GENDERED POLITICS OF FOOD: AN ANALYSIS ON WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD COOPERATIVES IN ANKARA

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IŞIL SERVETOĞLU

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submitted by **IŞIL SERVETOĞLU** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Science in Political Science and Public Administration, the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Sadettin KİRAZCI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences _____

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Tarık ŞENGÜL
Head of Department
Department of Political Science and Public Administration _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aylin TOPAL
Supervisor
Department of Political Science and Public Administration _____

Examining Committee Members:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Münis Seven AĞIR (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Economics _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aylin TOPAL (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Political Science and Public Administration _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zühre AKSOY
Boğaziçi University
Department of Political Science and International Relations _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Işıl SERVETOĞLU

Signature:

ABSTRACT

GENDERED POLITICS OF FOOD: AN ANALYSIS ON WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD COOPERATIVES IN ANKARA

SERVETOĞLU, Işıl
M.S., The Department of Political Science and Public Administration
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aylin TOPAL

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The food is becoming increasingly acute problem both in the world and in Turkey. Realizing that the problem is in the dynamics of food production, distribution and consumption, researchers and activists have turned to search for alternatives. At this point, the common opinion is that gender equality has an important place in food systems due to the paradoxical position of women as being both food producers and food insecure. Although the place of gender perspective in the world literature is central for food systems studies, the number of research from this perspective in Turkey is limited. Based on this, this thesis explores the opportunities and barriers to ameliorating the problems in food chains in Turkey with community-based food networks based on gender equality. To that end, the transformation of agri-food systems and the rise of alternative food networks (AFNs) are traced in the world and in Turkey. In addition, based on in-depth interviews with thirteen women who are members of agri-food cooperatives in Ankara this thesis examines the status of gender equality-oriented AFNs in Turkey. The findings of this study show that an AFNs has not yet been fully formed and there are some obstacles to its formation, such as the lack of development of cooperative understanding and exploitation of

women within the cooperatives among others. Despite that, there are promising potentials of such a structuring in Ankara, like increasing social and economic solidarity, rural development and women's say and visibility.

Keywords: Alternative Food Networks, Gender Equality, Agri-Food Cooperatives, Food Sovereignty, Ecofeminism

ÖZ

GENDERED POLITICS OF FOOD: AN ANALYSIS ON WOMEN IN AGRI-FOOD COOPERATIVES IN ANKARA

SERVETOĞLU, Işıl
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Hem dünyada hem Türkiye'de gıda sorunu giderek büyüyerek şiddetlenen bir hal almaktadır. Sorunun daha yapısal olarak gıda üretim, bölüşüm ve tüketim dinamiklerinde olduğunu fark eden araştırmacı ve aktivistler alternatif arayışlarına yönelmişlerdir. Bu noktada ortak kanı kadınların hem gıda üreticisi hem de gıda güvencesiz olarak tuttukları paradoksal pozisyondan dolayı, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin gıda sistemlerinde önemli bir yeri olduğudur. Dünya yazınında toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifinin yeri gıda çalışmaları için her ne kadar merkez konumda olsa da, Türkiye'de bu perspektiften bakan çalışmaların sayısı sınırlıdır. Buradan yola çıkarak bu tez, Türkiye'de gıda zincirlerinde yaşanan sorunların, toplumsal eşitliğine dayanan topluluk temelli gıda ağı yapılarıyla iyileştirilmesi önündeki fırsat ve engelleri araştırmaktadır. Bu amaçla, dünyada ve Türkiye'de tarım-gıda sistemlerinin dönüşümünün ve alternatif gıda ağlarının yükselişinin izi sürülmektedir. Ayrıca Türkiye'de toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği odaklı alternatif gıda ağlarının durumunu inceleyebilmek için bu tez, Ankara'da tarım-gıda kooperatiflerine üye on üç kadınla yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlara dayanan bir saha çalışması içermektedir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, alternatif bir gıda ağının henüz tam olarak oluşmadığını ve

oluşumunun önünde kooperatifçilik anlayışının gelişmemesi ve kadınların kooperatifler içinde sömürülmesi gibi bazı engeller olduğunu göstermektedir. Buna rağmen, Ankara'da böyle bir yapılanmanın sosyal ve ekonomik dayanışmayı, kırsal kalkınmayı ve kadınların söz ve görünürlüğünü artırmak gibi umut verici potansiyelleri bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alternatif Gıda Ağları, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Tarımsal Gıda Kooperatifleri, Gıda Egemenliği, Ekofeminizm

To my Mom and Dad who raised me with awareness and kindness towards nature…

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFI	Alternative Food Initiative
AFN	Alternative Food Network
AoA	Agreement on Agriculture
ARIP	Agricultural Reform Implementation Program
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Money Fund
LVC	La Via Campesina
MST	Movimento Sem Terra
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TNC	Transnational Corporations
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
WB	World Bank

