knowledge for the last two decades, academics have started to experience various labor-related security issues in the workplace at a global level which I mentioned in the Introduction in detail. While discussing the ways in which academic labor has been exposed to varying insecurities, the departure point is the changing nature of capital-labor relations with the decline of the welfare state regime and increasing deregulation of markets as underlined in studies conducted in some advanced capitalist countries as well as in Turkey.

Without trivializing the influence of the neoliberal political economy on the academics in Turkey, this study also takes into account the particular relation between state and social classes as a crucial factor for understanding the precarization experienced particularly by professors in foundation universities. As a result of the combination of state's regulatory role with its capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the university, social science professors working in foundation universities can be exposed to varying forms of insecurities intensively in the workplace. In this chapter, the impact of both recent marketization wave and the government's several means of intervention to the university on the professors from a wide range of social science disciplines will be discussed in detail.

3.1. Labor Market Insecurity:

Starting from the 1990s, there has been a sharp increase in the number of universities[28] or a "university inflation" in Turkey, as Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın identified (2015, p. 69). Regarding the rising number of higher education institutions, the existence of labor market insecurity which emerges as a result of an insufficient number of income-earning opportunities in the labor market, may sound, at first instance, not realistic or, at least, overrated. However, an emphasis on the quantities may not provide us the whole picture. To articulate, Demir's (1995) conclusions on the government's higher education policies during the early 1990s show how, especially, universities in different Anatolian cities were established without having the necessary number of qualified academic staff and the adequate physical infrastructure (cited in Tekeli, 2009, pp. 153-154). To concretize what is meant by 'adequate physical infrastructure', I want to share some research findings from Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın's (2015) recent study which focused on the experiences of academics working in 13 different foundation universities in Istanbul. For instance, in certain foundation universities, where some of the interviewees worked, the first cohort of students was enrolled in the departments like medicine without providing the necessary laboratory equipment (p.144). So, finding a job in one of the aforementioned types of universities does not mean that academics do not face labor market insecurity. They mostly concede to work in these institutions due to the paucity of universities which are research-oriented, attribute importance to academic freedom and provide opportunities to reinforce academic competencies such as research-teaching balance or financial support for research and conference participation. Despite acknowledging the lack of these conditions, accepting to work in one of those universities in order to sustain a living reveals not only a high level of

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[28] After the first university which was a public university was established in 1933, there were only 29 universities including one foundation university until the 1990s. Between 1992 and 2000, 43 universities (18 foundation universities, 25 public universities) and from 2001 to 2007 42 universities (9 foundation universities, 33 public universities) were established (Tekeli, 2009, pp.77-79).

labor market insecurity but also a strong sense of precarization experienced by academics in Turkey.

In addition to the problems in the academic quality of universities, academics can be also exposed to labor market insecurity due to problems in the accessibility of job openings especially in teaching-oriented foundation universities and in certain public universities. By drawing on the experiences of the interviewees, job openings are more accessible through the announcements on the department's website in research-oriented institutions. On the other hand, while talking about the recruitment process, the interviewees working at teaching-oriented institutions stressed the importance of networks which enabled them to hear about new job opportunities. The details of Interviewee 39's recruitment process illustrate the importance of networks:

> We have been friends with Professor X since we were undergraduate students. […] [She told me that] the department was seeking someone to teach courses on Z and Y topics. The department required me to take an exam during the process. I don't know whether there were other candidates or not [laughingly]; but if I wasn't informed by my friend, it would be hard [to hear about this job opportunity]. (Interviewee 39, Male, Assistant Professor, Working in a teaching-oriented institution)

Similarly, public universities may not emerge as an alternative for professors if they do not already have existing networks in these institutions, a fact which was pointed out by three junior professors working at different research-oriented institutions. In some cases, a position which initially did not exist may be opened after a professor sends her CV directly to the chair. Interviewee 41 found her current position in a teaching-oriented university in that way. In any case- finding a job with the help of already existing networks or with individual efforts- we encounter the problem of transparency in the academic labor market which enables academics to give consent more easily for the offered conditions such as low entry salary levels or heavy teaching load, because other job options may not be accessible.

Combining the limited number of good and accessible job opportunities with an increase in the number of the Ph.D. graduates in the social science departments has created the issue of demand-supply imbalance. As a result of these developments, academics are affected by the pressure of unemployment, which is a dimension of labor market insecurity, at varying levels depending on their education and seniority. Not surprisingly, new graduates and junior professors suffer relatively more from labor market insecurity, because finding a

job in one of the most- preferred foundation universities of Turkey is not so easy. To exemplify, as Interviewee 27, a recent graduate working as an assistant professor at a research- oriented university, highlighted, in addition to the competitive recruitment process, these universities do not open a position each year. Although he considered himself a competitive candidate because of his Ph.D. degree from one of the well-known universities in North America, he acknowledged the chance factor by pointing out that his job seeking process coincided with the job opening at his current institution.

Senior professors can also consider themselves under pressure due to the demand-supply imbalance. For instance, despite her qualifications and education as well as despite the high number of universities, Interviewee 17 who has been working as an associate professor for 10 years at her institution, stressed the possibility of unemployment in a case of unexpected dismissal. Similarly, Interviewee 13's point on the recent increase in the number of people doing Ph.D. which he defined as a 'pressure/push coming below', reveals clearly his sense of labor market insecurity 'despite being a productive scholar':

> Another aspect is that the number of university departments and doctoral students in our discipline have amplified significantly in recent years all around the world including Turkey. It means that competition has [also] increased. In line with increasing competition, a pressure has started to come from below. When I had just entered upon my career, one of my professors [also] pointed out this fact. As a productive professor in the fifth year of my career with a number of [ongoing] projects, I recognize the wave [of upcoming Ph.D. graduates]. There is a push coming from below. [Laughingly] Does it create a stress? Yes, it does, [as] competition is increasing […]. (Interviewee 13, Male, Associate Professor)

The paucity of adequate income-earning opportunities for social scientists aggrandizes the power of the board of trustees in its employment relation with the professors both during and after the recruitment process which was also pointed out by several professors in my sample during our interview. Interviewee 6, working at a research-oriented institution as a lecturer, stressed the increasing bargaining power of the board of trustees in the recruitment process by comparing the entry salary level offered in the past and current salaries offered to new-coming assistant professors which are below the salary offered during his recruitment process. In line with Interviewee 6's conclusions, Interviewee 41's words summarize the insecure position of an academic in the labor market in an eloquent way: "If I quitted my job today, the university could find many people who may have a better CV compared to mine, but who would be still eager to work here with a lower salary as an assistant professor. […]

Unfortunately, that's the situation." In addition to the salary levels, the content of the job contract might be another indicator not only of the advantageous position of the employer in the recruitment process but also of the labor market insecurity experienced by the professor in her recruitment process. For instance, while talking about her level of bargaining power, Interviewee 38, a professor currently working at a teaching-oriented institution, pointed out that the required hours of lecturing were not written in her job contract. While such ambiguities can easily result in unexpected increases in the workload, she had to accept the job.

Lastly, the interviewees did not point out explicitly the impact of political actors' direct or indirect interventions on their chances of finding jobs. However, the experiences of professors at Academics for Peace initiative[29] can serve as a very recent example of political actors' role in shaping labor market insecurity. After the failed coup attempt in July 2016, a state of emergency was declared in Turkey. In the following months, on grounds of eliminating the members of the organization behind the coup attempt from the state, huge numbers of people including academics, teachers, police and military staff have been dismissed with several statutory decrees[30]. There has been an ongoing public debate on the fairness of this legal process, because some opponents including a number of professors in the Academics for Peace initiative who had a critical stance towards the organization behind the coup attempt in addition to the government's policies[31], lost their jobs in this process[32].

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[29] I mentioned the case of Academics For Peace initiative briefly in the 'Acknowledgements' & Introduction part.

[30] http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-38648987, Accessed on 20/06/2017.
 http://www.diken.com.tr/son-khkyla-ihrac-edilen-330-akademisyenin-115i-baris-bildirisi-imzacisi/ Accessed on 20/6/2017.

[31] For instance, Candan Badem, a signatory, was one of the leftist dismissed academics. He shared a message on the social media in September 2016 and several newspapers made news on Badem's message. His words show clearly his critical stance towards both the government and the organization behind the coup attempt. With Badem's own words: "Good Morning. Today, I learned that I was also dismissed with the last statutory decree. There is no evidence [that I'm a part of this organization], but the [final] judgment has been already made. The fascism of Islam". Source: http://www.abcgazetesi.com/marksist-akademisyen-candan-bademin-gorevine-son-verildi-27290h.htm.   Accessed   on: 20/06/2017.

[32] According to the data provided by the Academics for Peace Initiative in June 2017, 372 academics (8 from foundation universities, 364 from public universities) were removed and banned from public service with the decree laws. Interestingly, among the signatories, 42 academics, who lost their jobs or forced into resignation before the coup attempt, were also removed and banned from public service with the statutory decrees (Academics for Peace Initiative Report, 2017). Source: https://barisicinakademisyenler.net/node/314 Accessed on: 20/06/2017.

What is important about the aforementioned dismissal of an important number of critical academics is that they have been banned from working in any public service and they have not been allowed leaving the country after the declaration of the decree law which included their name as a potential member of the terrorist organization[33]. Considering the historical development of the relationship between the state and the business people in Turkey, they may not find a job in a foundation university or, at least, they may have a limited number of opportunities. At that point, Interviewee 27's statement shows clearly how business relations between the state authorities and business people in the administration can affect the administration's attitude towards the professors in a case of political conflict:

> We have already been familiar with the idea that business groups or holdings behind the foundation universities also bid in various state tenders. This is true for many [business groups or holdings which established] their foundation universities. Why does the holding lose a particular state tender [and act against the political interests of the government] in order to provide an employment security to few critical professors? Yet, this can create a pressure [on the business people in the board of trustees]. (Interviewee 27, Male, Assistant Professor)

By drawing on Interviewee 27's important point, the combination of the economic interests of business people with the political interests of state authorities can lead academics to be deprived of almost all options in and outside the academia for maintaining a living which indicates the highest point of labor market insecurity an academic can experience. In such an environment where a university prioritizes political or economic concerns rather than the academic ones, as Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor) put it properly, being academic turns from a profession into a struggle to survive.

3.2. Employment Insecurity:

Unlike in public universities where professors' civil servant status provide them a lifelong employment security; the duration of job contracts- varying from one year to five years- constitutes an important dimension of the employment insecurity experienced by the

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[33] Airport police has a right to hold the passports of people who were dismissed with the decree laws.

professors in foundation universities. Apart from Interviewee 22 (Female, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor)[34]; all interviewees acknowledged the possibility of not renewing the contract and, in that sense, they found their employment relation with the institution insecure.

In addition to the duration of the employment, the existence of protection against arbitrary dismissals constitutes another important aspect of employment (in)security according to Standing (2011, p.10). At that point, there is a significant difference between the well-established research-oriented institutions and, teaching-oriented and relatively recently established research-oriented institutions. In well-established research- oriented foundation universities, the performance evaluation system provides an opportunity to the board of trustees to show a legitimate explanation for potential dismissals. On the other hand, the absence of a performance evaluation system or questions about the function of the existing evaluation system may increase the employment insecurity of the academics working in teaching- oriented institutions as well as in the recently established research-oriented university. In the following parts of this section, I will discuss first of all to what extent the administration succeeds in legitimizing employment insecurity by utilizing the performance evaluation system in well-established research-oriented universities. Secondly, I will focus on the experiences of the academics in the remaining institutions. While concluding, I will emphasize other factors such as the role of the relation between state and the business people in shaping employment insecurity.

3.2.1. Performance Evaluation System: An Attempt to Legitimize Employment Insecurity in Research-Oriented Institutions

As I mentioned in Chapter 2, the board of trustee's negative opinion about the tenure system is related to achieving and reinforcing productivity as well as competitiveness at the university. While reaching this goal, the performance evaluation system can provide not only an opportunity for distinguishing between the 'productive' and 'unproductive' academics

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[34] While Interviewee 26 did not feel insecure because he considered himself a well-established scholar; Interviewee 22 perceived her situation as insecure not as a result of the duration of her contract; but of rising authoritarianism in Turkey. In fact, Interviewee 22 highlighted that her institution reduced her sense of insecurity in such an authoritarian context.

and in that sense an opportunity for eliminating the arbitrariness of dismissals. It can also serve as a means of eliminating potential unrest among the faculty members as a result of the administration's employment decisions. In other words, the performance evaluation system can be thought as a "(ideological) production apparatus" [35] (Burawoy, 1985) which enables the administration to legitimize employment insecurity and to draw academics into the pursuit of reinforcing competitiveness and increasing productivity without using authoritarian methods and causing overt conflict with the academics.

While discussing professors' perception of performance evaluation system, it is important to mention that professors' opinions widely vary on this subject. On the one hand, there are professors like Interviewee 37 who believe in a correlation between the 'laziness' of some professors and their critical stance towarsds the performance evaluation system:

> I know that there are many people who are affected by performance evaluation in a negative way. However, I'm not negatively affected by this process due to my performance. I think there is a positive correlation between your productivity level and your opinion on the performance evaluation. […] I don't hear anything negative about the performance evaluation system from people who are self-confident and do their research in a proper way. One of the things which I find problematic in Turkey is that people complain about many things without doing anything. I believe that our case is a reflection of this general problem of Turkey. When someone complains about the performance evaluation system, I often think that you did not do your best, so how can you complain about it? (Interviewee 37, Female, Assistant Professor)

Some professors like Interviewee 14 (Female, Professor) and Interviewee 33 (Female, Associate Professor) who work at two different institutions emphasized how they love being a researcher. Therefore they stressed that if their performance was not evaluated, they would be still productive as a researcher. The final group consists of critical academics who are

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[35] In *Politics of Production: Factory Regimes under Capitalism and Socialism*, Burawoy (1985) considers production not only as an economic process, but also process constituting of two political moments. First of all, he points out the political and ideological effects which shape the labor process or, in other words the organization of work. From his perspective, during their production process, women and men do not only produce useful things by utilizing raw materials, but "they also reproduce particular social relations as well as experience of those relations" (Burawoy, 1985, pp.7-8). Secondly, there are particular institutions, or with his own words, "political and ideological apparatuses of production" (pp. 87-88) in the workplace which regulate and shape the relations in production. By drawing on Althusser's (1970) concept of "ideological state apparatuses" which produce consent for the interests of dominant class in a society, Burawoy takes a further step by stating that consent is not only produced with the help of institutions outside the workplace such as education or media. It is also produced in the production process with the help of several production apparatuses like collective bargaining, the grievance machinery and the internal market which put limits on workers' struggle while reducing the necessity of coercive instruments to dominate workers. With Burawoy's own words: "These regulating institutions afforded an arena of self-activity, free from managerial depredations, that gave workers the opportunity to construct effective working relations and drew them into the pursuit of capitalist profit" (Burawoy, 1985, pp.7-8).

skeptical about the function of performance evaluation or emphasize the negative consequences of the evaluation process. Nevertheless, problems in the performance evaluation system can even lead the faculty members who are generally not critical towards the system, to question the reliance of the administration on performance evaluations for the continuity of employment.

An important problem of the performance evaluation system emerges as a result of various ambiguities in the performance criteria. Although all of the interviewees are aware of the significance of publications for the renewal of contracts, the administration does not officially state specific criteria for publication, apart from the importance of publishing in indexed journals. For instance, despite her support for the performance evaluation system in general, Interviewee 37 acknowledged the 'vague' parts in the evaluation system at her institution:

> I mean, it is not officially stated that each professor should have one publication each year, etc. For instance, how many publications should we have in order to have a good performance? Of course, the more is better. However, if I published one article this year, would it be sufficient? These things are not transparent. [For instance] what kind of a publication [would be more preferred]? How important is the conference participation? These things, how to say, are a bit vague (Interviewee 37, Female, Assistant Professor)

In addition to the lack of clarity about expectations concerning the number or type of publications, the degree of importance of other evaluation criteria- teaching and service- may raise also questions in the minds of professors:

> In our school, the importance of publication in indexed journals is emphasized. On the one hand, the criteria are clear. On the other hand, to what extent other evaluation criteria are important is the unclear part. For instance [how important are] the teaching [and] the time you spent for your course? […] Or, participation in different committees are considered a part of good service, but what is the minimum number of committees a professor should participate in? Although priority is publication, you are also required to do these things. If you don't do these stuff, what kind of consequences will you encounter? (Interviewee 32, Male, Associate Professor)

While unclear aspects of the performance criteria exemplified by Interviewee 32 and Interviewee 37- two professors working in different departments of the same university- were not pointed out by the interviewees working at the other research-oriented university in my sample, the administration's insistence on keeping individual evaluation results secret was a

common problem. In some cases, as Interviewee 36 experienced, even though professors shared this issue of transparency with the president, the president insisted on keeping some aspects of the evaluation process obscure despite failing to provide convincing reasons:

> You got an evaluation in the end, but you don't know how good your result is compared to your colleagues. […] Assume that you got a 'Satisfactory' in the performance evaluation. Is it good or bad? Or we don't know how many people got an 'Outstanding'. When we shared this problem with the president, he told us that our department is a small department and, thus, sharing such data on the evaluation results may result in knowing everyone's performance. Or he said something similar, I didn't remember exactly. However, [what I remember exactly is that] his argument was not convincing. (Interviewee 36, Male, Assistant Professor)

What was also problematized by professors working in both research-oriented institutions is that the performance system fails to take into account particularities of social science departments. In many social science disciplines, it can take a long time, which can vary from 6 months to 2 years, to get a positive or negative response after the submission of a paper. At that point, duration of the contract can contradict with the publication expectations of the institution:

> Assume that your article is rejected. Although your article is a good article, sometimes it may be rejected. It happened to me too. At that point, if you had more time, you could try other top-indexed journals to publish your article. […] But it may not be possible. […] Because renewing contracts in a 3-year-period means that you have to present a file to the administration in 2 or 2,5 years; but it takes to 2 years to publish an article! Therefore, you may hurry up and publish your article in a relatively less prestigious journal in order to have a publication within 3 years. (Interviewee 33, Female, Associate Professor)

As a result of the ambiguities in the performance criteria, contradictive aspects of the contract renewal process and the administration's unconvincing arguments on transparency, especially in one of the research-oriented foundation universities, the performance evaluation system can fail to serve as an objective means of evaluation. Therefore, in the eyes of a number of professors it can lose its function of eliminating the arbitrariness of a potential dismissal which is likely to lead professors to focus on speculations, as Interviewee 32 (Male, Associate Professor) highlighted. At that point, Interviewee 6's (Male, Lecturer) thoughts about a recent dismissal of a colleague provide a concrete example of speculative thinking. Although his colleague had been initially informed that his contract would be renewed for the following academic year, after his critical stance towards the board of trustees' particular

policies, the school changed its decision. Interviewee 6 believed that his colleague's critical stance was the main reason. Similarly, Interviewee 34's- an assistant professor working at the same institution with Interviewee 6 and 32- focus on the administration's inconsistent attitude in terms of applying particular performance criteria to particular people reveals not only her suspicions about the reliability of the performance evaluation system, but also about the continuity of the employment:

> Although the school prefers single-author-publications in order to give you promotion, conducting research in collaboration with your colleagues is a part of the developmental process of a professor. In your early-career, you publish articles in collaboration with other professors; then you will conduct your own research. There are lots of contradictive points here. Is this applied to everyone? No. *Rules are sometimes more strictly applied to particular people, but sometimes the administration can act in a relax way.* […] [During the evaluation process], the department gives feedback on our performance. If necessary, some independent reviewers outside our school also evaluates our performance. In addition to that, the president, the dean and someone outside the department take part in your review process. […] The president's capacity to manage decision mechanisms [and to reinforce the trust of employees to the management] plays a key role at that point. […] In our school, the president failed to reinforce the environment of trust. Therefore, people feel really uncomfortable during the evaluation process. *You cannot know how you are going to be evaluated.* Although the department gave a positive feedback on your performance, the final decision could be still negative. It is really interesting. (Interviewee 34, Female, Assistant Professor. Italics added.)