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As an indispensable human need, food is essential to human survival, and thus, being able to reach diverse and healthy food must be a basic human right. Nonetheless, let alone having a diverse and healthy diet, having adequate food is getting harder and harder even for the citizens of the wealthiest countries. Clearly, the footsteps of the food crises that the world is -or has been- falling into are heard in the previous food crises of 2008-09 and 2010-11 which have shown how fragile the food systems have become. Those crises that affected a number of Global South countries were caused by high food inflation which significantly reduced people's access to food and resulted in a series of social upheavals. Yet, the depth and extent of these food crises or any other crises have never reached such a scale, not at least, since World War II. At first glance, the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as the culprit, however, multiple crises that occurred both during and after the Pandemic in the areas that have gone far beyond the health crisis, like the economy, politics, and environment have shown that the problems experienced are in our production, distribution, and consumption system. The Ukrainian war further put a big pressure on the already troubled and fragile food systems as those two countries combined account for more than a third of global grain exports. Food security has been declining all over the world, and rising food prices have reached a level that creates a danger of a global food crisis.

The gravity of the situation is revealed even with the simplest data. According to data published by FAO in 2023, the prevalence of undernourishment which was relatively stable at 7.9 % of the world population between 2015 and 2019, made a jump starting from 2020 and reached 9.2 % in 2022. Moreover, the prevalence of food insecurity at severe or moderate levels rose from 21.2% to 25.5% between 2014 and 2019, and

jumped to 29.5% in 2020 with the Pandemic and since then it has been around that number (FAO et al., 2023). Corollary, in December 2022, food inflation, which was close to the average of 2014-16 in 2019 and the first three quarters of 2020, started to rise as of October 2020 and increased by 30% in 2021. In 2022, on the other hand, the food inflation rate exceeded all previous periods and reached 60% at its highest[1] (FAO, 2022).

The alarming situation that the food-related data reveal exceeds the individual events such as the Pandemic or War, rather manifests a façade of prejudices, exclusions, and privileges that permeate through patriarchy in the whole society. More concretely, food-related problems including malnourishment and food insecurity have been more threatening and severe for vulnerable groups, especially women. The gender gap in the global prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity is widening at an increasing rate. It rose 1.7% in 2019, 3% in 2020, and more than 4% in 2021. As a matter of fact, between 2020 and 2021 food security among men actually improved in every region except Africa whereas it deteriorated for women in every region except Asia. The increase in the gender gap also applies to severe food insecurity where it rose from 1,3% in 2020 to 2,5% in 2021 (FAO et al., 2023). This proves that food crises or food-related problems are experienced much more severely by women. The gender ramifications of food are not limited to consumption and manifest themselves in food production as well. Women's labor in production has been especially concentrated in the "fields of agriculture and food" (henceforth agri-food) processing in Global South countries for centuries (Toksöz, 2012). In Global South countries, nearly half of the women are still in agriculture within different dimensions of the agricultural production process and their labor has indispensable importance in the maintenance of the peasant household[2]. It is pertinent to note here that the worsening food insecurity of women despite their increasing contribution to food and agricultural production constitutes a paradox that needs to be addressed.

[1] It is important to note here that these numbers do not account for the full effects of the Ukrainian war.

[2] The concentration of women's labor in the field of agriculture is not a new phenomenon, it has increased and became more visible in the 1990s. It was generally due to the neoliberal policies of the 1980s, which erased the income-generating effect of agricultural production leading to men's employment in non-agricultural jobs, since the transition of women to non-agricultural jobs was slower than men, women were left alone with the burden of agricultural production in the fields.

For this reason, the number of studies and movements that approach the problems in food chains from the perspective of gender equality is quite high in the world yet, the number of such studies in Turkey is quite limited. Even so, Turkey is not exempt from these problems surrounding food, on the contrary, both the food crisis itself and its gendered repercussions are just as real, maybe even more severe, for Turkey. The food crisis in Turkey is much more acute compared to other countries. According to the World Bank's Food Security update of July 27, 2023, among the countries that have the highest food inflation Turkey has ranked ninth in terms of nominal food inflation with 54% nominal year-on-year food inflation and ranked fourth in terms of real food inflation with 16% real year-on-year food inflation. This high numbers of food inflation alone proves the fragility of food security in Turkey. As again, just like other Global South countries women as one of the fragile groups are affected by this downturn more than men. While this constitutes the consumption side of the paradox, on the production side women's labor plays an important part in food production and processing in Turkey. In 2022, the number of women employed in agriculture was reported as 2043 thousand and the number of men as 2822 thousand, and in the same report, such a small difference between male and female employment was not observed for any sector (TÜİK, 2023). When these figures are considered together with the fact that women working in agriculture are not registered due to reasons like the fact that their labor is seen as domestic labor, it can be claimed that women join the agricultural workforce as much as men if not more. Since both food crises and women's high participation in food production are quite apparent in Turkey, this study argues that the problems and inequalities surrounding food are highly rooted in the market-oriented food supply chains and patriarchal relationships. Based on that, this thesis investigates whether it is possible to improve the problems in food supply chains in Turkey with a community-based food web structure that centers around gender equality and if so how.

Since food-related problems were so visible and felt all over the world for a long time, alternative movements and thoughts on a more sustainable, just, and clean food system have flourished. These movements which sought to replace the dominant market-oriented food system took many different forms including producer and consumer cooperatives, collectives, community-supported agriculture groups, food

communities, and so on. These organizational forms of alternative food movements which became prevalent in the 1990s in the world with the increasingly visible negative effects of the neoliberal transformation on food have also increased in Turkey in the last fifteen years. One of the most widespread forms of these organizations in Turkey was cooperatives as it is the most lawful organization compared to the other forms like collectives or buyer's clubs which can face problems like informality, continuity, and permanency. Moreover, the cooperative law in Turkey is not as limiting in the formation of cooperatives compared to developed countries, and the form of cooperative enables the formal exchange of goods due to its legal status (Kadirbeyoglu & Konya, 2017). Aside from the legal field, other features of the cooperatives like their understanding of economic unity, business cooperation, and social solidarity, make them suitable structures to create an AFN. In a sense, food cooperatives have a direct link with alternative food movements and their other forms like community-supported agriculture, producer markets, community gardens, and so on (Öz, & Aksoy, 2019). For this reason, this thesis examines whether community-based food networks that center around gender equality can offer a solution to the food crisis through cooperatives.

1.1. The Research Problem and the Relevant Literature

This thesis aims to reveal the potential to create community-based alternative food networks focused on gender equality that can solve food-related problems in Turkey. This question has been answered by tracing the changes in the agri-food systems in late history and by examining the experiences of women working in the cooperatives within the agri-food chains from the perspective of food sovereignty and ecofeminism.

Unfortunately, the number of studies examining alternative food movements or alternative food webs in Turkey is limited. However, the number of these studies has increased with the increasing awareness of food in the last two decades. The existing studies provide conflicting arguments regarding the way in which alternative food initiatives (AFIs), especially agri-food cooperatives, have to offer to improve food systems. Some researchers like Karakaya Ayalp (2021) and Kadirbeyoğlu & Konya

(2017) raise suspicions concerning the limitations of those cooperatives to create a viable “alternative” food network. These limitations include the diverging goals and methods of the agri-food cooperatives and the scattered structure of the Turkish cooperative map. Still, other researchers like Özden (2020), Gürler & Bozlu (2022), and Öz & Aksoy (2019) conclude that AFIs have the capacity to create a viable AFN. Moreover, Soysal Al (2020) and Bilgiç (2021) found in their respective studies that a collaboration between agri-food cooperatives and municipal governments expands and enriches the transformative power of AFNs. Such collaboration also strengthens community building, social inclusion, poverty reduction, and rural development.

As it is mentioned above, the perspective of gender equality in world literature has a very important place in food studies. In this sense, although the studies on women's cooperatives and even food production within these cooperatives in Turkey are diverse (Özdemir, 2013; Dalkıran, 2017; Gürsoy, 2021), the number of studies examining alternative food webs from the perspective of gender equality is negligible, except for a few examples (Soysal Al & Küçük, 2019; Soysal Al, 2020; Karakaya Ayalp, 2021; Kadirbeyoğlu & Konya, 2017). Unfortunately, these studies do not include an in-depth analysis of gender equality, only some analyses about it. This constitutes a big gap in the respective literature. As discussed above, gender equality is an inseparable part of food-related problems and alternative food movements.

1.2. The Research Design and the Structure of the Thesis

In order to gain better insight into possibilities and limitations for an AFN that centres around gender equality in Turkey, this thesis draws upon fieldwork conducted in selected districts of Ankara. The fieldwork of the study is focused on producer cooperatives in agrifood chains. The fieldwork has been designed to collect evidence in the form of descriptive qualitative data in order to understand the place of cooperatives in food chains and gender relations in both cooperatives and food chains.

The interviews were designed as face-to-face, semi-structured, and in-depth. In-depth interviews allow for individual contact with the participants and thus enable obtaining detailed and more sincere answers. Secondly, face-to-face interviews allow for observing non-verbal indicators like gestures and pauses that can indicate discomfort or excitement, which can be important to the analyses. Lastly, the semi-structured method allows for deepening the questions or asking follow-up questions while preventing the matter from cluttering. In this context, interviews were conducted with 14 people from various districts of Ankara. The interviews were mostly conducted in the production facilities of the cooperatives.