So, by 'failing to reinforce the environment of trust', the administration also failed to utilize performance evaluation system to legitimize employment insecurity which increased the unrest among the faculty members as Interviewee 34 pointed out. However the administration's use of coercive methods which expressed itself in its decision on dismissals does not mean that performance evaluation system was not successfully used as an ideological production apparatus. As Burawoy (1985) stressed, building consent for the interests of dominant class does not exclude totally coercion. In a case of violation of rules determined by the employer, coercion can be applied. In that sense, performance evaluation system provides a good example to observe all aspects of the ideological production apparatuses.

3.2.2. "Publish or Leave": Beyond an Indicator of Employment Insecurity in the Research-Oriented Universities

As publication is the most important factor for the continuity of employment, publication can easily turn from a form of knowledge-sharing and a measure of productivity into a threat of unemployment depending on the administration's attitude. For instance, as a result of a recent change in the administration's contract renewal policy, the president in one of the research-oriented universities has recently become much strict about the number of publications [36] compared to the administration of the other institution. Although the academics working at the latter institution did not point out an employment insecurity due to the strict publication expectation similar to that in the former institution, Interviewee 28's words show his sense of insecurity due to a potential increase in the administration's strictness about the publication expectations in the long run:

> Now, many people are worried about what if the same thing will happen here because you cannot predict how long the things will go well. I mean, if you work on hard questions like I do, it can take a long time to come to a conclusion. (Interviewee 28, Male, Assistant Professor)

As a result, according to the observations of Interviewee 34 who was working at the former university, many people started to feel highly uncomfortable during the evaluation process for renewal of their contracts. At that point, it is important to mention that not all professors considered themselves under pressure to publish and feel insecure during the evaluation process. As one of these professors, Interviewee 37 stressed that unlike her many colleagues she did not consider herself under pressure as a result of her high level of productivity. In line with Interviewee 37's situation, Interviewee 33- an associate professor working at the same institution with Interviewee 34 and Interviewee 37- pointed out that as she published often, she was not influenced by the strict attitude of the administration. Nevertheless, when I asked her about whether she found her position insecure or not, she concluded that as long as she could publish, she would have employment security which reveals clearly the changing role of publication- from a form of knowledge sharing to an indicator of employment security.

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[36] As Interviewee 34 (Female, Assistant Professor) mentioned, while the administration used to fire a professor due to her 'insufficient' performance at the end of 9 years; it has recently started to terminate contracts at the end of 6 years; because they wanted to see outputs in a faster way.

However, the issue of publication pressure cannot be reduced to the issue of employment insecurity in research-oriented foundation universities or, more generally, all around the world. The "publish or leave" approach serves as a concrete example of damaging consequences of the fictitious commodification of knowledge and labor. In this regard, a detailed analysis of its results can provide us a better understanding of how both academic labor and of knowledge production process can be demolished.

To understand commodification of knowledge in this particular case, we first have to look at the importance of university rankings for the administration which I have also mentioned in Chapter 2. To remember briefly, particularly research oriented universities attribute importance to these annual rankings in order to increase their reputation which can provide these schools an opportunity to become a more attractive workplace for outstanding and productive professors, to increase the number of their potential students, to attract external funders to develop new collaborations between the university and the private sector and, in that sense to, increase the money flow to the university. In order to have a higher ranking, the overall number of publications in indexed journals plays the key role.

The university's attempt to maximize its material (external sources of income) and non-material (reputation) resources in a competitive environment where increasing financial sources requires an effort, results, not surprisingly, in increasing impact of the indexed journals on the academics' career path whether in a direct or in an indirect way. Particularly, editors of the important journals have gained power in a significant way which also influences the knowledge production and accumulation process of the academic labor in addition to her promotion or continuity of the employment. To elaborate the ways in which indexed journals can intervene to the production process of the professors, Interviewee 20 (Male, Assistant Professor) stressed that the pressure to publish in certain journals can make academics to choose a particular methodology which will also shape their research questions while conducting a research. While talking about the crucial role of editorial boards in academics' capacity to publish, Interviewee 28, an assistant professor working at a research-oriented university, shared a memory with his Ph.D advisor who is one of the leading professors in his research area and who work as a professor with a tenure in one of the most prestigious universities in the United States. Despite the difference between the disciplines

of Interviewee 20 and Interviewee 28; his Ph.D. advisor's opinion on the issue of 'publish or perish' is parallel to the conclusion of Interviewee 20:

> If you mention my views in a different place, I will deny what I'm going to say to you now. However, we choose our research topics not because we find them interesting. Rather, we choose to study on particular topics regarding the interests of particular journals' editors.

Experiences of Interviewee 20 and Interviewee 28's Ph.D. advisor reveal not only the declining autonomy of the professors in their research process. These experiences also indicate commodification of knowledge in Polanyi's (1957) sense. To elaborate, an academic's publication process in an indexed journal shows how the knowledge is subject to supply and demand mechanisms, or in other words, to market forces. In that sense, knowledge turns into a commodity. Academics introduce their knowledge in the form of an article to a competitive indexed journal market where the number of top-indexed journals is limited and supply of knowledge exceeds the demand for it. While competing to publish in top-indexed journals in return for accumulating surplus-security[37] in the academic labor market, academics focus more on, in a Marxian sense, the exchange value of their knowledge instead of its use-value as Interviewee 28's Ph.D. advisor experienced himself or Interviewee 20 observed from his colleagues.

While producing knowledge in a competitive environment, academics can encounter a number of negative social consequences. One of these consequences is a decline in the level of collegiality. As Interviewee 22 (Female, Assistant Professor) highlighted, too much competition brings too much individualism which does not provide an opportunity to make collective projects. In parallel with Interviewee 22's point on the importance of collegiality, while comparing working in a teaching-oriented and research-oriented foundation university, Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor) emphasized 'her inner peace and happiness' at her current institution, a teaching-oriented institution, due to the lack of pressure to publish. As well as junior professors, senior professors like Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor) also pointed out the negative correlation between the competitive working environment and maintaining the inner peace. While discussing the sources of the inner peace at her current

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[37] 'Surplus-security' can be thought in the form of increasing the possibility of contract renewal with a publication in a top indexed journal, an improvement in the professor's CV which will increase its competitiveness in the labor market or which will provide the professor an opportunity to promote.

institution, Interviewee 41 pointed out the continuous feeling of inadequacy as a result of the pressure to publish in top indexed journals in the research-oriented university she had been previously working. Despite other problems at her institution, she had stressed her inner peace for several times.

A unique impact of the publication pressure on the social scientists is a potential isolation of the social scientist from the society in terms of being interested in the contemporary problems as long as it contributes to the publication which was emphasized by Interviewee 33 (Female, Associate Professor).

Last social consequence of 'publish or leave' approach is its impact on a professor's experience outside the workplace. Due to their teaching and administrative responsibilities, professors working at research-oriented institutions are very likely to work on their research outside the university. For instance, when I asked Interviewee 13 (Male, Associate Professor) how he coped with his busy schedule, his answer indicates significantly how the combination of commodification of knowledge with the commodification of labor may lead to very serious damages, such as a suicide, as well as less serious, but still important damages like a loss of a balance between work and private life, to the academic labor:

> We have no weekends. Research continues during the weekend. Often, I have to work at home. Apart from the teaching requirements, I have serious administrative duties such as serving as a vice-dean. In the past, I was vice-chair of our department. The combination of all could have affected my research performance in a negative way if I did not work more at home. […] What I also learned here which I had not learned during my Ph.D. is being able to work despite being disturbed during my time at school. I used to think that I could work on my paper for hours without being disturbed at the office. *There is no such a luxury*. For instance, if I got a half an hour, I learned to write a paragraph within this half an hour. That was the most difficult part [which I had to get used to]. To exemplify, when I have just concentrated on [my paper], the [office] telephone can ring or I get an email which I have to respond immediately. […] Also you have to be more careful about your private life. If your partner cannot show empathy, the situation becomes more complicated. […] However, not all people can succeed in managing such a busy schedule. Sometimes, we hear very bad stories. Even due to a pressure for bringing grants- I'm not talking about the pressure to publish!- our colleagues outside Turkey can kill themselves, as they cannot stand to this pressure. (Interviewee 13, Associate Professor.Italics added)

What is also dangerous about the publication pressure or, more specifically, the pressure to publish in particular journals is its impact on the academic profession itself. In an environment where 'becoming a good scientist' is equated with the 'quantity of publications'

(preferably in indexed journals), being an academic can turn into a 'practice without an essence', as Interviewee 20 put it properly:

> When publication in good [indexed] journals turns into an obsession, being an academic can turn into a practice without an essence. In my opinion, this is the major problem of top foundation universities. […] [Rather than making publications in particular journals] academic profession's essence comes from conducting research in the areas which you are interested in, from studying topics which you find important to study and, then, from making publications in journals which is suitable for your research. At least, I believe that the process should proceed in such a way. When the things go in an opposite way, you cannot maintain your motivation. The insecure and competitive environment start to affect you in a negative way. […] [Such an environment] may destroy your inner peace [as well]. (Interviewee 20, Male, Assistant Professor)

While concluding, Interviewee 34's statement provides an eloquent summary of the destructive impact of knowledge's fictitious commodification on its production and accumulation process as well as on the academic labor:

> If you replace an unproductive labor with a productive one, you can achieve efficiency in a shorter time period. It is possible[38]. However, does it lead us to feel more humane or good? Or does it influence your life in a good way? If you are not able to keep pace with it like me, it does not. [Such a way of knowledge production] was not a proper way for me, as I experienced. However, I'm not sure if I have right to blame [the system]. Anyway, that's the system. Both in the United States and Europe, the [knowledge production] system has been evolving into a system [where high productivity has a great importance]. Is it good? From my perspective, it is not. […] The knowledge production process is becoming less humane. […] [If you ask me why there is such an evolution in the academia in Turkey], this evaluation is not unique to our country, it has been occurring all around the world. I think, increasing speed in production and consumption as well as increasing competition are the driving forces. […] The faster we reach to an information, the faster we consume [that information] and want [new] information to be produced. As I said before, more humane relations, relatively more tolerant approaches, and long-lasting processes have become less important. […], we do everything to achieve a goal, but we don't have to reach the goal immediately. However, the system does not teach this. [It wants us to] focus always on the output. How you experience this process, to what extent you are able to make contributions to the society or to your discipline are not important now. I think this is a reflection of our general life in the academia. They call it as the "logic of capitalism". (Interviewee 34, Female, Assistant Professor)

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[38] At that point, Interviewee 28's Male, Assistant Professor) conclusions are crucial. Reducing knowledge production process to the output and reduction of academic labor to a factor of production may also prevent the administration from reaching its goal of increasing productivity, as he emphasized. The potential 'productive' professors such as Interviewee 28's colleague, may not prefer to work in a university which is managed like a capitalist enterprise.

Thus, causing damages to a university's main means of existence- knowledge production and academics- in return for achieving cost-efficiency, increasing productivity and competitiveness is more likely to be at the expense of the university as a whole.

3.2.3. "Good Intention of the Administration" as a source of Employment Security

Unlike the experiences of academics working in well-established research-oriented institutions, the performance evaluation system is not the major source used by the administration during the contract renewal process at the recently established research oriented university. When I asked the interviewees the criteria to be fulfilled for the continuity of their employment, Interviewee 22 (Female, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 17 (Female, Associate Professor) –two professors working in different departments- answered my question by mentioning predictable requirements with which you can encounter in any institution, instead of specific expectations of the institutions. Similarly, Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor) pointed out that very few number of academics have been dismissed so far due to some reasons different than their research or teaching performance.

In such an environment where contract renewal process includes further ambiguities compared to the process in well-institutionalized research-oriented institutions, the absence of unrest as a result of their objective employment insecurity- being insecure as a result of the duration of job contracts- is strongly related to the current administration's attitude towards the professors. As result of the "good intention of the administration" as Interviewee 20 (Male, Assistant Professor) identified, even the professors such as Interviewee 15 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 20 who were the only professors stressing the ambiguities behind the contract renewal process, did not consider themselves as insecure in practice. To elaborate this point further, I want to share Interviewee 20's thoughts on employment insecurity directly:

> If we are talking about the specific conditions in my institution, I feel secure [in terms of not having a fear of an arbitrary dismissal in the short-term]. Regarding the university's current management, [I can conclude that] if you *do your job*

properly and continue to contribute to the academic production, you will not have any employment insecurity. […] This helps me to feel more confident and augments my motivation while doing my work. […]; but [having an employment security] in practice does not mean that [an arbitrary dismissal] will not occur, [at least] at a theoretical level, because the [legal] nature of the [fixed-term] contracts is obvious. […] If you do not experience such a thing or see someone with such an experience, it is an advantage. […]; but this is about the *good intention [of the current administration]* as well as about the institutional culture. It is not [a] legally defined [security]. (Interviewee 20, Male, Assistant Professor. Italics added)

While Interviewee 20's certain phrases like 'institutional culture', 'doing the job properly' or 'contribution to the academic production' show the absence of concrete protection mechanisms against arbitrary dismissals which indicates a relatively high-level of employment insecurity, the subjective experiences of insecurity reveal the administration's success in managing the insecure work environment which could have easily risen the unrest among the faculty members.

3.2.4. Experiences of Professors in the Teaching-Oriented Institutions

Compared to the well-institutionalized or recently established research-oriented universities, not all universities had an established performance evaluation system Interviewee 38 (Female, Professor)'s current institution. While the remaining teaching-oriented university had a performance evaluation system, it did not play a significant role in the contract renewal process similar to the case in the recently established research oriented university. In this regard, academics working in teaching-oriented foundation universities may be more skeptical about the function of the performance evaluation system besides the fairness of the ways in which performance of an academic is measured:

[If you] have [more] administrative duties [and] participate in the university's publicity activities, you can have the best performance among the faculty members. To be first in the performance evaluation, people can have conflict. [For example,] she can write down only her name to participate in the publicity activities of the university which will bring her additional points in the performance evaluation process. […] In my institution, the way of measuring and evaluating performance is interesting. […] University's publicity activities are considered more important than my academic work. [For instance], once, the

school required me to go to another city in order to give information about the university and my department to high school students. When I told them that I had a lecture at that time, they required me to cancel my lecture. […] My course is really important for me. I spend a lot of time on my syllabus; […] however, the school attributes less importance to the lectures [compared to university's publicity]. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

Besides challenging the performance system, Interviewee 41's statement reveals the level of devaluation of the academic labor in a foundation university which is related to both labor market and employment insecurity experienced by the professors. Not to hire additional staff for university's publicity activities, academics can be required to deal with extra work which has nothing to do with their competencies, and, in fact, they can be expected to give a higher priority to such non-academic work which may lead professors to sacrifice their time to reinforce their competencies. Like the colleagues of Interviewee 41, in order to maintain their position and to continue providing a living, professors may comply so with the degradation of their labor that they might engage in conflicts to have more non-academic work.

In such an environment where the continuity of employment does not depend on concrete and transparent measures, the interviewees pointed out varying factors which *may* influence the renewal of their contracts such as doing the job properly, cost-cutting policies of the administration, a potential public statement of the professor which contradicts with the institution's interests, not making any public statements to the unity of the country, a potential pressure of the government on the board of trustees or the professor's close relation with a terrorist group. Our dialogue with Interviewee 42 (Female, Assistant Professor) summarizes the high possibility of arbitrary dismissals in a teaching-oriented institution in a significant way:

Interviewee 42: As the renewal of contracts are determined by the members of the board of trustees, the process is actually independent of us. Although we have good relations and do our job properly, the administration's interests are really important.

Elif: What do you mean by 'administration's interests'? Are they political interests?

Interviewee 42: They may be political or economic or both. These interests could be also shaped by clientelist relations. In other words, in order to recruit a person who has close relations with the people in the administration, they can fire someone else. We cannot be sure whether the contract renewal process proceeds in an objective way or not.

3.2.5. The Role of State-Business People Relations in Shaping Employment Insecurity of the Professors

Besides being able to make direct interventions to the university by utilizing state institutions such as YÖK, historical roots of state-capital relations enable political actors to make additional interventions to university. By drawing on the experiences of all interviewees, it can be concluded that the state-capital relations play a greater role in shaping the employment insecurity of the professors working at teaching-oriented institutions compared to their colleagues in well-institutionalized and recently-established research-oriented institutions. However, this does not mean that professors did not acknowledge a potential job loss as a result of the state-business people relations in Turkey. Interviewee 22's- an assistant professor working at the recently established research oriented institution-opinion about this fact is a good example:

> If I was writing critical articles about the government's policies every day, I would consider myself under pressure, but I think that this is not the responsibility of a professor. […] However, sometimes we hear that the administration talks with these professors. Yet, I do not feel personally insecure. […] Although I did not sign the petition of Academics for Peace [for several reasons], if I did, it would create a problem for me. […] I do not think that there is a better institution where I would feel more secure. […] Of course, sometimes I think that if I did certain things, I could lose my job; but this is a general problem in Turkey. […] It is a more structural issue. […] I define this structural issue as rising authoritarianism in Turkey which leads to an increase and consolidation of power of the government as well as to an increase in the pressure on freedom of speech. In such an authoritarian environment, I have not so many expectations [from my institution in terms of providing an employment guarantee]. Despite the institutional culture, I think institutions can resist against the [authoritarian policies of the] government to a certain extent. (Interviewee 22, Female, Assistant Professor)

Interviewee 22's emphasis on the limited resistance capacity of foundation universities against an authoritarian government reveals clearly that professors in research-oriented institutions are not totally exempt from state-related employment insecurity. In the long run, they may encounter dismissals due to their critical stance depending on the relation between the state and the business people in the administration.