The data is collected through interviews with women involved in the agri-food producer cooperatives in selected districts of Ankara that are: Ayaş, Bala, Beypazarı, Çankaya, Evren, Gölbaşı, Güdül, Haymana, Nallıhan. Seven of these nine districts are rural areas. The purposive sampling method has been used in the study, as the districts and the cooperatives were chosen to increase the representativeness of the sample. Although it is acknowledged that using a non-probability sampling method has a higher risk of sampling bias it is much easier in terms of feasibility. Moreover, since it is an exploratory and qualitative research that aims to gain detailed knowledge rather than making statistical inferences, the purposive sampling method will not create a bias once the selection criteria have been chosen to maximize the representativeness of the population. Although all participants were required to be women in order to make a gendered analysis, the cooperatives were not requisite to be women's cooperatives.

The transcripts and observation notes from each interview were analyzed by dividing them into common themes and sub-themes. The information gathered in the interviews was sorted into different groups to identify the commonalities and different trends reflected by the various groups of interviewees. This mapping revealed potentials and limitations through the experiences of women in cooperatives. This analysis method is chosen since it is the most appropriate method for in-depth interviews, allowing a detailed assessment of people’s opinions, knowledge, and experiences in the qualitative data set. Moreover, this analysis method makes it easier to analyze large data sets by creating common themes.

During the interviews, in addition to written notes, an audio recording was taken. After each interview observation, written notes and audio recordings were transcribed as full text within the following two days of the interview. Since the interviews may hold private information some ethical measures have been taken. First, a written consent form was obtained from the interviewees. Moreover, the names, cooperative names, or any other information that may reveal the identities of the participants was not included or coded in the thesis.

Structurally, this thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter establishes the contextual framework that this thesis uses. It first introduces the food regimes and food regimes analysis. Then it dwells upon the concept of food sovereignty. After that it overviews ecofeminism. Lastly, it establishes links between food sovereignty and ecofeminism which this thesis uses as the main framework.

The second chapter focuses on the alternative food movements in the world. To that end, it first draws a bird's-eye view of the transformation of agri-food systems in the world since the alternative food movements emerged as a result of these changes. Next, the alternative food movements that were born against dominant food regimes are dwelled upon. Lastly, the AFNs are examined in the global context.

The third chapter focuses on the AFNs in Turkey. Starting from the establishment of Turkey, it traces the transformation of agri-food systems in Turkey with an emphasis on neoliberal transformation. Then, it summarizes the place of AFNs in Turkey. Lastly, it analyses the potential of cooperatives to create an AFN that centers around gender equality in Ankara through the findings of the case study.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The food-related problems cannot be understood with an outlook of mainstream understanding of agri-food since these are the frameworks, relations, and structures that caused and deepened these problems. Therefore, this thesis will follow alternative frameworks to agri-food systems. In this chapter, the first section summarizes the food regime analysis, the second section elaborates on the concept of food sovereignty, the third section focuses on ecofeminism, and the last section dwells on how food sovereignty and ecofeminism could be applied together.

2.1. Food Regime Analysis

To investigate the historical development and transformation of agri-food systems through a specific lens on political, economic, social, and ecological relations, Harriet Friedmann and Phil McMichael proposed the concept of "food regime" in the late 1980s (Friedmann, 1987; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). The food regime is defined as the historically significant cluster of relations that link the global relations of food production, distribution, and consumption to forms of accumulation within the periods of capitalist transformation since 1870 (Bernstein, 2015; McMichael, 2015; Friedmann, 2009).

In their early work in 1989, Friedmann and McMichael identified two major food regimes that took place since the late 19th century. The first food regime which corresponds to the period between 1870 and the 1930s, was characterized by British hegemony, colonialism, free trade, and market-driven agriculture. The first food regime, which is later named 'the colonial-diasporic food regime' by Friedmann (2005), was centered upon imports of basic foodstuffs from settler colonies to Europe

in return for manufactured goods, labor, and capital. This system played an important role in the establishment of national agricultural sectors in settler states. The second food regime that was in effect between from 1950s to 1970s, was characterized by the US hegemony, postwar world economy, extension of the state system, and restructuring of the agricultural sector by agro-food capitalists. This restructuring reshaped agriculture as an industrial sector and food as manufactured products rather than a final use. At the same time, agribusiness created internationally specialized agricultural supply chains. Friedman later labeled this food regime as the 'mercantile-industrial food regime' (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; Friedmann, 2005). The third food regime is marked by corporate hegemony, neoliberalism, and globalization. Although the changes in agri-food systems since the 1980s are apparent with the reduced farm supports, privatization of public services, increased market control of transnational corporations, and financialization, there is considerable debate upon the existence of a new food regime among the food regimes scholars. Friedmann sees these changes that mark the increasing control of the Transnational Corporations (TNCs) on the agrifood system as a transitional period. Yet, McMichael (2013) suggests that it signifies a new food regime since those changes reverse the previous food regime's states-managed market to give the states the role of servers of the markets. On account of this, McMichael names this food regime as the 'corporate food regime'.

Along those lines, "food regime analysis" is defined as an analytical framework for understanding agriculture and food's role in capital accumulation across time and space (McMichael, 2009a). It investigates the relations of production, distribution, and consumption patterns and the underlying economic, social, and ecological consequences of each food regime (Bernstein, 2016). That being said, food regime analysis encompasses more than just "food." By addressing the transitions in capitalist food relations, it reveals how capitalism is (re)produced through these relations while also addressing the history of capitalism (McMichael, 2009b).

Thus, any attempt at a comprehensive analysis of food systems necessitates incorporating the food regime analysis. As McMichael (2016) argues, food regime analysis offers an important tool not only in understanding how the current food

system came to be but also in understanding the contemporary transformations as well. Moreover, this kind of historical analysis of the forms of capitalism also enables us to understand the dynamics behind the growing reactions to the current dominant production, distribution, and consumption relations which solidifies with the rise of the food movements and increasing searches for AFN. Hence food regime analysis is a building block in understanding food sovereignty among other food-related concepts and theories.

2.2. Food Sovereignty

Since it was propounded, the concept of food sovereignty has played a key role in efforts to transform the dominant food regime and create alternatives. The concept of food sovereignty gradually transcended the boundaries of the food movement over time, "*as a political project and campaign, an alternative, a social movement, and an analytical framework*," (Alonso-Fradejas et al., 2015, p.433) becoming not only a political but an academic discourse. It has been adopted by various movements, scholars, farmers, culinarians, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), AFIs, and human rights activists all around the world. Food sovereignty extended beyond being an agricultural, rural, and productional concept to include distribution and consumption, urban-rural relations, state-society relations, classes, and identities as well. By including all this, food sovereignty became a relevant and powerful concept, movement, and analytical framework. For this reason, it is important to thoroughly understand the food sovereignty perspective that this research will also use as a key analytical framework.

The notion of food sovereignty has been crucial in the oppositions, search for alternatives and transformations against the dominant food regime. The concept itself emerged and evolved from the farming peoples' critical evaluation of their experiences with the changes created by the agricultural policies introduced throughout the 1980s and early 1990s (Wittman et al., 2010). Eight farmers' organizations from all over the world (mainly Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, and North America), met at a conference in Managua, Nicaragua, in 1992, to discuss their common concerns and problems of the effects of the increasingly globalized

and clustered agri-food system. Those organizations that decided to maintain this connection, met once again in Mons, Belgium a year later, in 1993, and established "La Via Campesina" ("peasant way"), one of the largest social movements in the world today (víacampesina, n.d.).

At the Second International Conference of La Via Campesina (LVC), which was held in Tlaxcala, Mexico in April 1996, the concept of "food sovereignty" was discussed for the first time, as an alternative to "food security". At this Conference, eleven principles of food sovereignty were established. In November of the same year, based on these eleven principles, the definition of food sovereignty was introduced by LVC at the World Food Summit[3] held in Rome. At this Summit, food sovereignty was defined as "*the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity.*" (viacampesina, 2021, para. 6). The concept of food sovereignty was introduced not only to question the dominant food regime but also to offer a tangible alternative. Moreover, it is also stated that food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security (viacampesina, 2021). The Summit, attended by delegates from 185 different countries, was also paralleled with an NGO forum and brought international recognition to the concept of food sovereignty. The concept quickly spread beyond the LVC through global conferences and protests especially in the protests accompanying the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Meetings in Geneva in 1998 and Seattle in 1999 (Desmarais, 2007).

In 2002, another World Food Summit was held again in Rome, to evaluate the progress made in the last five years after the first Food Summit. At this Summit the former 'NGO Forum' was replaced by the 'NGO Forum for food sovereignty' which shows how strong the concept of food sovereignty has grown in the past five years. There, a more comprehensive definition of food sovereignty was introduced:

> *Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are*

[3] World Food Summit was organized by FAO which is a UN organization. LVC did not sign the resulting "Rome Declaration on World Food Security" on the grounds that it did not elaborate on food sovereignty and the needs of peasants (Desmarais, 2007).

> *ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies.* (Wittman, 2011, p. 88)

Again, five years later, in 2007, that is organized an international forum on food sovereignty in Mali. Mali was purposefully chosen to increase the involvement of the African organization as it was the least participant region. The organizations in Mali gave the World Forum for Food Sovereignty a meaningful name and chose Nyéléni, named after "a woman who left her mark in the history of Mali, as a woman and as a great farmer" (Nyeleni, 2006). The Nyéléni 2007 forum was attended by more than 500 representatives from more than 80 countries. In the Declaration of Nyéleni (2007) food sovereignty was defined last time so far, as:

> *Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies … It ensures that the rights to use and manage our lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social classes and generations.* (Declaration of Nyéléni, 2007, para. 3).