On the other hand, the state-capital relation can serve as a more visible source of employment insecurity in the teaching-oriented institution. For instance, in one of the teaching-oriented foundation universities, the content of the job contract shows significantly the ability of political actors to shape the employment relation as well as the production process of a professor with respect to their own political interests. To concretize, I want to share Interviewee 38's (Female, Professor) experience directly:

> In our contract, there are some articles such as '[, not] making [any public] statement against the unity of our country' [and] '[not] imposing political opinions on the students as well as on the administrative staff and other workers'. If you did not act in accordance with these articles, your contract would be terminated. In the contract which I signed, there were such statements. Also, there was another article about [not] making a statement against Kemalism.' All of them are defined as valid reasons to terminate my contract. What I want to say is that [...] I have already sacrificed my freedom of speech, right after [I signed the job contract and] started working here. In that sense, I'm telling you that this is a different place.

By shaping the job contracts so that they will support state's political interest such as 'maintaining the unity of the country' or 'reducing the critical voices against Kemalism', the university administration can help political figures to have an indirect control over the scholarly activities within the university. In this regard, sense of employment insecurity in these institutions double which makes these universities 'a different place', as Interviewee 38 highlighted.

3.3. Income Insecurity:

Income security can be roughly defined as an "assurance of an adequate and stable income" (Standing, 2011, p.10). With this definition, Standing means not only earning stable and sufficient wages/salaries at the workplace to sustain a living. He also considers enterprise benefits, state benefits, the value of support provided by family or local community and ability to make savings as important sources of stable income which provides a security to the individual in a case of unexpected dismissal. In this regard, Standing prefers to use the term "social income" in order to move beyond monetary definitions of income (pp. 10-12).

In addition to potential fluctuations in the money wages with respect to macroeconomic developments, reductions in the state and enterprise benefits or lacking familial or social bonds can lead to income insecurity as well.

Regarding the conclusions of the interviewees, ambiguities about income level both during and after the recruitment process constitute a major dimension of income insecurity. In relation with the labor market insecurity in the academia, academics may have to accept jobs with indefinite incomes. To elaborate, while talking about their bargaining power in their recruitment process, both Interviewee 41 and Interviewee 42, two assistant professors working at the same teaching-oriented institution, mentioned that they did not know their salary not only during the recruitment process but also for a time period after they started working at their institution[39]:

> You may use what I'm going to tell you now as a quotation in your thesis. As I received my contract after I started working here, I have worked for a time period without knowing the amount of my salary. […] The process did not proceed in such a way that the administration made an offer and I accepted it after a brief evaluation process; [laughingly] because I would accept to work here regardless of the amount of my salary. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

As the quotation indicated significantly, in order to have and maintain a position at an institution, academics can give consent for various insecurities just like both interviewees accepted their income insecurity by not objecting the human resources or to the administration about their ambiguous salary level.

While none of the interviewees working at the research-oriented institutions encountered with indefinite salary levels during their recruitment process, a combination of the administration's salary privacy policy with the ambiguities in the performance evaluation process can raise questions about their salary levels in the minds of academics. As Interviewee 28 (Male, Assistant Professor) pointed out, an increase in his salary depends on the performance evaluation, or more precisely, research performance of the professor. Rather than being uncomfortable with the notion of competitive salary benefit, professors problematized the non-transparent aspects of the evaluation process which led them not only to question the fairness of salary increases but also to feel insecure about their income, as Interviewee 36 experienced:

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[39] Both Interviewee 12 and Interviewee 8 are working in the same foundation university which is a teaching-oriented university.

Depending on your performance, you may get a different salary benefit than your colleague working at the same department with you. Nobody has any information how these differences are determined. On the other hand, the promotion mechanism in public universities is much transparent. Therefore, here, people may question whether they got what they deserved or not. […] Such an ambiguity makes you feel little uncomfortable. (Interviewee 36, Male, Assistant Professor)

Lastly, academics can accept 'relatively' lower salary levels, as Interviewee 28 (Male, Assistant Professor, Working at a research-oriented university) and Interviewee 40 (Male, Assistant Professor, Working at a teaching-oriented university) pointed out, regarding certain enterprise benefits like housing or support for schooling expenses, if the child goes to the private school belonging to the holding behind the foundation university. In that sense, the university administrations can manage income insecurity experienced by the professors in foundation universities.

3.4. Job Insecurity:

Standing (2011) defines job security as the ability to maintain a position in employment which provides opportunities to reinforce competencies and to promote in terms of both status and income. In discussions of job insecurity, the orientation of the foundation university plays an important role, particularly, in terms of setting barriers to skill dilution. Unlike in the research-oriented foundation universities, cost-cutting policies of the administration results in an increase in both teaching and administrative requirements expected from the professors working at teaching-oriented institutions. In such an environment, academic profession in those universities can turn into "a practice of repetitive tasks" (Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015, p.50) which does not give any satisfaction to the professor besides hindering professional development. As a result, not surprisingly, academics encounter the problem of promotion. While the research-oriented institutions support the academics to reinforce their competencies by limiting teaching requirements to 4 courses in a year or by expecting relatively less administrative work, professors can be exposed to job insecurity due to the ambiguities in the promotion system which I also discussed in Chapter 2. Lastly, an important source of job insecurity is government's ability

to intervene in the professor's research process as well as to the teaching process which can create a pressure particularly on the social scientists depending on their discipline. After giving a brief outline of this section, I want to start with the experiences of professors in teaching-oriented institutions.

3.4.1. Excessive Teaching and Administrative Duties: Absence of Opportunities to Reinforce Qualifications in Teaching-Oriented Institutions

As I mentioned in Chapter 2, teaching requirements in teaching-oriented foundation universities can vary from 4 to 8 courses in a semester. The combination of teaching requirements with various administrative responsibilities leads academics working in teaching-oriented foundation universities to engage in a trade-off between the time they spent on administrative duties and teaching and on research. To concretize how both teaching and administrative requirements can affect the time spared for research, Interviewee 39's experience at his institution provides a good example:

> […], but the working environment which is provided by the university does not fit to the expectation[s of the administration]. Projects, contribution to literature, publication are expected from us, however, we are teaching 4 courses [per semester. Moreover,] we have many administrative duties. I don't know if we are going to talk about these things today. For instance, I'm vice-chair of the department, Erasmus coordinator of our department, [department's] website coordinator [and] coordinator of the office for disabled people [at the same time]. Each week, [besides my lectures] I spend 2-3 hours in a meeting for one of my administrative duties. […] [However,] when you give 4 lectures [each week], deal with [various] administrative responsibilities and are required to participate in the publicity of your institution, you cannot conduct research. […] Now it is early [therefore you didn't have a chance to observe], but [often] after 12 p.m. [people come to my office for varying reasons such as] for submitting their petition, taking my signature for bureaucratic procedures [or] informing me about the upcoming administrative meetings such as a meeting for the change in curricula. We don't have a working environment such that we go to school only for 2 days or we can read articles/books without being disturbed [during our time in office]. Rather, we are dealing with a lot of stuff. (Interviewee 39, Male, Assistant Professor)

As a result, academics in teaching-oriented institutions conduct research whether in their off-days- which was one day for Interviewee 39, but, in general, which depends on the

department- or at home and during holidays. In other words, they are trying to find some time for research, which is actually the most important part of an academic career from Interviewee 39's perspective.

At that point, it is important to mention that there are also professors such as Interviewee 40 (Male, Assistant Professor)[40] who did not problematize the teaching expectations at teaching-oriented institutions. 'In a country where the required working hours are 40 hours in many sectors', he criticized his colleagues who complained about spending 20 hours for lecturing[41] (15 hours of lecturing plus 5 hours for office hours), unless they designed a new course or had administrative duties:

> Interviewee 40: As I have already said before, "many" is a too subjective word. […] You have 25 free hours in an environment where the normally required hours of work are 40 hours. You can leave after your lecture. You have [also] off-days. […] But if you ask me whether I can conduct research in such an environment, I do not, because I'm relatively lazy. If you were a hard-working person, you could do your research. You have enough time to conduct research. […] If you were preparing a new course, it could take relatively more time. However, you don't have to prepare for the courses you have been lecturing for a long time. […] You won't feel tired mentally, but maybe you may get tired physically. Anyway, I have friends who can spare time for research and became associate professor in a short time period. […] At that point it is important to emphasize that my friends who are currently associate professors did not teach courses above 4 courses; I have been teaching 8 courses [in a semester] until the last two semesters. That created an exhaustion.

> Elif: Why did you prefer to teach 8 courses?

> Interviewee 40: [Laughingly] [In order to earn extra] money. I mean, I had several reasons. First, other departments needed a person to teach courses on my topics. […] [Secondly], becoming an associate professor was not my priority because I had other priorities such as maintaining my family. […] If you have focused more on teaching for a certain time, it becomes harder to turn to the 'research side'. Meanwhile, I had varying administrative duties including serving as the vice-chair, web-coordinator of the department and some other duties. As the vice-chair, I spare 70% of my time to the administrative duties. […] Therefore, I show a reaction to the people complaining about their teaching load. The most ungrateful group of workers are the professors. Their complaints about getting too tired are not acceptable, while there is a group of workers who has to

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[40] Interviewee 40 was the only professor who had a less critical stance towards the teaching load in teaching-oriented institutions.

[41] Due to the student profile at his current institution, Interviewee 40 pointed out that lecture notes which he prepared 10 years ago were still sufficient for his lectures. However he also emphasized that absence of interested and willingly students decreased his satisfaction he got from lectures.

work more than 40 hours in a week and who tries to integrate their lives with respect to their jobs in order to sustain a living. […] For instance, in the academia, professors can reject giving courses in the evening because her home is far from the school. In the private sector, such behaviors are not acceptable. Regarding the requirements in your contract, if you are required to do something, you have to do it.

Despite acknowledging the impact of his working conditions on his research performance, accepting to deal with exhausting teaching requirements in order to increase his income-earning opportunities shows how the interrelation between different labor-related security issues can intensify the subjective experiences of precarization. Although Interviewee 40 initially emphasized his laziness as a potential reason for his research performance, his following sentences indicate that his income insecurity is an important driving force behind giving less importance to research and to his promotion. He copes with multiple insecurities at the workplace by comparing his situation to the workers who are exposed to labor-related security issues more intensely in other sectors. On the one hand, there are indeed sectors where workers are required to be more flexible in terms of adapting to sudden changes in their working hours, places or job descriptions. On the other hand, Interviewee 40's complaint about his 'ungrateful' colleagues is beyond a way of coping with his job insecurity. It reveals further how he has internalized the job insecurity by taking it as a natural phenomenon in the private sector which enabled him to give consent for his own job insecurity.

Besides the number of courses, academics can be expected to teach courses in areas in which they are not competent at all, as both Interviewee 37 (Female, Assistant Professor, Working at a research-oriented institution) and Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor, Working at a teaching-oriented institution) pointed out. Although none of the interviewees experienced aforementioned situation by themselves, for instance, the answer of Interviewee 41 shows clearly how she was ready to accept giving lectures on topics different than her academic interests and, in that sense, how academics, in general, may give consent for degradation of her qualifications in order to find a job:

> The chair asked me which courses I prefer to teach. I was really surprised because I was often told that if I started to work at a foundation university, I would be, even, expected to teach courses which would have nothing to do with my qualifications. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

As well as teaching requirements, extensive administrative duties which can vary from participating in publicity activities of the school to coordinating the departmental website, create another means of skill dilution at teaching-oriented foundation universities. Particularly in departments where the faculty members consist of 3 or 4 professors, each professor can have 4 or 5 administrative duties, as Interviewee 39 (Male, Assistant Professor) mentioned. In addition to the administrative work in the school, academics may be expected to contribute to the publicity activities of the school which can be both in and outside the school and which can last 4 to 5 days. Therefore, as Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor) experienced, professors can deal with administrative work not only during working hours but also outside the workplace.

Limitations in the financial resources for research and conference participation pose another obstacle for the professors to make use of their qualifications. By drawing on Interviewee 38's (Female, Professor) experience, academics can engage in a trade-off between a stable income and reinforcing their competencies in their research areas in a case of participating, particularly, in international conferences. For instance, professors may not return to school right after the conference due to the distance, for example, if the conference organized in the United States. In such a case, the university subtracts the payment of the additional days in which professors cannot come to the school, from the salary. Unlike Interviewee 38, the interviewees working at the other teaching-oriented university were not left to choose between their income security and job security, if they wanted to attend a conference. However, according to Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor), her institution did not provide any internal research grants for the professors and it has recently reduced the amount of travel funds.[42]

Dealing with a heavy teaching load and administrative requirements as well as the absence of financial sources to support research process of the professor result, not

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[42] While discussing whether the school provided sufficient financial support for conference participation or not, the interviewees gave different answers. For instance, two professors- Interviewee 40 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 43 (Female, Assistant Professor, Working at a different department)- did not problematize the sufficiency of conference supports unlike Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant professor, Working not at the same department with Interviewee 40 and Interviewee 43). The differences in the answers may occur as a result of a difference in the administration's attitude towards particular departments. For instance, Interviewee 43 highlighted previously that as her department was one of the most-preferred departments by the students, they were able to let the administration know about their problems as well as their issues more easily. Similarly, Interviewee 40 mentioned the existence of variations in the working conditions of the professors. In this regard, the institution could provide adequate opportunities for professional development only to particular departments.

surprisingly, in the issue of promotion for particularly assistant professors who are responsible for relatively more courses and administrative work. As assistant professors cannot have sufficient time and environment to conduct research, they have difficulties in making publications which prevents them from becoming a part of academic networks and reduces the possibility of having research grants, as Interviewee 36, Interviewee 39 and Interviewee 40 stressed. Job insecurity in teaching-oriented institutions has further negative consequences for the academics in such a way that it can lead to labor market insecurity. To articulate with Interviewee 41's own words:

> If you take your courses seriously, preparation for a course requires a lot of time. In such a context, you don't have much time to prepare for a conference and to conduct research. In that sense, the process turns into a self-triggering process. [I mean,] as you can't improve your CV, you cannot find a job in a better university. However, as you are working here, you don't have a chance to make your CV better. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

3.4.2. Experiences of Job Insecurity in Well-Established and Recently-Established Research-Oriented Universities

In discussions of job insecurity in research-oriented institutions, all interviewees confirmed that their school attributed importance to achieve research-teaching balance and in this regard, they were not required to teach more than 4 courses in a year. Another relative advantage of the professors in research-oriented institutions comes from the additional opportunities provided by the administration to support academic development such as individual research funds and administrative support while applying for international grants which were not provided in teaching-oriented institutions.

While all interviewees stressed important contributions of both research-teaching balance and aforementioned opportunities to their research performance, the administration can support particular departments more in terms of providing a proper working environment for research. As Interviewee 33 (Female, Associate Professor) experienced, regarding their relatively high contribution to the university's income by bringing important amount of grants, some departments like the engineering departments can be labeled unofficially as 'money-making' departments which plays an important role in shaping working conditions

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of the professors as well as bargaining power of the departments. To exemplify, while the department where Interviewee 33 works as an associate professor, could not manage to reduce the number of the courses below 4, the academics working in the business administration department and in the engineering sciences were allowed to give 3 courses in a year instead of 4, because the school could hire additional adjunct lecturers with the money from the grant. Despite the differences in the opportunities provided for improving research performance, professors in research-oriented universities have still an adequate work environment for professional development compared to their colleagues in teaching-oriented institutions, because the administration put barriers to skill dilution by reducing the teaching and administrative requirements.

A common form of job insecurity, experienced by the professors in well-established foundation universities, emerges as a result of problems in the promotion structure. The issue of transparency can lead academics to feel uncomfortable which was emphasized by Interviewee 13 (Male, Associate Professor), Interviewee 28 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor). In addition to this general problem, promotion structure can involve some contradictions which affect particularly social science professors in a negative way. As I mentioned in Chapter 2 in detail, due to the contradicting expectations in two-step promotion system in well-established foundation universities, academics may encounter difficulties in their promotion process.

3.4.3. The Role of State-Business People Relations in Shaping Job Insecurity of the Professors

Different than employment insecurity, political authority figures affect the job insecurity of the social scientists in foundation universities both through utilizing particular state institutions like YÖK and with the help of their relationship with the business people. Due to the nature of their work which can be concerned relatively more with the political sphere, the production process of social scientists is more likely to become the target of the state and to be subject to the university administration's interference into their scholarly activities. This aggravates further the job insecurity experienced by the professors. As result of the government's capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the academic

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workplace, professors can feel under pressure in their lectures, in their research process and while thinking about their promotion.

To start with the lectures, professors in particular disciplines are subject to the government-related insecurity relatively more because the ways in which social phenomena are analyzed in certain disciplines can challenge the authority and current policies of the government. Reflections of job insecurity can show itself in an increase in the self-censorship in the lectures, as two professors (Interviewee 38 and Interviewee 41, both working in different teaching-oriented universities) experienced because students can report professors to the administration due to the 'inappropriate' statements of a professor. While professors such as Interviewee 6 (Male, Instructor) and Interviewee 27 (Male, Assistant Professor)- two professors working at different research-oriented universities, pointed out the possibility of being reported by a student, they did not consider themselves under pressure like their colleagues in the teaching-oriented institutions. A potential reason behind differences in the experiences of academics might be working in a well-institutionalized, strong institution which was particularly emphasized by Interviewee 27. The institution's ability to resist the government's attempts to shape university depends significantly on the relation between the business people and the political figures in the case of foundation universities. If political actors are unable to utilize the particular apparatuses of the state, such as fiscal apparatuses, against the business people in a case of conflicting interests, the administration of a foundation university can stand more easily behind the academics as well as other components of the university in a case of conflict. In that sense, a university is whether a strong institution or not.