This definition tackles some issues, most of which are included in the principles of food sovereignty. Those principles are; acknowledging women's roles and rights in all spheres of life, securing a living wage for peasants and rural people, conversion and rehabilitation of the environment, respect for diversity of traditional knowledge, values, food, and culture, local people's access and control over their land, protection of peasants and rural people against the actions of transnational corporations (Patel, 2009).

As can be seen from its history, food sovereignty can best be understood through its contrasts with food security. That being said, it is important to notice that food sovereignty and food security are not opposing discourses but rather interconnected concepts, especially considering from the start food sovereignty has been suggested

as the precondition of food security. The concept of food security arose in the mid-1970s from discussions on international food problems, with an initial focus on ensuring the availability of basic foodstuffs at the global and national levels and relatively stable prices. The official definition of food security was made in the 1974 World Food Summit as "a*vailability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices."* (FAO, 2003, p. 27). This definition was modified in 1983, 1986, and in the 1996 World Food Summit food security was defined as:

> *Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life*. (FAO, 2003, p. 28)

The most recent definition of the term made in The State of Food Insecurity 2001 as "*Food security [is] a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life"* (FAO, 2003, p. 28). This definition of food security, represented a shift towards inclusion of broader social concerns, signaling changes in the global landscape. This expansion of the definition occurred during the triumph of neoliberal, when institutions like the FAO appeared increasingly irrelevant in shaping hunger policy, resulting in the market's increasing influence of the food systems rather than institutions. The broadening of the concept of food security to involve nutrition, social control, and public health, and not just addressing production and distribution as it was before, proves the success of pressures made by peasant and indigenous movements on international organizations. In that, it is possible to attribute a part of the evolution of the definition of food security to the introduction and popularization of the term "food sovereignty" by 1996 as an alternative to the prevailing notion (Patel, 2009).

Still, although this definition defines food as a right and analyzes the consequences of food-related problems, it does not include any judgment on the production, distribution, and consumption of food. This aversion of the concept of food security

towards the discussion on food systems is highly criticized as being insufficient to understand and solve food-related concerns and problems. That same point is why LVC saw the food security concept as inadequate and needed another term that is more responsive to the needs of the people. As the food security concept put forward and widely used by International Institutions such as the UN-affiliated FAO, OECD, and European Union (EU); it aligns with the dominant food regime. Food sovereignty on the other hand provides a more suitable basis for alternative food systems, as it sees the dominant food regime itself as problematic.

On this basis, food security sees food as a commodity that people have a right to. According to food sovereignty, food is a source of life and thus a right for every person and every community. That is another distinction of the food sovereignty concept; it identifies food not only as an individual's right but also as a community right. Based on that food sovereignty approach makes judgments on production. As the definition of food security does not state an opinion on the production of food, many of its utilizers advocate "efficient" industrialized agricultural production. In the food sovereignty approach, since food is a human and community right, then, agricultural production is one of the rights of rural people. Moreover, it advocates production methods that align with nature such as agro-ecological production. This distinction is caused by the distinction in the aim of the production. While the food security approach adopts a supply-oriented production for the market, food sovereignty opts for a production that is made for more of a local consumption. When it comes to productive resources, the food security approach generally defends private property rights meaning it also supports the privatization of resources and Genetically Modified Seeds. Food sovereignty openly opposes this point of view, taking an anti-patent stance and believing that the control of productive resources, especially land, and seeds, belongs to rural farmers and local communities, including the right to keep and share those resources. It also opposes Genetically Modified Seeds, advocating that seeds are part of the heritage of rural farmers and local populations and cannot be commodified or commercialized.

When it comes the distribution, the food security approach leaves the distribution of food and inputs to the market mechanism. When the prices of food and inputs are left

to the market, the livelihoods of the entire peasant communities are handed over to the market. Against that, the food sovereignty approach advocates fair prices because peasants have the right to receive just incomes and should be protected against market-born injustices. Although food sovereignty is often depicted as "anti-trade" it does not altogether reject trade just suggests fair-trade alternatives as opposed to free trade. Along similar lines, food sovereignty does not oppose the subsidies it rather opposes subsidies that favor big companies and states that local producers and markets should be protected from dumping/subsidized food imports. Following previous outlooks, food sovereignty sees the cause of hunger as "inefficiency" mainly in production, and designs policies accordingly. Food sovereignty however sees hunger as a distributional problem.

Accordingly, while food security discourse advocates global food policy, food sovereignty suggests local food policies that are designed by local communities that can respond to specific needs and circumstances better. Moreover, food security does not make any remarks on other social or environmental issues. For example, food security can be achieved by using child labor who can be food secure themselves in that situation. In food security food waste, monopoly, etc. are either not seen as a problem or that it is not explicitly stated. It also doesn't state any environmental concerns and although it acknowledges climate change as a problem it believes that industrial agriculture is a necessity to prevent world hunger. Food sovereignty, however, sees the solution to climate change in rural food production and consumption. In that light, it can be said that food security goals for agricultural development and food sovereignty goals for rural development. Agricultural development is more of an economic goal which includes improving crop production with new technologies and modernizing farming practices to maximize productivity. Rural development, on the other hand, is a much more comprehensive goal that includes improving agrarian activities such as crop and livestock production as well as other matters such as quality of rural education, rural infrastructure, electrification, human rights, water access, participation, biodiversity, social recognition, loan access, and so on. In other words, rural development generally aims to improve the overall quality of life of rural inhabitants by addressing various social, economic, and environmental aspects beyond agriculture alone (Pachón-Ariza, 2013; Wittman,

2011). Overall, it can be said that while food security is aimed at eliminating symptoms, food sovereignty works to treat the disease.

Consequently, the policies that were developed with food security understanding were more than ineffective, they caused various economic and social problems and deepened the ones that already existed. FAO's years of policies and efforts to end hunger and food insecurity were not only insufficient to reduce hunger, but also increased food vulnerability in different periods, causing more hunger and food insecurity, especially for the global South. These policies, which do not question the market mechanism, and international organizations such as the WTO, which are the sources of the problems, try not to harm the interests of multinational companies, and see local people as a helping factor rather than policymakers, have eventually led to food dependency, malnutrition and food vulnerability in Global South (Pachón-Ariza, 2013).

This position can be seen in both approaches' outlook on gender equality within food systems. When it comes to gender equality, there are also differences in the frameworks although both of them assign a special place to women. The food security approach attributes a special place for women because of their position as food producers, consumers, and family food managers responsible for more than half of the world's food production. Combining that with food security's interpretation of hunger as inefficiency, they see the solution to food-related problems in women's 'empowerment' and eliminating inequalities towards women, making them participate in the market in a more knowledgeable, and entrepreneurial way and increasing their efficiency (Agarwal, 2015; Mehra & Rojas, 2008). This understanding has been criticized because it sees the solution to the food crisis and the empowerment of women in the market mechanism, which is the source of these problems. By ignoring the exploitation of women's labor in the field of agriculture, and, seeing the problem not in distribution but only in production, it reinforces both food inequality and the problem of women's labor. The understanding of food sovereignty, however, has adopted the principle of gender equality since its emergence and sees food sovereignty as a feminist issue. Food sovereignty attributes a special place to women not only as their key position in food production, household

food management, and food culture but also as their unequal position in the food systems and uneven burden of the consequences of destructive food policies. Food sovereignty also gives a special place to women in the resistance against the dominant food regime based on the observation that women within peasant movements have taken strong stands and leadership in movements and protests against TNCs. Hence, it emphasizes that, unlike the understanding of food security, food policies should be made *by* women and society, not *for* women and farmers (Patel, 2012; Park et. al, 2015).

The concept of food sovereignty however comes with some challenges and shortcomings. First of all, the term itself is, as Patel (2009) puts it, "over defined". Since food sovereignty aims to be a "big tent" that roofs over diverse positions, it becomes inconsistent and means everything and nothing. For example, the expression mentioned in the definition of food sovereignty "It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food…" is such a large definition that even might include capitalists, landowners, and so on. Moreover, unlike the food security term that changes with the global outlook, it is not possible to track coherent changes in the definition of food sovereignty. Another problem with the term food sovereignty is that it does not fully address issues of land ownership, access, and control. It does not specify who is the sovereign in food sovereignty. When it is talked about a right, it requires a guarantor of said right. The food sovereignty discourse does not address who is responsible for ensuring those rights. Moreover, it overlooks some structural inequalities within agricultural systems. Food sovereignty discourse has a big commitment to equality and justice, especially gender equality. However, the right itself does not guarantee equality or justice. There are many economic, political, and social inequalities adherent to the food system. For example, food sovereignty overlooks the power imbalances caused by class differences. Since "farmers" do not constitute a unified class, the structural power imbalances between farmers and farmworkers also need to be addressed in order to achieve egalitarian goals. Thus, the egalitarianism that food sovereignty bases upon is a prerequisite to food sovereignty, not a consequence. This is most visible when it comes to gender quality and women's rights. Food sovereignty promotes family farming as an alternative to industrial agriculture yet, the family itself is one of the oldest and most felt sources

of patriarchy. Along similar lines, food sovereignty discourse does not say much about unpaid labor within households or any of the diverse forms of labor involved in food production (McMichael, 2012). Upon that issue, Patel (2009) suggests using a feminist approach, to start a conversation, especially on the prioritizing of rights in the context of food sovereignty.