Another common way for political actors to interfere in the academic labor process is the intervention to the research process with the help of the university administrations. At that point, discipline and research interests play an important role. While none of the interviewees experienced or witnessed directly such an intervention apart from Interviewee 38 (Female, Professor), Interviewee 39 (Male, Assistant Professor), Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor), and Interviewee 42 (Female, Assistant Professor)[43], their emphasis on studying 'non-problematical' research topics due to which they may be 'exempt from' such

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[43] All of these four interviewees were working in different teaching-oriented institutions. Apart from Interviewee 38, the remaining professors were working at the same school.

an intervention and extra insecurities a professor can experience, shows clearly that social science professors were aware of additional insecurities they may encounter in a case of engaging with politics in a critical way. To give an example of a potential way of intervention to a 'problematic' research topic, Interviewee 41 had an opportunity to observe the attempts of the university administration to restrain academics' research process in a meeting where the founder of the university came together with the faculty members of her department:

> [The university administration] believes that [the administration] shows respect for [our] freedom of speech. In our meeting with the founder of this university, he stated that: "I established this university to provide a proper environment for research. I want you not to believe in anything that is dictated to you, […]. Therefore, I established this university. […] Each year, I expect an article from each of you." […] [However], he continued his words [in such a way that he conflicted with himself. To elaborate with his own words:] "For instance, the Kurdish issue. The idea that Kurds and Turks are two separate [ethnic] groups is imposed on us by Americans. I don't want you to believe in this. Please make a research in which you argue that Turks and Kurds are not separate [in terms of their ethnic origins]. […] Be liberal, be open-minded" Do you understand what I mean? (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

According to Interviewee 41, the university administration did not control regularly each published work or ongoing research project one by one. However, she concluded that if someone wanted to control them, this would create a problem for an academic who studied on a topic that would attract the attention of the state authorities like the Kurdish issue. What Interviewee 41 identified as 'problem' means actually various labor-related insecurities including job insecurity which professors can be exposed to due to the administration's concerns about the government's attitude towards the institution. For instance, certain articles of the job contract including "not making [any public] statement against the unity of our country and Kemalism" indicate that in a case of conducting a research which may serve as a 'potential threat to the unity of the country' or which may approach Kemalism from a critical perspective could result in the dismissal of Interviewee 38 (Female, Professor). In that sense, the university administration can leave academics to choose between their autonomy and their academic freedom in their research process; and their employment security. Such a threat of unemployment may lead academics to become more 'careful' while choosing their research topics and shaping their research questions, as Interviewee 39 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 42 (Female, Assistant Professor) experienced while conducting a research.

In addition to reduced autonomy and self-censorship in the research process, academics may not benefit from financial support for their academic development due to the governments' attempt to have a control over the university in an indirect way. To exemplify, when Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor) asked for financial support to go to a conference, she was asked about whether she was going to talk about a political topic or not. Similarly, Interviewee 41's colleague received a written statement from the university administration about the administration's discomfort of her paper on Gezi Uprisings[44] which she was going to present at a conference. In this regard, academics might have to sacrifice the opportunities to improve and reinforce their skills not only due to the budget constraints but also due to the pressure of the political figures on the university administration, both of which shows the relatively high level of job insecurity experienced by Interviewee 41 and her colleague.

In discussions of the issue of promotion, political actors can affect the promotion of an academic with the help of particular state institutions such as YÖK. In Turkey, the promotion of an academic is mainly determined by the evaluation process coordinated by YÖK apart from few number of foundation universities where professors are subject not only to the evaluation process of YÖK but also to international evaluation processes for their promotion. For the academics whose research can challenge the government's authority, such as Interviewee 22 (Female, Assistant Professor), a potential pressure of the government on YÖK serves as a crucial source of job insecurity in terms of encountering with obstacles during the promotion process.

3.5. Work Insecurity:

The absence of protection against any workplace-related accidents and illnesses is the major cause of work insecurity according to Standing (2011). Besides safety and health regulations, limits on working time and unsociable hours serve as important protection

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[44] In 2013, an environmentalist protest against building a shopping mall in the area of Gezi Park in Taksim turned into a nation-wide demonstration against the government's authoritarian policies in Turkey.

mechanisms against work insecurity. Similar to Standing, Dörre (2011) defines work insecurity as a physical insecurity as a result of the nature of the work. By drawing on Standing's and Dörre's approaches to work insecurity, Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın (2015) take a step further. According to Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, an increase in the work-related anxieties, rise in the possibility of certain illnesses such as diabetics-which can be caused by psychological traumas- or an increase in the number of self-suicides among the qualified labor show clearly that work insecurity cannot be reduced to certain sectors and to the manual labor working in these sectors (2015, p.50) .

Regarding the interviewees' conclusions, work insecurity in foundation universities expressed itself, mostly, in the form of work-related anxieties. Work-related anxieties can emerge as a result of various factors, however employment insecurity was the main trigger for the work-related anxieties in the foundation universities in my sample. For instance, publication pressure could trigger work insecurity in research-oriented institutions depending on the administration's attitude. As Interviewee 34 (Female, Assistant Professor) experienced at her institution, "publish or leave" approach of the administration increased her stress level which led her to become much slower in the research process. Similarly, Interviewee 20 (Male, Assistant Professor) and Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor) –two professors at the recently established research oriented university-, but in different departments, mentioned about a "loss of inner peace" as a result of the publication pressure in well-institutionalized, research-oriented foundation universities, although they did not suffer from work-related stress issues by themselves. Experiences of work insecurity at teaching-oriented institutions do not differentiate from the experiences at research-oriented institutions. Ambiguities in the contract renewal process which I discussed in the 'Employment Insecurity' part, can lead some academics like Interviewee 41 to become more anxious.

While concluding this section, none of the interviews pointed out a particular role of state-business people relations in shaping their work-related anxieties. So, different than other labor-related security issues, work insecurity emerges more as a result of 'corporatization' of the universities.

3.6. Conclusion:

In this chapter, I provided a detailed analysis of the ways in which professors suffer from labor insecurity in the foundation universities. While discussing the precarization of professors, this chapter, first of all, argues that the research-orientation of the foundation university creates a significant difference in the experiences of professors. Secondly, the professors suffer from different forms of labor insecurity not only as a result of the last marketization wave but also as a result of the government's capacity to make direct- with the help of particular state apparatuses- and indirect- due to the historical development of the relation between state and business people- intervention to the university regarding its own political interests. The next chapter will focus on the experiences of graduate student assistants.

CHAPTER 4

NEITHER A STUDENT NOR AN EMPLOYEE:

EXPERIENCES OF GRADUATE STUDENT ASSISTANTS IN FOUNDATION

UNIVERSITIES

[As I have been not able to come to school for a month due to a serious accident,] our chair required me to write a petition. In this petition, I was required to write that I wanted an unpaid leave because of my health issues. If I wanted *an unpaid leave*, they could employ a new graduate student assistant instead of me. I wrote the petition, but I did not mention the unpaid leave which made our chair angry. […] After this petition, a person from the *Human Resources* department called me. She told me: 'Hocam[45], (She was calling me as 'Hocam'!), as we received a petition from your faculty dean and our president accepted this petition, you are *dismissed* and you won't paid a *salary* anymore. *From now on, you will be considered only as a student'*. When I asked the reason, she told me that she couldn't explain the reason, because I was a student! […] Although they, supposedly, considered me a student, they did not treat me as a student as well. For instance, there were crucial turning points while I was working on my thesis. I wanted to talk to our chair to solve the problems about my thesis. I mean, I wanted to be a student, but my studentship could only last for several minutes. [Our chair responded to my questions, in general, like:] "We will talk about your problems later, please return to your work now". (Interviewee 44, Female, a former Ph.D. student who lost not only her job but who was also expelled from the school due to her critical stance towards her unofficial employment status. Italics added.)

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[45] 'Hocam' is a word which can be used for addressing teachers, graduate student assistants and professors in Turkey. The reason behind Interviewee 44's emphasis on the word is to draw the attention to the unofficial employment status of graduate student assistants at her institution, because full-time professors or full-time teaching/research assistants are the ones who can be called officially as 'Hocam'.

With fictitious commodification of labor, new flexible employment forms in the academic profession have been developed. One of these flexible employment forms is the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system which is a form of employment unique to foundation universities in Turkey[46]. Unlike their colleagues working at public universities, graduate student assistants in my sample were working under the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system without having a status of the employee. They are required to 'contribute to the academic work' at their institution in return for their scholarships[47]. Despite the absence of a legal employment relationship with the institution, as the aforementioned quotation underlined, graduate student assistants may be still 'dismissed' like full-time employees, their scholarship may be titled as 'salary' by the HR or they may be subject to regulations like taking an unpaid leave which they should be, theoretically, exempt from because of their official title as a student. So, as Interviewee 44 experienced, graduate student assistants can find themselves in an ambiguous position between being a student and an employee, which creates additional layers in the graduate students' experiences of insecurity. In the following pages, this chapter aims to answer, first of all, what 'not having a legal existence' means in the discussion of the precarization of the academic labor.

In order to have a better understanding of graduate students' experience of insecurity, there are certain key points to discuss before providing a more detailed analysis. First, instead of the research or teaching orientation of the university, to what extent graduate students are subject to the relationship between professor and assistant plays a significant role in shaping their experiences of precarization. In other words, to what extent the amount of their stipend, their working hours and the content of their assistantship are determined by their professors shapes their level of precarization. The combination of the ambiguous status of graduate students with the absence of administrative or other representative mechanisms increases the subjection of graduate student assistants to their relations with the department and/or to the

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[46] While project scholarship, as a form of assistantship in return for scholarship, can be also applied in public universities, it is not the norm while employing graduate student assistants unlike in the foundation universities in my sample.

[47] These scholarships may be given directly by the graduate school which can include the tuition waiver, housing expenses, transportation expenses and/or stipend depending on the required time for assistantship as well as on the university. Some graduate students receive their scholarship from an external institution such as The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) or their graduate education can be funded by a company depending on the department. Another group consists of project assistants who were funded by the project budget of their professors. Besides the scholarships available to Turkish citizens, international graduate students can receive their scholarships from particular institutions in their home country.

professors they assist which aggravate various labor-related security issues experienced by student assistants. Depending on the effectiveness of the graduate school as well as on the existence of alternative organizations such as solidarity groups, graduate students' experience of insecurity varies at a significant level.

Secondly, it is important to stress that graduate student assistants are exposed to different labor-related security issues, mostly, due to the proliferation of flexible employment forms with the last marketization wave after the 1980s in Turkey. Among the 18 interviewees, only two interviewees' experience indicates the political actors' role in shaping labor insecurity of the graduate students. Interviewee 49 (Female, Master's student) and Interviewee 44 (Female, a former Ph.D. student) who were working at the same teaching-oriented institution were the only graduate students whose experiences directly reveal the role of state-business people relations in affecting their research process as well as their professional development. While Interviewee 23 (Male, Master's student) pointed out political actors' ability to intervene different spheres in Turkey as a source of insecurity, neither his experiences at his university nor his sense of insecurity imply a link between political actors' ability to intervene to the university with the help of both YÖK and state-business people relations, and labor-related security issues experienced by the graduate student assistants. Rather, he emphasized the role of conjectural factors such as rising authoritarianism in Turkey in shaping his sense of uncertainty and insecurity as a citizen.

A potential difference between professors' and graduate students' experiences is related to the assistants' informal status at their institutions. As graduate student assistants are considered officially students instead of employees, they have no formal employment relation neither with the board of trustees, like the professors nor with the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) like graduate student assistants, mostly in public universities[48]. In that sense, both the board of trustees and YÖK have a very reduced control over the assistantship experiences of graduate student assistants in foundation universities except one foundation university where Interviewee 44 and Interviewee 49 were working. The reason was the

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[48] According to YÖK, each university should employ a minimum number of full-time research assistants for each department. In that sense, foundation universities hire also full-time research assistants, but they minimize their number. In that sense whether graduate student assistants under the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system constitute the majority of the graduate workforce or they increase the workload of professors in order to compensate the small number of full-time assistants.

relatively high impact of the founder of the university who is the president of the board of trustees and who directly intervened in relations between professors and assistants as well as the research process of the professors[49]. Unlike the other foundation universities where the number of graduate students with a scholarship and the amount of scholarships were determined whether by the graduate school or by the department, both Interviewee 44 and Interviewee 49 stressed the dominance of the founder of their university in the allocation of scholarships. Depending on the level institutionalization which shapes the relationship between the actors within the university, graduate student assistants can be also more affected by the impact of state-business people relation in their daily experiences.

4.1. Labor Market Insecurity:

Regardless of their university, graduate student assistants are exposed to labor market insecurity at two levels. First, an insufficient number of full-time assistantship positions in both foundation and public universities serves as an important driving force for accepting the unofficial employment relationship with their current institution. For instance, while comparing his situation with his friend who was a Ph.D. student at a public university, Interviewee 47 (Male, Ph.D. Student) stressed that he found his current position better than his friend's Ph.D. conditions, because he earns money, despite under the name of scholarship, in return for his assistantship. On the other hand, his friend was going to leave the Ph.D. program, as he was not able to sustain a living in the academia without having any assistantship position. Similar to Interviewee 47, four professors (Interviewee 20, Interviewee 27, Interviewee 33 and Interviewee 39) from different foundation universities

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[49] As I also mentioned in Chapter 3, the founder of the university can intervene directly to the research process of the professors. To exemplify, I want to share again the quotation of Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor): "[The university administration] believes that [the administration] shows respect for [our] freedom of speech. In our meeting with the founder of this university, he stated that: 'I established this university to provide a proper environment for research. I want you not to believe in anything that is dictated to you, […]. Therefore, I established this university. […] Each year, I expect an article from each of you.' […] [However], he continued his words [in such a way that he conflicted with himself. To elaborate with his own words:] 'For instance, the Kurdish issue. The idea that Kurds and Turks are two separate [ethnic] groups is dictated to us by Americans. I don't want you to believe in this. Please make a research in which you argue that Turks and Kurds are not separate [in terms of their ethnic origins]. […] Be liberal, be open-minded' Do you understand what I mean?"

pointed out the absence of sufficient income-earning opportunities for graduate students; as a result, apart from Interviewee 39, they approached the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system in a positive way. To exemplify, I want to share directly the opinion of Interviewee 33 who compared her period as a graduate student with her assistants' experiences:

> First of all, awarding scholarship [to a graduate student] is very good. When I was a graduate student in a public university, such an option didn't exist. As you know, public universities have a limited number of full-time assistantship positions. […] [Therefore] I was working in another job. However, when students have other full-time jobs outside the university, they cannot concentrate on their graduate studies. It is hard to continue to your graduate education. But the absence of social security is a problem. (Interviewee 33, Female, Associate Professor)

Despite accepting the absence of a basic right such as social security, accepting to work under the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system is beyond acknowledging relative advantages of that system. Rather, as Interviewee 39 stressed, working in return for the scholarship is more of a forced choice than a good opportunity provided to graduate students which indicates the significant level of precarization that graduate student assistants are exposed to.

In addition to contemporary conditions, the interviewees acknowledged the possibility of unemployment in the future despite their qualifications which constitutes another layer of labor market insecurity experienced by the graduate student assistants. To exemplify, in discussions of their future insecurity, a group of graduate students including Interviewee 2 (Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar[50]); Interviewee 19 (Female, Master's student), Interviewee 23 (Male, Master's student), Interviewee 24 (Male, Master's student) and Interviewee 25 (Female, Master's student) stressed the issue of uncertainty which would be expecting them after graduation. While existence of career shift opportunities for master's students which can reduce their sense of future insecurity, depending on their departments, it is harder to make career shifts for the Ph.D. students which leads them to see their future more 'dark' and 'hopeless' as both Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 47, two Ph.D. students working at different institutions, pointed out. To

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[50] In Turkey, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) gives scholarships to a number of outstanding students who want to continue to graduate education. The graduate student assistants who are paid their stipends by TÜBİTAK, are identified as TUBITAK scholars in this study.

concretize the Ph.D. students' sense of labor market insecurity, I want to share sentences of Interviewee 7 directly:

> Since I was an undergraduate student, I have been studying at various foundation universities. Therefore I didn't observe any different [graduate student] experience. The graduate students around me- while I was an undergraduate and master's student- were working under the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system. […] In that sense, there is no discrepancy between my expectations and my current experiences. I've already known [what is expecting me here]. However, I feel the pressure of unemployment every day. For instance, I am 30 years old and I want to get married, but how can I make such a decision [under these circumstances]? People around me decide to have children. It took 2 years for me to make a decision about having a cat! How can people take such responsibilities? In my world, there is no place for these things. I cannot make plans for my future. Especially when I feel down, I question what I'm currently doing. Although I love my job, I still ask why I'm doing this. I mean, if I was working in a non-sense full-time job in the private sector, I would be spending my hours in return for a potential increase in my future income. Today [while working as a graduate student assistant] my motivation comes only from the hope that I will encounter a job opportunity after I graduate. […] I have to convince myself each day that I'm not doing all of these stuff for anything. I will find a job anyway. Apart from my individual efforts [to draw an optimistic picture of future], the future seems really dark and precarious for me. (Interviewee 7, Female, Ph. D Student)

Interviewee 7's sentences are not only important for indicating her sense of labor market insecurity. They also show how labor-related security issues can result in a habituation of an unstable life as a whole.

As a result of the 'dark and precarious' future, which was emphasized particularly by Interviewee 7, both master's and Ph.D. students may be ready to accept any job opportunity. For instance, Interviewee 2's and Interviewee 7's answers to my question about where they may want to work in the future summarize eloquently their insecure position in the academic labor market:

> If I would be able to go to a Ph.D. program and complete it, I would be willing to work at any school which would employ me. […] Most probably, I would accept any job opportunity regardless of the university's place. (Interviewee 2, Male, Master's Student, TÜBİTAK scholar)
> In my case, being able to choose your workplace is a luxury. […] For instance, if we would make this interview a few years later, my answer would be different. However, for now, I don't have a chance to choose. In the ideal world, I would prefer to work at a good university where I could find collegial work environment as well as good students. However, I don't look at these criteria now. I just want a job! (Interviewee 7, Female, Ph.D. student)

The pessimism which dominates the statements of both Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 7 is related to the combination of the paucity of good job opportunities with an increase in the number of Ph.D. students, particularly in the social science departments, which was stressed by Interviewee 4, another Ph.D. student. In parallel with her colleagues, Interviewee 4 internalized the possibility of unemployment in the future. According to Interviewee 4, with the introduction of Instructor Training Program (Öğretim Üyesi Yetiştirme Programı-ÖYP)[51], the possibility of finding a position in a public university has been reduced at a significant level for the Ph.D. candidates outside the program, therefore she considered foundation universities as her only job option. Different than Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 7, Interviewee 4 tried to cope with her sense of labor market insecurity by planning to make a post-doc at a well-known university in Europe or North America which may increase her chances of finding a job in a good foundation university in Turkey. However, regarding the high number of Ph.D. graduates in social sciences and the paucity of job opportunities in research-oriented foundation universities which attribute importance to the professors' academic freedom, she was pessimistic about her future like Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 7.

On the other hand, pessimism about employability is not unique to the graduate student assistants working at different foundation universities. Graduate student assistants in public universities, particularly those with 50/d status [52], suffer also from labor market insecurity, as Interviewee 46 who left his master's program in a foundation university, continued his graduate studies at a public university and worked there in a full-time position under a fixed-term contract, experienced. Although Interviewee 4, Interviewee 7 and Interviewee 35 (Female, Ph.D. student, TÜBİTAK scholar) argued that ÖYP assistants are exempt from labor market insecurity, ÖYP assistants have recently lost their advantageous

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[51] ÖYP is a specific program which is coordinated by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) in Turkey. Briefly, graduate student assistants are assigned to different universities during their graduate education and after graduation, they will start to work at their previously-assigned institutions.

[52] The employment forms of assistants working at public universities also vary. Briefly, there are two employment statuses in the public universities: Assistants working with 33/a status (i.e. Their employment does not end right after they complete their graduate program. Their employment security is guaranteed with permanent employment contracts) and assistants working with 50/d status (i.e. Their employment ends after they complete their graduate work. They work under fixed-term contracts).

position in the labor market due to the state's actions after the coup attempt in Turkey[53]. So, although political actors can create labor-related security issues for the graduate assistants, as in the case of ÖYP assistants, by making use of various state institutions, the interviewees were not particularly affected by the political actors' ability to instrumentalize state institutions to reinforce their authority unlike the professors working at foundation universities.

4.2. Employment Insecurity:

In order to analyze the ways in which graduate students are exposed to employment insecurity, we should, first of all, clarify whether the graduate student assistants have an employment relation with their institution or not. While discussing whether graduate student assistants are employees or students, the administration's argument which was supported also by two professors (Interviewee 26 and Interviewee 37) is that assistantship should be thought as a part of the academic development and learning process of a graduate student, instead of an employment relation between the university and the graduate student. Even in some foundation universities in Turkey, the assistantship requirements are considered as requirements which should be fulfilled to pass a specific course. As a result, none of the interviewees signed an official job contract in which there are well-defined job descriptions and working hours before they started to serve as a research assistant and/or a teaching assistant. Rather, they signed a document in which it was written that they accepted to 'contribute to the teaching and research activities' in return for their tuition waivers, stipends and/or accommodation scholarships. In some cases, even signing such a document may 'get lost in the shuffle'; as Interviewee 48 experienced. With her own words:

> When we were offered an admission to our Ph.D. program, we had to sign a
> document which was similar to a contract in which there was detailed information

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[53] Until the coup attempt in July 2016, graduate students who were a part of this program were provided an employment guarantee by YÖK after obtaining their doctoral degrees. However, after the decree law in September 2016, their employment guarantee was eliminated. As I made the interviewees before the coup attempt in Turkey, the interviewees mentioned the labor market security of these graduate student assistants. Source: http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-37383762 Accessed on: 20/07/2017.

about the Ph.D. program such as its duration and qualification exams; but there was no detailed information about our assistantships. There was only a statement like "You have to *help* to the research and teaching activities in your department". In fact, I did not sign this document. It got lost in the shuffle. It is not a binding contract [like a job contract]. (Interviewee 48, Female, Ph.D. Student, TÜBİTAK scholar. Italics added.)

In addition to taking assistantship as a means of academic development, certain administrative bodies such as the graduate school can approach the expectations under the name of assistantship as a part of mutual assistance. For instance, when Interviewee 3 was required to proctor an exam despite her position as a project scholar, the graduate school's response to the interviewee's critical reaction indicates how administrative bodies try to alleviate the discomfort emerging as a result of graduate students' ambiguous position by presenting the employment relationship between the graduate student and the school as form of mutual assistance. With Interviewee 3's own sentences:

I don't have any relation with the school as an assistant because my stipend is paid from the budget of my professor's project. I don't have a relation with any professor as her teaching assistant. So why should I spare extra time for proctoring? […] Then I decided to email the secretary of the graduate school about my problem. In this email, I wrote: "I'm a project scholar. My responsibility as a project scholar is working for my professor's research project. If my responsibility also includes proctoring, I prefer, first of all, to have a written document in which all of the responsibilities are clearly stated". […] In fact, I was required to proctor an exam for another department! The response of the secretary was like: "Dear Interviewee 3, I can feel an empathy with your situation. However, you know that we have difficulties in finding proctors. So in this process, we should try to help each other. (Interviewee 3, Female, Master's student, Project scholar)

However, certain practices in different foundation universities show that assistantship is actually beyond a means of academic development or a part of mutual assistance in practice. For instance, Interviewee 4's experience with her professor shows how teaching assistantship was considered not only a part of her development process:

My professor required me to proctor an exam on Friday evening, however, I had other things to do which I could not postpone. When I told this to my professor, she responded me with these sentences: 'But you have to do proctoring, you cannot cancel proctoring due to a private excuse'. So there is such an expectation. Although you didn't sign any [job] contract, there are certain duties which you have to do. (Interviewee 4, Female, Ph.D. Student)

At that point, Interviewee 26's contradictive statement provides a good example :

> We should approach these scholarships as a way of supporting graduate students while making investments for their future. In other words, they are not paid in return for their labor. […] If our aim was to find someone for grading exams and homework or for proctoring, we could hire Ph.D. students from other universities for this job which would be more cost-efficient. The motivation behind awarding scholarships is not employing cheap labor. If that is your hypothesis, strike it out!

While Interviewee 26 rejected consistently the idea that graduate student assistants are employees during our interview, his reaction to a graduate student because of missing a proctoring reveals significantly how providing financial support to graduate students is not only about 'helping students to make investments for their future':

> Then, I asked about her excuse for missing her proctoring. When she told me that she couldn't come due to her best friend's wedding ceremony, I thought initially that she was joking. [After I was sure that she was serious] I asked: 'Does your father decide not to come to work without informing his manager? Go and ask your father.' […] I couldn't have imagined the existence of a student with scholarship or of any student who could normalize not fulfilling her obligations in such a way. (Interviewee 26, Male, Professor)

To share a parallel view of another professor, Interviewee 37's -an assistant professor working at a different foundation university- opinion on the length of the holiday of graduate student assistants despite 'paying, actually, a salary for 12 months' supports our aforementioned claim:

> For instance, we are actually paying [graduate] students a salary for 12 months. So, what does it mean? They have to work during the summer [as well]. However, we want to make regulations in order to provide them a time for vacation. [Currently], they can leave for vacation for a month. As I said before, one month is a long time. Personally, I believe that the duration of their vacation should be shorter, [because] they are paid a salary. [Laughs] Do you understand what I mean? (Interviewee 37, Female, Assistant Professor)

Conclusions of all interviewees show significantly how assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system is beyond 'helping each other' and it cannot be reduced to a component of graduate students' learning and development process. Particularly, Interviewee 26's comparison between the student's attitude and a full-time employee's potential behavior in a similar case and Interviewee 37's critique of 'long holidays of graduate student assistants' reveal how the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system is considered an employment relation in which graduate students are expected to fulfill their obligations like full-time employees.

The graduate student assistants may not be allowed to have full-time jobs in order to concentrate on their assistantships, although they did not sign any binding contract like an official job contract. If a graduate student found another job like Interviewee 46 did; he could be threatened by the graduate program coordinator in such a way that he would be expelled from the school besides losing his stipend. To articulate, I want to share our dialogue with Interviewee 46 directly:

> Interviewee 46: No, we were not required to sign any contract. However, when I told them that I was accepted to a full-time research assistantship position in a public university, the program coordinator responded me like: 'So, you will not receive your stipend from now on. You will be also expelled from the school [if you start to work outside the school]'. It took me a time to realize that he, as well as the department, did not have such a right. However, after our talk, they immediately suspended my stipend and they tried to end my studentship.
> Elif: However, you have some friends who are still continuing to the master's program at your previous institution while working as a full-time research assistant at a public university.
> Interviewee 46: By drawing on my experience, they decided to talk with the program coordinator before [they were accepted for the full-time position]. [However], my friends also encountered the program coordinator's negative reaction to having a full-time job at another institution. However when they stressed that they could not maintain a living with their stipend, the program coordinator allowed them to start working at another institution, but my friends could not receive a stipend anymore which was ok for them. (Interviewee 46, Male, Currently a master's student and full-time research assistant in a public university, but used to be a master's student and graduate student assistant in a foundation university.)

Interviewee 46's experience provides a good example of the lack of protection mechanisms against the arbitrary elimination of scholarships and, in that sense, against unexpected dismissals[54]. On the one hand, to maintain their scholarships and assistantships, the interviewees mentioned factors like not having a cumulative GPA below a certain level, passing qualification exams, completing the graduate program in a specific time period and fulfilling obligations as an assistant. On the other hand, inconsistent attitudes of the program coordinator in Interviewee 46's former master's program indicate how the absence of legally defined rights and obligations of graduate student assistants may result not only in unjust treatment of particular students like Interviewee 46 but also in an increase in the graduate

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[54] As scholarships are awarded in return for different assistantships, continuity of scholarships means continuity of the employment besides the continuity of the income.

students' dependence on the professors in terms of continuity of their job. Although Interviewee 48 (Female, Ph.D. Student, TÜBİTAK scholar) who was working at the same university, but in a different department, did not encounter such an attempt of arbitrary dismissal, her conclusions supported the point on how the continuity of scholarships and assistantships depends on the people in the administrative positions in the department. To exemplify, she stressed the dominance of the chair in the decision making processes including the decisions such as the allocation of assistantships and scholarships. Therefore, due to the self-rule of each department, while allocating the departmental budget, the working conditions of the graduate student assistants varied at a significant level. However, this situation is not unique to the research-oriented foundation university where Interviewee 48 was working and Interviewee 46 used to work. In another foundation university, a teaching-oriented university, Interviewee 44 (Female, a former Ph.D. student) experienced a similar case. While Interviewee 44 was trying to get permission from the chair and the faculty dean for participating in a conference, both her chair and her dean told that if she insisted on participating in that conference, she could not return to her job. In order to maintain her job, the interviewee had to find alternative ways for participating in the conference.

On the other hand, conclusions of the graduate student assistants working at the remaining two foundation universities did not reflect a subjugation to the professors in terms of their continuity of their scholarships and in that sense their employment. For instance, despite the lack of legally defined rights and obligations, it was still not easy to dismiss a graduate student assistant according to Interviewee 4. With her own sentences:

> You are expected to fulfill your obligations, although you did not sign any [job] contract. […] However, if you didn't do what your professor required from you; it would be not so easy to dismiss you unlike in the private sector. There is a low a risk of a dismissal. (Interviewee 4, Female, Ph.D. Student)

At that point, the existence of an effective third party in the form of an administrative body such as the graduate school[55] or a representative body such as solidarity groups or student representatives enables graduate student assistants to address their problems about the continuity of scholarships as well as about their working conditions. While these parties do

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[55] While all graduate student assistants are under the responsibility of the graduate school, in certain schools where Interviewee 44, Interviewee 46 and Interviewee 48 are working, the chair, the director of graduate studies or the dean can serve as the main body to address problems and demands compared to the administrative people in the graduate school. In this regard, the graduate school may be not effective .

not eliminate the employment insecurity or while, particularly, solidarity groups are not successful in solving the issue of status; these alternative mechanisms can decrease the graduate students' dependency on specific professors to solve their problems which enables them to feel more comfortable in their employment relation. For instance, Interviewee 3's answer to my question about whether she preferred to share her problems with stipends or assistantship conditions with a professor or not, indicates clearly an additional sense of insecurity due to a potential absence of a third party such as the graduate school:

> I refrain from discussing such issues with my professors; because if I discussed, that would create a greater psychological burden on me. Maybe, therefore, I feel much comfortable [about talking these issues] with the graduate school; because we don't have any additional relationship with the administrative people in the graduate school apart from our, kind of, employee-employer relation. [What I mean by 'additional relationship' is that, for instance,] I don't take any courses from them. If I talked with a professor from whom I was taking a course; I would feel a pressure while sharing my problems. (Interviewee 3, Master's Student, Project scholar)

To elaborate the reason behind Interviewee 3's feeling of pressure, Interviewee 5's memory with his roommate, a graduate student in the engineering department, provides a good example:

> Sometimes I see my friend working from 9 a.m until 5 p.m. at the lab because his professor wants him to stay in the lab. […] My friend accepts to work in the lab for long hours because his professor is the only professor with whom he can work. Therefore he cannot change his professor. He stays in the lab because his professor will write him a recommendation letter or he will be the [major] person who will evaluate his thesis. Therefore, my friend doesn't want to have a conflict with his professor. (Interviewee 5, Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar)

So, due to various dependencies of graduate students on the professors, the existence of effective alternative structures to share their problems about their scholarships and assistantships prevents graduate students at least from worrying about potential arbitrary dismissals.

4.3. Job Insecurity:

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Job (in)security experienced by graduate student assistants depends both on macro and micro dynamics. At a micro level, which will be the main focus of this section, the job security of a graduate student assistant depends strongly on to what extent the university succeeds in providing a work environment to graduate students for deepening their knowledge in the areas they are interested in and for improving their research and teaching skills. So, in order to understand to what extent foundation universities are able to provide a job security to the graduate student assistants, their experiences both as students and as assistants should be discussed. However, in a global environment where social science departments have been closed and the budget for these departments have been reduced with the last marketization wave following the oil crisis in 1973, or in a country where particularly social scientists are more likely to be in a vulnerable position at their workplaces due to state-related labor insecurities, we cannot talk about a job security of the social scientists. These developments are preventing and will, most probably, continue to prevent people who chose social sciences as a profession, from having an adequate work environment to reinforce and improve their qualifications. In this regard, depending on the institutional environment, we can only talk about a partial or limited job security both for professors and graduate student assistants.

To understand whether the institution is able to provide, at least, a partial job security or not, I want to start with graduate students' experiences of studentship. The indefinite working hours and ambiguous job descriptions can lead most interviewees- except Interviewee 19 and Interviewee 23- to make sacrifices from the time they spent for course requirements and for their own research. However, at that point, indefinite working hours and requirements can serve as an advantage which was emphasized by several interviewees including Interviewee 3, Interviewee 7, Interviewee 8, Interviewee 48 and Interviewee 49. To articulate, these interviewees concluded that although they may have to spare all of their time for their assistantship for few weeks, they could have, for example, a free month after fulfilling their obligations. So, the majority of the interviewees did not have a constant heavy workload as assistants and, in that sense, their assistantship did not have negative implications for their studentship and their own research. Apart from one exception, Interviewee 44, the interviewees did not suffer from a high level of job insecurity due to the assistantship-studentship imbalance. However, currently being able to allocate sufficient

time for both assistantship and studentship does not mean that they can always maintain a balance between these two sides. As a result of their ambiguous status between a student and an employee as well as due to their dependence on particular professors, none of the interviewees are totally exempt from job insecurity. To give a concrete example, with an unexpected change of the chair in her department, Interviewee 44 encountered a sudden increase in her hours of work as well as in her workload which posed a serious obstacle for the interviewee to proceed in her thesis or to concentrate on her qualification exams:

> I was the only assistant in our department. Our chair told me that "You cannot leave the department. You have been studying X [the discipline of the interviewee] for many years, so I don't think you will have a problem with passing the exams". While preparing for my qualification exams, I had to come to the department five days and I was working really hard for my assistantship at the same time. […] On Monday, I came to school for the exam. Our chair required me to find a proctor and an empty class room for my exam. As an assistant, I was also responsible for the planning of class rooms, therefore I could see which rooms were empty. […] As the other professors and my friends managed to persuade our chair, I was *able to* have a free hour before the exam. Also, with the help of my dear professors and friends, I was allowed to take a leave for my exam week. In the meanwhile, the chair required another graduate assistant who had a serious accident and therefore was on sick leave, to come to school for the assistantship. After finishing all of the written and oral exams, I was told that I had to turn back to my work. So, right after my last oral exam, I turned to my office and continued to my work. (Interviewee 44, Female, a former Ph.D. student. Italics added.)

Depending on its content, assistantship can turn easily from a source of job security into a means of job insecurity. On the one hand, assistantship experience is an inseparable part of the academic career. It can provide a great opportunity for a junior academic such as a master's or a doctorate student to improve their teaching skills and to learn from the experiences of well-established researchers while working together in a research project. On the other hand, as I've already mentioned in the previous section, graduate student assistants were formally informed about the content of their jobs only to the extent that they would be expected to contribute to the teaching and research activities in their department which bring the issue of unpredictable expectations. As Interviewee 47 (Male, Ph.D. student) emphasized, 'contribution to teaching and research activities' can vary from making photocopies to dealing with the professor's more personal requirements. For instance, due to the age of his professor, Interviewee 8, a master's student who was working at a different university, was responsible for editing his professor's CV or following-up the professor's recommendation letters, in addition to his TA-ship and RA-ship. Similarly, Interviewee 35 (Female, Ph. D

student, TÜBİTAK scholar) and Interviewee 48 (Female, Ph.D. student, TÜBİTAK scholar) who were studying at two different foundation universities conducted a city tour for the guest of their professors which should not be a part of her responsibility according to Interviewee 35. Interviewee 44 (Female, a former Ph.D. student in a different foundation university) was, from time to time, required to make coffee-tea service to the chair and her guest, which- as the interviewee added in a humorous way- enabled her to have a close relationship with the people in the tea room. So, as both Interviewee 47 and Interviewee 49 (Female, Master's student) emphasized, as long as their job content was defined with weighing terms such as making a contribution to research and teaching activities, no expectation under the name of assistantship could be considered a surprise.

In addition to dealing with, from time to time, personal requirements of their professors, the ordinary requirements which make no contributions to their research process as well as to their studentship, can create another dimension of job insecurity experienced by the graduate student assistants. For instance, Interviewee 49's (Female, Master's student) major responsibilities as a graduate student assistant include assisting different administrative duties such as assisting the Erasmus coordinator, editing the department's website or dealing with the work of the dean's office. Similarly, Interviewee 24's (Male, Master's student, Studying at a different university) disappointment about his ordinary obligations which requires more of manual labor rather than mental labor shows degradation of graduate assistants' time as well as their labor:

> In the beginning, I thought that we would be dealing with more academic obligations, but our assistantship is closer to manual work. If you asked me whether this is unique to our university or not, it could happen most probably in other universities as well. However, that does not mean that I should be happy with my current situation.

As Interviewee 24 pointed out, degradation of time and labor of graduate student assistants, as a common form of job insecurity, is not unique to foundation universities and should not be seen as a distinctive result of the informal employment of graduate student assistants. A number of professors (Interviewee 14, Interviewee 33, Interviewee 40's colleague and Interviewee 43) also confirmed that graduate student assistants in public universities are considered more as administrative staff rather than a junior colleague. As an exception among the interviewees, Interviewee 40's colleague problematized the absence of graduate student

assistants' contribution to the administrative work which *should have been* the responsibility of an assistant; because professors were required to deal with all administrative work in her institution. At that point, it is important to mention that Interviewee 40's colleague obtained her Ph.D. degree from a public university and she was expected to make contributions to the administrative work during her graduate study. In that sense, her attempt to normalize degradation of the time and labor of a graduate student assistant had its roots in her own job insecurity during the Ph.D. period.

Unlike Interviewee 40's colleague, Interviewee 14 and Interviewee 33, two professors working at different foundation universities, highlighted the relative advantage of graduate student assistants under assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system regarding the assistants' workload and the requirements from full-time assistants in public universities. Except dealing with, from time to time, personal requirements of their professors and with administrative work as a number of assistants experienced; both professors were not wrong in their conclusions on the assistantship experiences in this system. Apart from experiences of Interviewee 24, Interviewee 44 and Interviewee 49; the majority of the assistants were required to fulfill obligations which could have contributions to their future academic career such as conducting discussion/problem-solving/lab sessions, gaining some experience of grading or participating in the data collection part of the research projects. However, the professors' comparison between two different assistantship experiences is more like a compliance to 'the best of a bad' in such a way that assistants sacrifice a higher income, their social security and various benefits attached to full-time employment for a relative job security.

To what extent a professor relies on her assistant's labor in her research process, in her teaching and/or while dealing with administrative work can also result in a trade-off between the job securities of both parties in a corporatized university environment. The economic concerns of the administration such as achieving cost efficiency or maintaining competitiveness and productivity can turn professors and graduate student assistants into two parties with conflicting interests. At that point, Interviewee 48's experience provides a good example. Briefly, the chair of Interviewee 48's department tried to extend the ordinary obligations of the graduate students in such a way that they were required to spare a certain amount of time in a month for helping the department's secretary; because the administration

did not hire a new secretary. In the beginning, graduate students were required to replace the secretary when she was on her annual leave which was not a problem for Interviewee 48 and her friends. With her own words, "This was *helping*. The department does different things for us, [and in return] we help to the department if we are asked for help". However, when the chair wanted to turn their help into a regular part of their assistantship; that created a debate in Interviewee 48' department:

> That created a debate among the Ph.D. students because this was an administrative work which should not be the responsibility of a Ph.D. student. While I am always happy to help both to our chair and to our secretary, turning such a help into a regular duty leads to new problems. For instance, sometimes I may not have an administrative work, but sometimes I can spare my four hours for doing administrative work. These four hours are really important for me, while another person may not problematize it. [...] We were divided into two groups. A group of graduate student assistants including myself had a critical stance towards the chair's new policy, because we are going to complete our thesis soon and, in that sense, the time is really important for us. The other group constituted of graduate students who have not passed their qualification exams yet and who are relatively new in the department. Therefore they didn't want to have a conflict with the department. [...] The chair required from us to fill an online form about our available times we can spare for administrative work. Apart from four or five students who belonged to the latter group, nobody filled the form. Then, our director of graduate students (DGS) sent us a reminder email to fill the form, however, again, nobody filled. After a certain time, we got another email from our DGS that if we insisted on not filling that form, a certain amount of money would be reduced from our scholarship. [The department had no right to do that], because, as I've already told you, a change in our stipends should be placed on the accounting records regarding the related budget item. Each change in the budget shared for stipends and other scholarships should be recorded in the related budget item, but there is no budget item which was shared for the amount we would get in return for administrative work[56]. [...] After the second mail, I controlled every day the online system whether any additional person wrote her available time or not; but, again, no one filled the form. Contributing to administrative work is de facto not a part of our job now. [...] Our chair was not totally unfair, I also understand her point. She needed our support [to overcome the issue of an insufficient number of administrative staff]. (Interviewee 48, Female, Ph. D. Student, TÜBİTAK scholar)

As Interviewee 48's experience indicates significantly, when graduate student assistants voiced their criticism to a potential degradation of their time and labor, they could have

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[56] In Interviewee 48's department, the scholarship structure is relatively complicated. Except TÜBİTAK scholars, every student has a base scholarship. If you accept to have additional assistantships such as serving as the IT assistant or DGS's assistant, you will be paid extra money.

conflict with the professors in the administrative positions even to the extent that particular professors such as the DGS may try to utilize the income insecurity experienced by graduate student assistants to overcome their resistance. However, the interviewee's emphasis on her empathy with the chair indicates also how survival of the one side will be at the cost of the other side in terms of degradation of the time and labor. To reinforce my conclusion, I want to share another comment of Interviewee 48 on her chair's attitude:

> When our chair was unable to delegate certain [administrative] work to the faculty members, she had to do it by herself or she had to require someone else to do it. Therefore, when the administrative workload had increased, she tried to delegate some work to us.

So, Interviewee 48's both statements shows how economic concerns of the administration may be at the expense of the relation between the professor and the graduate student assistant. To give an example from another university, 'publish or leave' approach of the administration can increase the pressure on the graduate student assistants besides the professors as Interviewee 4 (Female, Ph.D. student), Interviewee 8 (Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar) and Interviewee 35 (Female, Ph.D. student, TÜBİTAK scholar) pointed out. Interviewee 8's statement exemplifies how economic concerns of the university can create a tension between the professor and the graduate student assistant:

> Another reflection of the corporate logic in [our] foundation university is the obsession of efficiency. Produce, produce and produce… [As a result,] one of our professors is leading 10 research projects at the same time. She has to do a lot of job at a theoretical level, but she doesn't do it by herself in practice. Her assistants do everything. […] She requires a lot of work which has to be done in a short time period. […] However, when you say that you are also busy, she can get angry.

At that point, Interviewee 2's observation about his friends' situation in the engineering departments indicates a similar tension between the graduate student and her professor:

> Our professors can be on our side if our interests conflict with the interests of the administration. However, when the relation between a graduate student and a professor will be redefined… For instance, that happened a lot in the engineering departments: When graduate students wanted to reduce their working hours or to have a clearly-defined job description, the attitude of the professors may change, because it would affect them in a negative way. (Interviewee 2, Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar)

Different than the trade-off that Interviewee 48 experienced, we see a trade-off between professor's employment insecurity and the graduate student's job security in both Interviewee 8's experience and Interviewee 2's observation on his friends in the engineering sciences. As long as the professors can publish, they can maintain their employment in the research-oriented university where Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 8 are graduate student assistants. Without the contribution of their assistants they cannot conduct research as both interviewees emphasized. However professors' attempt to decrease their sense of employment insecurity is likely to be at the expense of graduate student assistants in terms of their workload and hours of work. Therefore, by drawing on all conclusions, it can be concluded that proliferation of market mechanisms into the academic workplace does not only result in individual experiences of job insecurity or employment insecurity, but it may also increase the conflict between different precarious components of the academic labor.

4.4. Income Insecurity:

> Maybe you have already seen the caricature about a graduate student who tries to 'hold on to life' with the income of a graduate student assistant. We live like this graduate student in that caricature. […] In a country where the starvation line is 1650 TL, earning an income which is barely above the starvation line is not sufficient [for sustaining a living]. (Interviewee 23, Male, Master's student)

As Interviewee 23's impressive statement summarized, the interviewees working under the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system suffer from income insecurity at a significant level, first all, due to their inadequate income level to sustain a living. At that point, social scientists constitute one of the groups which is more likely to be affected by the income insecurity due to the budget allocated for social science departments. Particularly in foundation universities where the stipend and other benefits such as accommodation depend on the departmental budget, graduate student assistants in social science departments are likely to have more difficulties while sustaining a living.

In addition to the level of their income, graduate student assistants may not be paid a stable salary in return for their labor which constitutes another dimension of their income

insecurity. For instance, Interviewee 3 whose stipend was paid from the TÜBİTAK project of her professor encountered an unexpected reduction in the amount of stipend. Interviewee 3's experience is not only important for revealing the degree of income insecurity a graduate student can suffer from. It is also important for challenging the administration's major argument- "You have already known your conditions before accepting to come here" - which enables the administration to legitimize the informal employment as well as current conditions of the graduate students. To elaborate, I want to share Interviewee 3's experience directly:

> I experienced a problem about my stipend. I started to the master's program as a project scholar. In the document which I signed before starting the program, it was written that I would be funded from the budget of my professor's TÜBİTAK project during my graduate education. However, after several months, I learned that the project would end in September [which was the beginning of the second academic year of my program]. Therefore my stipend would be less after September. When I shared this problem with my professor, she initially told me that there would not be a reduction in my stipend in my second year. However, after the professor talked with the graduate school, she mentioned a potential reduction in my stipend. Not surprisingly, I got angry due to this unexpected change in my stipend. […] It was important because the administration always stresses that we have been already familiar what is expecting us, [however] I accepted the stipend level which was initially offered to me. While my professor acknowledged the unfairness of my situation, she recommended me not to show a big reaction during our talk with the administrative people in the graduate school. With her own words: "*While talking with the graduate school, please try to keep calm; because one of the universities where you may want to work after completing your Ph.D. will be this school. One cannot know who will be in the decision making processes in the long run. If you have a problem with the graduate school now, you may encounter new problems in the long term*". She was speaking in such a manner because she experienced a similar case when she was a Ph.D. student. As she did not want to assist a particular professor, her attitude affected her Ph.D. process as a whole. […] In the end, I was able to solve this problem. (Interviewee 3, Female, Master's student, Project scholar. Italics added.)

By drawing on her own experience, Interviewee 3's professor's suggestion reveals significantly how the labor market insecurity- the absence of a sufficient number of good research-oriented universities- can force the academics to give consent for violation of their rights in the workplace, despite acknowledging the unfairness of the situation. However, refraining from showing a clear critical stance towards such an unfair case increases further the vulnerability of the academic labor in the workplace.

To what extent a graduate student assistant suffers from income insecurity depends strongly on their social income which I discussed in Chapter 3 in detail. To remember briefly, the existence of other income sources such as familial support, non-monetary benefits provided by the enterprise or by the state determines not only your level of income security but also your level of dependence on money wages. The absence of state benefits and enterprise benefits which are provided to full-time employees increases the importance of familial support to maintain a living in the case of graduate students. To concretize with Interviewee 47's and Interviewee 44's own words:

> Compared to our work, we are paid very low salaries, especially if you are 30 years old like me and have to maintain your living. I have to pay my rent and my bills. Without the support of my family, it is impossible to bear all of the living expenses on my own. If it will continue like that, sometimes I think about finding another job or going to a different school to continue to my graduate studies. (Interviewee 47, Male, Ph.D. student)
> We wanted an increase in our scholarships. Such an increase was not so crucial for me; because I was living with my family and therefore my income level was sufficient. […] My father told me that: "Please do not stop me if I want to support you financially. You have to focus on your Ph.D. and in this process, you need some help". (Interviewee 44, Female, a former Ph.D. student)

Both interviewees' conclusions are crucial for showing not only the importance of familial background for the survival of a graduate student assistant in an environment where labor has been left increasingly to market forces. They also reveal the potentially damaging impact of the commodification of labor on the graduate student assistants, if they were deprived of all sources of social income except their stipends.

4.5. Work Insecurity:

Graduate student assistants are exposed to work insecurity, first of all, because they are exempt from state-provided general health insurance and retirement benefits as a result of their informal employment. While all of the institutions in my sample provide a private health insurance, it does not cover more than two or three examinations according to the

interviewees[57]. In addition the private health insurance, one foundation university- as an exception- has recently started to provide *an opportunity* to pay back the amount of social security premium[58] which an employer would pay to the state if the graduate students were full-time employees; if the graduate student pays it by herself and shows the payment bill to the administrative unit. However, even in this case, turning a basic right into an opportunity or a favor of the administration shows clearly the high level of work insecurity experienced by graduate student assistants.

In two foundation universities, particular groups of graduate students can have a social security. In one of these foundation universities where Interviewee 44 (Female, a former Ph.D. student) and Interviewee 49 (Female, Master's student) were working, graduate student assistants from particular departments like engineering, law or pharmacology had a social security. In addition to the differences between departments, your entrance date may serve as another factor to determine which students would have a social security. According to Interviewee 44, no full-time graduate student assistant was hired in the social science departments after 2008. So, as Interviewee 49 put it properly, if a graduate student assistant from a social science department had an accident, for instance, while coming to school for a weekend proctoring, the university would not have any responsibility as an employer and, thus, it would be exempt from covering health expenses of the assistant. In the remaining university, only graduate student assistants who got their scholarship from TÜBİTAK could have social security, if they engaged in a trade-off between a lower income[59] and having a social security, as Interviewee 2 (Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar) highlighted. In order to sustain a living, accepting the absence of social security shows not only a form of work insecurity but also a high level of precarization.

At that point, the work insecurity of graduate student assistants may have consequences for their professors as well. Although the board of trustees has the responsibility of providing a work security to the graduate student assistants, the informal

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[57] Also, the private health insurance of the graduate student assistants might not cover all health expenses. As Interviewee 41 (Female, Assistant Professor) experienced during her graduate education in a foundation university, her private health insurance did not cover the hospital expenses in a case of giving birth to a child.

[58] Payment of social security premiums affects the age of retirement as well as other retirement benefits provided by the state.

[59] According to Interviewee 2, in such a case, the amount of their stipend falls from 1000 TL to 400 TL.

employment relation of the assistants with the university increases the burden on the professors in particular departments. If a graduate student assistant had an accident in the laboratory which happened in the past in one of the foundation universities in my sample, the professor had the responsibility instead of the administration. Besides the natural science or engineering departments, the professors like Interviewee 33 whose graduate student assistants played an important role in the data collection part of her research projects can encounter a similar issue:

> I work with a lot of graduate student assistants who conduct the field work of my research projects. During the field work, they may go to different cities or they can make various home visits. In the field, they might have an accident. […] In such a case, I would be responsible for the accident. [In fact,] I could have to stay in prison for a few years [depending on the seriousness of the accident]. (Interviewee 33, Female, Associate Professor)

Similar to the professors, another form of work insecurity expresses itself in work-related anxieties and physical illnesses. For instance, due to his busy schedule and different assistantships[60], Interviewee 8 (Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar) had to use pills which helped to reduce his stress level. Similarly, due to the mobbing in her department as well as her workload, Interviewee 44 (Female, a former Ph.D. student) started to have different physical illnesses when she had to go to school. To articulate, I want to share Interviewee 44's statement directly:

> My friend with whom I was sharing the office was dismissed [due to his critical stance towards the assistantship-in-return-for-scholarship system] and it was unbearable for me. We went to each protest together. I returned to our office, but he could not. […] In order to overcome my depressive mood, I was told consistently that I should work harder. Indeed, I was working really hard. After a while, both the pressure of 'what-is-past-is-past' and the constant control over my work and behaviors in the form of "Don't do that", "Don't go there" or "Don't talk with undergraduate students [about certain topics]" started to drive me mad. In the meanwhile, I started to get physically sick which is one of the major outcomes of mobbing. […] When I had to go to school, I got pain while trying to wake up. […] I started to have a strong migraine and the ulcer in my stomach turned into gastric. […] In this process, I went [also] to a psychiatrist. […] It was a really hard process for me.

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[60] Interviewee 8's duties as a graduate student assistants included grading all exams and home works, preparing course's slides and syllabus, editing her professor's CV, proof reading, controlling bibliography of the papers and controlling his professor's mail account. Although the interviewee did not complain about his different duties due to his professor's age, he did not deny that these responsibilities took a lot of his time.

4.6. Conclusion:

While concluding this chapter, it can be concluded that both professors and graduate student assistants have been suffering from the five labor-related security issues despite certain differences in the experiences. While graduate student assistants were subject to precarization mostly as a result of the impact of marketization wave, professors were affected by precarization not only due to the corporatization of their universities but also due to the government's capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the university. The following chapter will focus on the issue of representation which is the last labor-related security pointed out by Standing (2011). While sharing the damaging impact of the marketization on the academic labor in common, Chapter 5 aims to discuss to what extent different components of academic labor feel the deficiency of collective representative mechanisms as well as collective action to struggle against precarization of their labor.

CHAPTER 5

A STRUGGLE AGAINST PRECARIZATION?

OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As the previous two chapters indicated, both professors and graduate student assistants share the damaging impact of the marketization on their labor in common despite certain differences in their experiences. This chapter is going to focus on the issue of representation which is the last labor-related insecurity pointed out by Standing (2011). It aims to discuss to what extent different components of academic labor feel the deficiency of representative mechanisms and problematize the absence of collective action to struggle against precarization of their labor. The chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will provide an analysis of certain forms of obstacles for organizing against labor insecurity and maintaining these organizations. The second part will focus on what kind of factors can trigger and has triggered different components of academic labor to organize.

5.1. Obstacles

5.1.1 Employment Insecurity and/or Labor Market Insecurity

> People hesitate to organize, [because] they don't know what they would encounter. It is a class-based issue, I mean the issue of unionization. In our minds, all of us have the question of what would happen in a case of unionization (Interviewee 13, Male, Associate Professor, Working at a research-oriented institution.)

> If someone becomes a member of a union, she will be dismissed. […] Definitely, it is necessary to unionize, because we work like the employees in the private sector under difficult conditions. What I'm telling you is not unique to my current institution. There are lots of colleagues who clock in and out every day. In fact, it is claimed that the professors will be required also to clock in before and after their lectures in certain [foundation] universities. […] In order to determine [and standardize] certain conditions, unionization is a must. However, I may not become a member of that union which is disappointing. [Laughingly] Maybe, in the future… (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor, Working at a teaching-oriented institution)

One of the significant obstacles for organizing under a collective body such as a union is the high possibility of a dismissal for the academics regardless of the orientation of their institution. Similar to Interviewee 13 and Interviewee 41; a number of professors from three different foundation universities (Interviewee 32; Interviewee 38, Interviewee 40 and Interviewee 42) showed employment insecurity as an important reason behind non-unionizing in the academia. In fact, Interviewee 22, an assistant professor working at the recently established research-oriented university, mentioned that they were not allowed to become a member of a union because of an article in their job contract. So, academics can engage in a trade-off between their representation security and employment security not only to maintain their jobs but also to have a job.

Similar to the professors, graduate student assistants may be less willing to organize under a union or a solidarity group in order to continue their graduate education as well as to find a job after graduation. To exemplify, while collecting signatures for a petition in which graduate student assistants listed their demands and issues; Interviewee 7's (Female, Ph.D. student) friends hesitated to sign the petition in order to keep their good relations with the professors who would affect their job placement process. In a case of participating in a collective action for improving their working conditions as Interviewee 44 did, graduate students may be not only dismissed but they may also not find another job at a different university. Due to the difficulty of making career shifts, particularly as a Ph.D. student in a

social science department, graduate students can 'lose their whole reality' by being deprived of the job options in and outside academia, as Interviewee 44 experienced:

> After I was expelled from the graduate school, I thought initially that I could never find a job. The only world I knew was the academia because I had been working in the academia for years besides my experience as a DJ. What would you do with a qualified DJ? […] Therefore I lost my whole reality. […] I used to think also that academia was my only option. When your single option was taken from you, you became nothing! (Interviewee 44, Female, a former Ph.D. student)

In line with Interviewee 44's conclusion, because of the paucity of available job opportunities in research-oriented institutions and limited options outside the academia, the issue of exit option for social scientists serves as an important barrier for taking part in a collective action against labor insecurity as Interviewee 36 (Male, Assistant Professor) highlighted. As Interviewee 3 (Female, Master's student, Project scholar) observed, despite her professor's opinion on the necessity of collective actions against labor insecurity, the absence of a better exit option or, with the interviewee's own words, 'having a lot to lose' was an important reason behind her professor's lack of interest in participating in the demonstrations against precarization. Interviewee 2, another master's student studying at the same school, concluded that one of his professors became more active in the aforementioned protests after he had found a job in another university which, again, indicates clearly the positive correlation between the existence of exit options and ability to show critical stance in a case of a right violation in the workplace.

5.1.2. Effective Ideological Production Apparatuses:

As I elaborated the concept of ideological production apparatuses in Chapter 3, the production apparatuses can function as a means of legitimizing employment insecurity of professors in research-oriented institutions. In this part, I will emphasize how the board of trustees may succeed in utilizing specific institutions like the performance evaluation system to weaken the collegial solidarity among professors.

Performance evaluation system can function as an ideological production apparatus in Burawoy's (1985) sense particularly in research-oriented universities because there was no well-functioning performance evaluation system in the recently established research-

oriented university and teaching-oriented institutions. As I discussed in Chapter 3 in detail, on the one hand, a number of professors had problematized the fairness of performance evaluation process which will affect the continuity of their employment. Whether they approached the board of trustee's emphasis on the number of publications in a critical way or they were, at least, skeptical about the ways in which the evaluation system measured the 'sufficiency' of a performance. On the other hand, performance evaluation system could serve still as a powerful production apparatus, because, the board of trustees was able to get support of a counter group of academics who were persuaded into the idea that the professors having a critical stance towards the performance system were the 'losers' of the existing system. Such a division among the faculty members prevented not only emergence or sustainability of alternative organizations to stand against the administration in a case of a right violation in the workplace, but it also enabled the board of trustees to eliminate the critical voices against its economic interests and succeed in maintaining employing academics in an insecure way.

Especially, experiences of professors in one of the research-oriented institutions provide a good example for how performance evaluation system can pose an obstacle for showing critical stance to employment insecurity. For instance, with a recent change in the administration's contract renewal policy, the president of one of the universities has recently become more strict about the number of publications which resulted in the dismissal of an important number of professors. Interviewee 33, an associate professor working at the aforementioned institution, pointed out the division among the faculty members while talking about why the solidarity group of professors failed to increase the pressure on the administration to change its decision:

> When the university informed some of our colleagues that their contract would be not renewed for the next academic year, we [, I mean the solidarity group of the faculty members], showed a great effort [to change the decision of the administration]. We tried to explain the mission of a university to the people in the administration at a more philosophical level. These people [who were dismissed] contributed to our university at different levels. Those contributions should also be taken into the account. […] These people have to maintain a family or there are other life-events. The university should consider these factors as well. We tried to explain these things to the administration, but why did we fail? Because we failed, first of all, to get the support of our colleagues. Some of them thought that our dismissed colleagues should have worked harder. […] Whom

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was this solidarity group is representing? That was the question which was asked by the administration. (Interviewee 33, Female, Associate Professor)

Similarly, when I asked to Interviewee 32, an associate professor working at the same research oriented institution with Interviewee 33 but in a different department, whether he was active in the solidarity group or not, his answer indicates clearly how academics perceived the situation of their dismissed colleagues as an individual issue instead of a collective issue:

> I was not active. I did not participate actively in the meetings. I'm not sure to what extent the recent meetings [organized by the solidarity group of faculty members] addressed to the professors who were not directly affected by the administration's recent policies like me. (Interviewee 32, Male, Associate Professor)

So both conclusions show the success of the administration in presenting employment insecurity as an absence of individual competitiveness rather than a collectively shared insecurity and a structural issue.

5.1.3. Perception of being a graduate student:

An analysis of how graduate education is perceived by the different components of academic labor is important for several reasons. First of all, it can show us to what extent graduate student assistants problematized their informal employment which affects their willingness for a struggle against their own labor insecurity. Secondly, the perspective of professors on the graduate assistantship as well as graduate education reflects not only how they perceive the precarity of their junior colleagues, but it indicates also how some views such as 'Assistantship is more of a part of the academic development/learning process than a form of labor' which have been internalized and normalized since the graduate education, can reduce the possibility of organizing under a collective body which consists of different components of the academic labor.

While discussing the perception of graduate education, I want to start with how current graduate student assistants perceived themselves and their informal employment relationship with the university. At that point, graduate students are divided into three groups.

While two graduate students (Interviewee 2 and Interviewee 24) alternated between being a student and being an employee, half of the remaining students (8 people) considered themselves more an employee and the other half identified themselves as a graduate student.

The self-perceptions of graduate student assistants depend mostly on their experience with their professors as well as with the administrative bodies of the school. For instance, Interviewee 47 (Male, Ph.D. student) concluded that because of a huge number of Ph.D. students who have not graduated yet, the board of trustees did not increase the budget of his department which led the department to encourage their Ph.D. students, first of all, to finish their degrees. The attitude of the administration and the faculty members was an important reason behind the dominance of studentship for Interviewee 47 and Interviewee 48 who were Ph.D. students in the same department. Similarly, the graduate school's emphasis on the importance of assistantship in the meetings led Interviewee 25, a master's student in a different foundation university, to consider herself, first of all, as an employee. To give another example, as Interviewee 7 (Female, Ph.D. student) believed that her professors did not only perceive Ph.D. students as students but also as their junior colleagues which increased the interviewee's sense of being an employee.

The workload and the content of the assistantship are the other important factors. For instance, by comparing his current assistantship experience in a public university with his past experience in a foundation university, Interviewee 46's conclusion indicates clearly how his workload, as well as his income level, affected the way he defined himself:

> While I was a graduate student assistant in a foundation university, I never thought that I was employed by the university, because neither I earned [a sufficient amount of] salary nor I was expected to do a lot of work in return. [Therefore] I felt myself more like a student there. Due to the amount of my stipend, I thought like 'Why do I spare [more] time for an assistantship?' Even I didn't make office hours. Why should I do? The amount of my stipend is apparent. […] All of my friends had a similar perspective. (Interviewee 46, Male, Master's student)

In line with Interviewee 46's perspective; Interviewee 19 and Interviewee 45, two master's students in different foundation universities, considered themselves more a student due to the limited time they spared for their assistantship.

The time spent for the assistantship and the workload of graduate student assistants are not only important for understanding graduate student assistants' perception of their

current conditions but also for understanding why professors might trivialize the precarization of the graduate student assistants in their institutions. For instance, while discussing the graduate student assistants' conditions in their current institutions, both Interviewee 26 and Interviewee 36- professors working at two different universities-emphasized that the hours of work spared for assistantship in practice are less than the hours of work which graduate student assistants were theoretically expected to work[61]. In that sense, Interviewee 36 considered the stipends more of an unconditional scholarship than a payment in return for labor. Comparing their own graduate education process with their current students' process can also decrease the professors' feeling of empathy with their graduate student assistants. Particularly a group of professors (Interviewee 14, Interviewee 17, Interviewee 22, Interviewee 32, Interviewee 34, Interviewee 37) who obtained their graduate degree from the United States concluded that their graduate students' conditions were better than the workload and hours of work they had spent for their own assistantship. For instance, while Interviewee 37 (Female, Assistant Professor) was the only TA of a course which was taken by 120 people during the graduate education, minimum 10 assistants were allocated for a course taken by 300 people in her current institution. As another example, Interviewee 34 (Female, Assistant Professor) had to teach a course even in her first year in the graduate program. So, except for Interviewee 44, the graduate student assistants had indeed relatively less workload and they spared comparatively less time for their assistantships.

Besides the differences in the workload, how professors thought about their working conditions during the graduate education can explain the absence of solidarity between different components of academic labor as well. When I asked how they felt about their workload or busy schedule as a graduate student, I got the answers like "You had to do that in order to obtain your degree", "All graduate student assistants were in a similar situation, so I did not problematize my own working conditions" or "Assistantship is more as a part of the learning process of a graduate student than a form of labor". The last answer needs more

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[61] In two universities in my sample, graduate students were expected theoretically to do 20 hours of assistantship in return for their tuition waivers and/or other forms of scholarships including stipend. However, none of the graduate student assistants were given an information neither about their expected hours of work nor about the content of their jobs before starting to the program. After they started to the graduate program they learned about actual expectations under assistantship.

elaboration because it serves more as a means of internalization of labor insecurity than the former two answers which reflect more a forced choice.

One of the reasons behind considering assistantship more as learning process and means of academic development is the direct contribution of the assistantship requirements to graduate students' own research in particular disciplines. As an assistant professor in one of the aforementioned disciplines, Interviewee 37 concluded that:

> Can we consider graduate student assistants employees? I think that the graduate students mainly work for themselves. I mean, contributions of assistantship to my own work or to the department are at a minimal level. [However], as I said before, I'm talking about our department […], [because] graduate student assistantship is different in our department. […] In our discipline, you have to collect data whether by conducting experiments in a lab or by making surveys. If you are working with a professor [and you can collect your data while working as a research assistant in your professor's project], it will be better [for your thesis process]. (Interviewee 37, Female, Assistant Professor)

Similarly, by drawing on his observations in the United States, Interviewee 26 (Male, Professor) considered graduate student assistantship as a process in which both professor and the graduate student assistant mutually benefit from. Again by taking the system in particular departments as a basis for his argument, he pointed out that, particularly, research assistantship process can make easier to collect data of the thesis for a graduate student who may not be able to conduct this research otherwise due to financial issues or the issue of time. In line with his former conclusion, he perceives TAship experience as 'an opportunity to gain practical teaching experience' rather than a form of labor.

It cannot be denied that the assistantship experience will have crucial contributions to the academic career of a graduate student. However, what is problematic with this approach is that it can serve as a means of normalizing or trivializing some current issues of the graduate student assistants. For instance, while talking about sudden increases in her workload as an assistant, Interviewee 22's sentences show clearly how she normalized her experience of job insecurity by considering these sudden changes as a part of a learning process:

> For instance, my professor required from me to do a literature review for his conference talk one night before the conference! It required a lot of time. [So,] I had to work for the whole night to finish it. Sometimes, I could be required to do coding, although it had nothing to do with my own research. [However], I believe that such experiences enabled me to improve my work ethic a lot. [When I was a

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graduate student], I could consider such requirements unnecessary, but now I acknowledge their importance. You benefit from the things you learned during your assistantship a lot. (Interviewee 22, Female, Assistant Professor)

Similar to Interviewee 22's point on 'improvements in her work ethic', Interviewee 40's colleague who obtained her Ph.D. degree from a public university in Turkey, emphasized how being ready for sudden requirements of their professors enabled her to become a more hard-working academic:

> Only one hour before the class, my professor could inform me that I would be lecturing that week's topic instead of her. She was telling me this while she was passing by my door. [So] I had to prepare for the lecture in the last moment. You had to be always ready to lecture if you were required to do so. If you asked me that how I benefitted from such an experience or not, I could teach many different courses. Because they [I mean our professors] made us get used to work hard. (Interviewee 40's colleague, Female, Assistant Professor)

In both Interviewee 22's and Interviewee 40's colleague cases, being ready for spontaneous requirements serves beyond as a means of gaining skills which will improve an academic's performance as a lecturer or a researcher. It can also serve as a means of trivializing their flexible job requirements which is an important aspect of job insecurity. Lastly, Interviewee 41's emphasis on learning which is 'the whole life of an academic' provides another good example of how such discourses or perceptions on the 'nature' of an academic career can even prevent an academic to problematize their experience of work insecurity and income insecurity:

> I believe that despite the lack of social security or the insufficient income level, being an academic is that kind of a job. I mean, being an academic means to me being eager to learn and take the responsibility without taking any offense at your professor. Because learning is our life. […] While I was a graduate student who was working in return for scholarship, social security was a problem, however that assistantship experience had important contributions to my career. […] Generations are changing. I think there is such a difference between our generation and the new generation: We were more willing to fulfill our obligations whatever they were. However, I heard sometimes sentences of our graduate students like 'I don't have to do this. My stipend does not cover that'. We really get surprised, because academia relies indeed on a master-apprentice relation. (Interviewee 41, Female, Assistant Professor)

Interviewee 41's observation on her current Ph.D. students' attitudes is also interesting. As her statement indicated, factors like 'taking the nature of the academia for granted' or

'willingness to learn' may not function as means of internalizing labor insecurity for the 'new generation'. Having such a difference between the attitudes of 'two generations' may be related to the existence of third parties in regulating the relationship between the professor and the student which reduces the student's dependence on her professor in her assistantship relation. This institution was the only university where the president of the board of trustees had a control over the working conditions of all components of the academic labor which I discussed more in detail in the beginning of Chapter 4. So, by relying on the directives of the president[62], the graduate student assistant might be more comfortable while satisfying the requirements. Unlike her graduate student assistant, Interviewee 41 obtained her graduate degree from a foundation university where the working conditions of the assistants depend much on the professor they were working with. There were no effective third parties such as an effective graduate school or the president of the board of trustees like in Interviewee 41's current institution. In that sense, instead of her generation, her subjection to a professor in her assistantship process may have increased her tolerance to different forms of labor insecurity.

5.1.4. Duration of the graduate program & Heterogeneity in the demands in a case of organizing under a collective body:

In addition to the perceptions of the graduate program, certain objective facts such as duration of the graduate program and the heterogeneity in the demands of graduate student assistants can affect the attempt to organize as well as the sustainability of the existing collective bodies. To start with, duration of the graduate education can decrease the motivation to organize especially in the master's students' case because they do not spend more than three years in their institution. As Interviewee 23 summarized eloquently:

> Two years are not enough to change this system. In that sense, we lack a well-established, well-institutionalized solidarity organizations. It would be better if

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[62] This president wanted to minimize the responsibilities of the assistant due to their informal employment relation which could be related to two facts in accordance with the statements of some graduate student assistants. In 2014, a graduate student assistant who was working in return for her scholarship sued her university due to her informal employment and she won the law suit against her institution. In the meanwhile, the solidarity group of graduate assistants drew the public attention. Both factors could have led the board of trustees to take a step back and the administration required from the departments to decrease the workload of assistants at a significant level. Source on the law suit: http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/yargitay-asistan-degil-isci-1187269/ Accessed on 19/07/2017.

such an organization existed. However, who will establish it? (Interviewee 23, Male, Master's student)

In addition to the issue of motivation, Interviewee 32 (Male, Associate Professor) pointed out the issue of sustainability of such organizations as a result of the duration of the graduate program:

> Both master's and Ph.D. students won't stay as graduate students in their whole life. Considering the fact, the following cohorts have to maintain the solidarity group after the founders of the organization leave the university. So, it creates certain difficulties. Not all students want to save an institution where they will spend only a few years. If the following cohorts are not as motivated as the founders to maintain the organization [of graduate student assistants], it will be a problem.

Heterogeneity in the demands of graduate student assistants serves as another obstacle for the bargaining power of an organization of graduate student assistants which might affect its success and, in that sense, the continuity of the organization. At that point, Interviewee 32's observations on a current organization of graduate student assistants at his institution can exemplify the issue of heterogeneity:

> In my opinion, whether unionization of graduate student assistants or organizing under a solidarity group is not problematic. However, what can be problematic is that very different topics can be included in the list of demands in order to attract a wide range of graduate students to join the organization. For instance, while our graduate students established a solidarity group to solve their problems with the administration, problems about their studentship as well as the amount of the stipends were included in the petition prepared by the graduate students. Also, another problem which was included in their petition was the use of social facilities such as the swimming pool. In such a case, the diversity of demands would create a problem for solving the problems of the graduate students. (Interviewee 32, Male, Associate Professor)

Social income and different sources of scholarship are important reasons for this heterogeneity. Depending on their age and sources of income apart from their stipends, graduate student assistants can be divided within themselves, as Interviewee 44 (Female, former Ph.D. student) experienced while graduate students in her institutions were trying to organize. On the one hand, a group gave priority to an increase in the stipends. This group consisted mostly of graduate student assistants who had to sustain a living on their own, who were married or who had children. On the other hand, the remaining group wanted first of all to gain their social security right. Although they managed to find a middle ground at the end

of the day according to Interviewee 44, differences in the social income can create a problem while raising a collective voice against labor insecurity of the graduate student assistants. As well as the social income, sources of their scholarship may lead to a division among the graduate student assistants, a fact which was pointed out by Interviewee 2 (Male, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar). At Interviewee 2's institution, graduate students got their stipends not only from the university but also from TÜBİTAK, from the budget of their professors' research projects or sometimes from companies. As a result of the difference in sources of scholarship, problems of graduate student assistants varied as well. To exemplify, TÜBİTAK scholars could have social security, if they accepted to have a decline in their stipend. Therefore, while writing a collective petition to the administration in which graduate student assistants listed their demands, some TÜBİTAK scholars didn't want to sign for the demand of social security.

To conclude, as well as subjective reasons, certain objective facts including the duration of the graduate program and heterogeneous conditions of the graduate student assistants can affect the existing struggle of graduate student assistants or potential struggles in a negative way.

5.2. Opportunities:

Although in the previous part I provided a pessimistic picture, there are certain opportunities which have triggered the emergence of collective action against precarization in three foundation universities in my sample. One of these opportunities is a law suit of a former graduate student assistant who was working in return for her scholarship. She sued her school due to her informal employment relationship with the school and won the case. As a result, her university had to pay back all social security expenses for the years she had spent at this particular institution. This case was important for the other graduate students because it could serve as a precedent case.

In all three universities, although none of the graduate student assistants sued their university, this case has increased their motivation to form an organization and to share their

issues and demands with the administration. For instance, Interviewee 4's (Female, Ph.D. Student) statement reveals clearly an increase in her self- confidence due to the precedent case: "Sometimes, I feel more like how can I struggle against the experienced group of lawyers of our university. But after the precedent case, I started to think why not." Similarly, Interviewee 44, a former Ph.D. student in another university, concluded that after the aforementioned graduate student won the case, the graduate student assistants in her faculty started to talk about what they could do to improve their stipends and to gain their social security right.

Former collective actions serve as another important opportunity for mobilization of the graduate student assistants. As Interviewee 2 (Male, Master's student) pointed out that the solidarity group of the academics emerged by benefitting from the networks and contact information collected in another protest a year ago.

Another point which was remarkable in the conclusions of the graduate student assistants is the impact of Gezi Resistance- an anti-government resistance in the summer of 2013- on graduate students' perception of the collective action. To exemplify, Interviewee 48 (Female, Ph.D. student) stressed that after the Gezi Uprising, graduate student assistants from different faculties have started to meet and learn about the other departments' problems. Afterward, they listed their demands and issues to share with the administration which resulted in certain gains of rights.

In addition to the positive impact of previously gained rights and former social movements, particularly in two foundation universities, relatively worse salary levels and the fringe benefits provided by the school served as a triggering factor for mobilization of the graduate students as Interviewee 48 and Interviewee 44- a current and a former Ph.D. student at two different universities- confirmed. In parallel with the experiences of Interviewee 44 and Interviewee 48, Interviewee 27 (Male, Assistant Professor) pointed out the importance of relative impoverishment for unionizing by drawing on his own experience during the graduate education in the United States.

In a discussion of the opportunities, I focused primarily on the graduate students' mobilization under solidarity groups. However, that does not mean that professors did not have any attempt to organize against the right violations in the workplace and their labor insecurity. In one of the foundation universities in my sample, professors established a

solidarity group of faculty members. This solidarity group was particularly active in the contract renewal period in which an important number of academics were informed about their dismissal. However, according to Interviewee 33, the active members of the solidarity group were considered as 'losers' of the existing system by the majority of faculty members in her institution:

> The people who are going to the meetings of the solidarity group or who take an active role in the managerial board of the group are considered 'losers'. There is a common perception that people who cannot satisfy the publication expectations and therefore have a risky position, consider the existence of a solidarity group necessary. (Interviewee 33, Female, Associate Professor)

When I asked about the composition of faculty members in this solidarity group, Interviewee 34 (Female, Assistant Professor) concluded the dominance of faculty members from social sciences and humanities in the university. The fact is most probably related to the relatively disadvantageous position of social sciences and humanities which do not directly contribute to the national competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy and which are considered relatively more resource consuming than resource generating in a corporatized university environment. Also, standardization of the performance criteria can lead the university administrations to fail to take into consideration the particularities of the social science disciplines which creates another layer of structural disadvantage experienced by social scientists in their institutions. However rather than acknowledging these structural issues faced by a number of disciplines including social sciences, the professors who are interested in class politics and willing to struggle against precarization of academic labor can be labeled as 'leftist' which was not perceived as positive in the eyes of her colleagues as Interviewee 33 observed.

Apart from the solidarity group of professors, there was an attempt to establish another solidarity group which aimed to include all components of the university again in the same foundation university. However, according to Interviewee 6 (Male, Lecturer), this solidarity group was established with the efforts of graduate student assistants. In line with Interviewee 6's observation, Interviewee 38 concluded that the participation of faculty members in the second solidarity group was relatively low and the active participants were, again, from the social science departments.

At that point, it is important to discuss further why professors were relatively less motivated to mobilize under collective bodies. Employment insecurity, the absence of exit options and the existence of effective ideological apparatuses partly explain the lack of professors' interest in a struggle against their own precarization. Graduate student assistants were also affected by the employment and labor market insecurity, in fact in a relatively intense way because they were in the beginning of their career and they have no formal employment relation with the institution. Similarly, the professors' lack of interest in a collective struggle against precarization cannot be reduced to their perception of the graduate education which affects their acknowledgment of precarization of graduate student assistants in a negative way. In order to have a better understanding of the differences in the professors' motivation and attempts to organize, we have to also focus on their location within the class relation or, in other words, the issue of class locations.

5.2.1. The Issue of Class Locations

Our common experiences [of precarization] could have affected us [-I mean professors and graduate student assistants] in a positive way. I mean, we could have shared more [our problems] with the help of this commonality, but we do not share that much. We do not try to solve the problems together because there is an absence of a culture of collective action. […] I can show many reasons to explain this fact. Maybe because of their [i.e. professors'] salary, they do not think about that. Also being a professor in the X university is prestigious which may give a satisfaction to them. […] Salary, educational background, age… […] These are the possible reasons that came to my mind, [but] I don't know the real reason. (Interviewee 8, Master's student, TÜBİTAK scholar)

We earn significantly different. I mean, we have common experiences. I acknowledge that. [For instance], they don't have any employment security like us. […] However despite our common experiences, the hierarchy between us… They seem that they want to protect this hierarchy. Maybe they do this unconsciously, I don't know. What we commonly experience is uncertainty. (Interviewee 3, Master's student, Project Scholar)

In professors' case, the realization of common experiences of precarization is not only related to the factors discussed in previous sections. While Interviewee 3 showed collegial hierarchy as the major obstacle for an absence of such a realization, Interviewee 8 emphasized multiple

factors such as the lack of a culture of collective action, salary level, status or age. However, the factors pointed out interviewees are actually a result of the different rights and powers that professors may have over the production process in the university, or more shortly, a result of the differences in the class locations of professors and graduate student assistants.

The concept of class location was introduced by Eric Olin Wright. Instead of reducing class location to an objective position within the class relation determined by various material benefits such as the salary level, Wright considers it as a "social position within a class relation [which] is formed within the structured patterns of [social] interaction" (2005, p.14). According to Wright, the class location of an individual is affected by the distribution of the rights and powers over the process of production. The degree of autonomy and authority, the level of responsibility or cognitive complexity of tasks are some examples of the aforementioned rights and powers (p.15). To give a concrete example from the corporate world, although managers can be hired and fired like the other employees, they have a right to exercise some powers of capital including changes in the labor process, employing or dismissing the junior employees. In addition to the material benefits of being a manager, their right to exercise certain forms of power place managers in a different location compared to the junior employees within the class relation. Wright gives highly skilled professionals as another example to emphasize their particular location within the class relation due to their credentials which bring them particular rights and powers over different aspects of their work (2005, pp. 16-17). From his perspective, a discussion on the class locations is crucial, because:

> If we want to understand the formation of people's subjective experiences within work or the dilemmas faced by union organizers on the shop floor, or the tendencies for people to form different kinds of coalitions within political conflicts, or the prospects for living a comfortable material existence, then knowing that they are capitalist or a worker within a polarized model of class relations is unlikely to tell us everything we want to know. (Wright, 2005, p.15)

By drawing on Wright's concept of class location, I argue that the differences in class locations serve as a good departure point in order to understand why a class-based solidarity is absent in the academia and why different components of academic labor do not realize the common experiences of precarization. Depending on their levels of responsibility and degree of power in the administrative mechanisms, their right to exercise certain forms of power of

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an employer over graduate student assistants and/or other professors, their degree of autonomy in their labor process or their qualifications; the professors' subjective experiences of precarization as well as their willingness to organize under a collective body can vary at a significant level. An uneven distribution of the aforementioned rights and powers within the university shapes the distribution of material benefits among the different components of academic labor.

The differences in class locations can reduce the sense of collectivity in the existing struggles against precarization, as Interviewee 44 and Interviewee 4 experienced. Interviewee 44's critique of several professors' attitude in a meeting, where different components of academic labor were sharing their experiences of precarization, provides a good example of the issue of class locations:

> Professor X left the room when the panel of graduate student assistants started. While our panel was continuing, he came to the room to control whether we had finished speaking or not. Only after our panel was finished, he came back. There were a number of professors who behaved in a similar manner, even in such a meeting! They were also 'old-school' professors like Professor X. […] Although I didn't like such attitudes, I continued to go to the meetings of the solidarity group because I considered the existence of such a solidarity group as a positive development. (Interviewee 44, Female, a former Ph.D. student)

It would be wrong to conclude that the lack of interest of the aforementioned professors in the graduate student assistants' problems is only as a result of their different class locations. It may be also related to a number of myths about being an academic[63] (Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın, 2015) which shapes their perception of being a graduate student as well. However, similar to the aforementioned difference between managers and junior employees

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[63] Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın consider their participants' certain opinions on the academic career as an academic myth which alleiviates the subjective experiences of precarization with the help of some already-accepted perceptions of 'being an academic'. They argue that these myths are based on the idea that academic career is different and more important than all other occupations due to the attribution of high importance to science in the modern era. Their occupation serves as a crucial means of progress and development. As a result of their important mission, academics should not be affected from and should not complain about the difficulties they encounter while sustaining their livings (2015, pp. 79-80). On the other hand, academic profession and universities have been subject to a remarkable change with extension of market mechanisms to the academia and with massification since the last marketization wave following the oil crisis in 1973. As Leslie and Slaughter summarized eloquently: "As the industrial revolution at the end of nineteenth century created the wealth that provided the base for postsecondary education and attendant professionalization, so the globalization of the political economy at the end of the twentieth century is destabilizing patterns of university professional work developed over the past hundred years" (1997, p.1). In that sense, Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın considers certain views on academic career as an illusion rather than the current reality of academic career. They pointed out a number of myths including a trade off between material securities and inner satisfaction one can get from his job , "financial difficulties as a part of the nature of academic career", "enjoying master-apprentice relationship", "high degree of autonomy". (2015, pp. 79-107).

in terms of their rights and powers over the production process, the differences between professors and assistants as well as among the professors who were at different stages in their career serve as an important obstacle for the existence of solidarity among different components of academic labor. While talking about the composition of academics in the solidarity group, Interviewee 44's observation supports my conclusion. Her statement reveals the significance of class locations for understanding the absence of class-based solidarity in the academia:

> [Although the solidarity group was open to all components of the university], it was the solidarity group of graduate student assistants in practice. I can tell you frankly that without [the efforts and participation of] graduate student assistants, the meetings cannot be organized. Graduate student assistants constitute the majority who regularly attend the meetings. There are also a few number of professors who regularly come to the meetings, but they are the ones who were actively participated in the class-based struggles of graduate student assistants during their graduate education. The other professors only come in a case of a dismissal. The professors who attend the meetings mostly consist of the adjunct faculty members and the faculty members from the language departments. [The reason for this fact] is that when your academic rank increases and you got an advantageous position in the collegial hierarchy, you will encounter fewer problems.

Interviewee 44's point on the importance of an academic's position in the academic and/or administrative hierarchy for her participation in a solidarity group against precarization of academic labor, supports the significance of rights and powers an academic has over the production process while discussing the uneven distribution of the participants of the solidarity group in terms of their location within the class relation.

While Interviewee 4 focused more on the material outcomes of the distribution of rights and powers among different components of the academic labor, her opinion on the demands of instructors at her institution reveals significantly how the class locations can serve as an obstacle for maintaining a sense of collectivity in a case of organizing against precarization:

> OK, instructors have also important problems, but… I mean, I felt like what we [i.e. graduate student assistants] were struggling for was really different than the instructors' motivation to participate in the solidarity group. Because their conditions… I know that we should stand together; [but] for instance they earn approximately 6000 TL per month. We have similar educational backgrounds. [Some] instructors are also Ph.D. students [but] they are teaching some core [undergraduate] courses. As the administration declared a reduction in their salaries and an increase in their workload… When I compare their conditions

with the conditions of graduate student assistants who [are not full-time employees like instructors] and do not have any social security, […] I found their demands a bit unnecessary. (Interviewee 4, Female, Ph.D. student)

5.3. Conclusion:

By drawing on the conclusions of the interviewees, I discussed the obstacles and opportunities for mobilization of academics against the issue of mobilization. While employment insecurity, labor market insecurity and the perception of graduate education serve as an obstacle for organizing under a solidarity group or a union for both graduate student assistants and professors, effective ideological apparatuses, duration of the graduate education and heterogeneity in the demands of graduate student assistants affect a particular component of the academic labor. While providing an analysis of the factors that triggered the mobilization of academics, an interesting fact is that graduate student assistants were more motivated to struggle against precarization by establishing solidarity groups, although they are subject to a serious precarization by not having any formal employment relation and social security. In order to have a better understanding of how professors may be less willing to take an action against their own precarization and may fail to realize common experiences of precarization, I focused also on the issue of class locations. The following chapter will be the Conclusion where I will provide a brief summary of the findings of this thesis.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this research, my aim was to explore why and in what respects social scientists in foundation universities experience precarization in Turkey. A focus on the experiences of social scientists in foundation universities enabled me to observe not only the impact of the recent marketization wave on the academic labor but also the impact of government on the precarization of academics whose research interests and scholarly activities are more prone to conflict with the political interests of the government.

In the previous studies on different forms of labor insecurity in Turkey as well as in some advanced capitalist countries, the departure point was the changing capital-labor relations with the decline of the welfare-state regime and with the extension of the logic of market to new spheres including the academia. In these studies, the role of the government is whether not emphasized or only its role of being a regulator of capital-labor relations is pointed out. Without neglecting the influence of commodification of labor and knowledge on the social scientists in foundation universities, this study argues that government's capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the academic workplace for its own political interests is crucial for understanding, particularly, the precarization of social science professors in foundation universities. While the government has been able to have a direct control over all universities in Turkey since the establishment of Council of Higher Education (YÖK), depending on the relationship between the business people in the board of trustees and the government, it can make indirect interventions to the university due to Turkey's position as a late industrialized country which led to a particular development of the state-capital relations compared to the early industrialized, advanced capitalist countries. In that sense, the first contribution of this thesis to the existing literature is that it provides a multi-

dimensional analysis of the precarization of academic labor with the help of a case study conducted in a developing and late-industrialized country like Turkey.

In order to analyze various experiences of precarization in the academia, I conducted interviews with 22 professors and 18 graduate student assistants from five different foundation universities in Turkey. Conducting interviews with both components of the academic labor enabled me not only to capture the common and unique experiences of precarization but also in what circumstances different experiences of labor insecurity can be interrelated. On the other hand, apart from a few exceptions, previous studies analyzed the impact of the recent marketization wave on each component of the academic labor separately. Even if Taşdemir-Avşar (2015), and Vatansever and Gezici-Yalçın (2015) discussed the experiences of both graduate student assistants and professors, only Vatansever and Gezici Yalçın focused from time to time on the influence of the relationship between the professor and the assistant on the precarization of different components of academic labor. However, their analysis was limited to the impact of the collegial hierarchy on the precarization of the relatively disadvantaged in the hierarchical relation. One of the important findings of this study is that the professor's degree of dependence on her assistant's labor in her research, in her teaching and/or while dealing with the administrative work can lead to a trade-off between different labor-related insecurities of the two components of the academic labor in a corporatized university environment. Economic concerns of the administration can turn precarious components of academic labor into two groups with conflicting interests. In that sense, another contribution of this thesis to the existing literature on the precarization of academic labor is showing interrelations between different experiences of precarization.

Although both professors and graduate student assistants are exposed to all forms of labor insecurities pointed out by Standing (2011), their experiences of precarization varied due to several factors. To start with the reasons for the differences in professors' experiences, the orientation of the foundation university constitutes an important reason. Working at a research-oriented or teaching-oriented foundation university creates especially important differences in the experiences of employment insecurity, job insecurity, and income insecurity. In research-oriented foundation universities, the continuity of the employment and the promotion in terms of academic title and income depend heavily on the publication performance of a professor which shapes the subjective experiences of employment and

income insecurity at a significant level. In the recently-established research-oriented institution as well as teaching-oriented universities, the contract renewal process is not affected strictly by the performance evaluation results like in the well-established research-oriented institutions. In that sense, the continuity of the employment can depend on more subjective factors like the good intention of the board of trustees, doing the job properly or not making any public statements against the unity of the country. Different than their colleagues in research-oriented institutions, professors, particularly in teaching-oriented universities, can encounter problems with the stability of their income as well as ambiguities about their salary after their recruitment. In terms of job insecurity, in research-oriented institutions, professors have a relatively better working environment in terms of maintaining a teaching-research balance or having financial sources for their research and academic development compared to their colleagues in teaching-oriented institutions. On the other hand, regardless of the orientation of the university, social science professors suffer from job insecurity due to the recent marketization wave. With the rising importance of higher education as a means of increasing national competitiveness and with the increasing dependence of universities on the external sources of income, departments' contributions to the university income as well as to the national economy have become important at a global level as well as in Turkey. Due to the relatively disadvantageous position of the social science departments in terms of the amount and the number of research grants available to social scientists, attracting students or contributions to the technological development; financial resources allocated to social science departments have been reduced globally and even in some countries, the number of social science departments has been reduced. In this regard, social science professors in research-oriented universities are not exempt from job insecurity.

In discussions of social science professors' experience of precarization, the government's capacity to make direct and indirect interventions to the university plays an important role. Particularly social science professors whose research and teaching activities can challenge the government's authority and policies are subject to government-related precarization in Turkey. Government serves as a source of precarization in two ways: First, with the help of a centralized institution, Council of Higher Education, the government can have a control over all higher education institutions which can lead professors whose research and scholarly activities can turn them into the target of the government, to feel uncomfortable

particularly while thinking about their promotions. Depending on the relation between the government and business people, the government can use its particular apparatuses against the business people in order to reinforce its authority in a case of conflicting interests. Due to both current business relations with the state as well as historical development of state-capital relations in late industrialized countries, business people in the board of trustees can consider political interests of the government besides their own economic interests. In that sense, the government is capable of making indirect interventions to the foundation universities which can lead professors to consider themselves not only under pressure in their research and teaching processes but also insecure in their employment relationship with the school.

Different than the professors, graduate student assistants experience precarization mostly due to the proliferation of flexible employment with the recent marketization wave because their informal employment relation with the school reduces the control of both board of trustees and the Council of Higher Education over their assistantship experiences. In that sense, graduate student assistants are not affected by the government-related precarization. Similar to the professors, their experiences of precarization are shaped by the impact of the neoliberal restructuring on the social sciences in an intense way. Depending on the degree of institutionalization as well as the existence of effective third parties and/or representative mechanisms, the relation between professors and assistants becomes the main determinant of the job content, hours of work, and in some cases, stipend levels of graduate student assistants. This fact leads to significant variations in the experiences of precarization.

In this thesis, I discussed not only how both professors and graduate student assistants struggle to survive in a university environment where political and/or economic concerns can dominate the academic ones, but also the possibility of a struggle against precarization of academic labor. While providing an analysis of the factors that prevented and led to the mobilization of academics, an interesting finding is that compared to professors, graduate student assistants were more motivated to struggle against precarization by establishing solidarity groups despite their insecure employment, current and future labor market insecurity, duration of the graduate program, division among the graduate students in terms of their perception of graduate education all of which could have decreased the motivation of graduate students to organize. Although all of the aforementioned factors can serve as an

obstacle for mobilization of each component of the academic labor and/or for the realization of common experiences of precarization, differences in the class locations play a crucial role in explaining why professors may be less willing to participate in a collective struggle.

I want to conclude this thesis by making some suggestions for further studies on the precarization of the academic labor. There are relatively few studies on the experiences of academics in public universities in Turkey compared to the studies on the academics in foundation universities. Although foundation universities constitute an ideal place to observe the impact of recent marketization wave on the universities and academic labor, Council of Higher Education has been also working on restructuring managerial structure of the public universities since the 1990s by taking foundation universities as a role model. A study on to how academics in public universities have been experiencing precarization despite their status as civil servants would enable us to have a better understanding of precarization of academic labor in Turkey.

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