2.3. Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism which comes from the combination of the words ecology and feminism, establishes a connection between feminism and ecology, as the name suggests. It is a branch of feminism that connects the domination of women and the domination of nature. Ecofeminism sees the connection between feminism and ecology on the similar (historical, experiential, symbolic, theoretical) places that women and nature put in society, economy, culture, politics, and so on. Ecofeminist analysis tries to identify sources of oppression that lead to the domination of women and nature. These sources can vary from modern sciences' exclusion of women and nature to seeing women and nature as property. By doing so, ecofeminism does not try to establish women's domination over nature and men, rather it aspires to an egalitarian society. With that, ecofeminism does not only contribute to feminism, it also aims to demonstrate the shortcomings of environmental theory for adapting the insights of feminism. In that, ecofeminism also puts the patriarchal system as responsible for the problems of women and nature (Gaard & Gruen, 1993; Warren, 1990; Adams, 1993).

Ecofeminism emerged in the 1970s in the early 1980s, from the intersection of feminist research and various social movements including campaigns for gender, ecology, race, and anti-war and anti-nuclear stances of the era (Gaard, 2011). The French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne is credited with conjoining the term "ecofeminism" in her book "Le Feminisme ou la Mort" (Feminism or Death) written in 1974, where she puts masculinist culture responsible for environmental degradation. However, considering the fact that this book has not been translated into English for 15 years after its publication, its effect on the popularization of the term before 1989 is thought to be minimal. Rather, the spread of the term "ecofeminism"

across different regions even before that, indicates that it corresponds to a real, observable, international phenomenon (Gaard & Gruen, 1993). One of the most influential texts that built the foundation of ecofeminism was Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) which not only inspired ecofeminism but also contributed to the advancement of the global environmental movement by proving the detrimental effects of DDT. Other foundational texts on ecofeminism include Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature* (1978), Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980), and Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology* (1978). As the term and the movement spread around the world, different points of view that connect gender and nature have been established. After a while, "ecofeminism" sprawled as a broad umbrella term for a set of diverse approaches.

These diverse approaches can be grouped under three branches according to their interpretations of the origins of the relationship between gender and nature: liberal, cultural, and materialist ecofeminism. Liberal ecofeminism is rooted in liberalism and liberal feminism as the name suggests. Liberal ecofeminism, conforming with the basic tenets of liberal thinking, is consistent with the ideas of reforming environmentalism, and seeks to transform the relationship of humans with nature inside existing structures of governance through new laws and regulations. Based on the liberal feminist notion that women do not differ from men as rational agents, liberal ecofeminists suggest that given equal opportunities in education, science, natural source management, and law-making, women can contribute to the improvement of their environment and overall quality of human life, just like men (Merchant, 2005). Liberal ecofeminism is criticized for aligning with the developmentalist ideology of science and technology which builds the basis for the domination and exploitation of nature.

Cultural ecofeminism which took its roots from radical feminism, believes in a deeper connection between women and nature. They suggest that women have closer ties with nature due to their natural processes like menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, nursing, and their role as caregivers. They also say that due to these ties, women are more sensitive to ecological concerns and thus, more suitable for dealing with environmental issues as they see masculinity and patriarchy as the culprits of

ecological destruction. Cultural feminism claims to offer alternatives that could liberate both women and nature. Often arising from an anti-science standpoint, some cultural ecofeminists praise the revival of pre-patriarchal belief systems and spiritual rituals that mainly center around goddess worship, lunar or menstrual cycles, and the like. Due to this reference to diverse belief systems, cultural ecofeminism is sometimes attributed as "spiritual ecofeminism". With these characteristics, cultural feminism has been heavily scrutinized for its essentialism and biological determinism.

Materialist ecofeminism, acknowledging the critiques towards cultural ecofeminism, rejects the notion of a special historical relationship between woman and nature. Materialist ecofeminism grounded on the material foundation of life, advocates that sources of oppression of women and nature are the same: patriarchy and capitalism. Thus, it seeks the emancipation of women and nature by erasing economic and social hierarchies. Although materialist ecofeminism acknowledges some biological differences between women and men, it rejects all forms of biological determinism and advocates an equal capability of ecological ethics.

Materialist ecofeminism can be divided into two subgroups: social ecofeminism and socialist ecofeminism. Although these two groups agree on the sources of oppression and the notion of emancipation of women, they differ in terms of the feminist strategy. Social ecofeminism coming from social ecology, centers on domination, and hierarchy, and its main focus is challenging dualism in Western culture like female/male, culture/nature, white/black, and heterosexual/homosexual. Social ecofeminism opposed these dualisms arguing that they are modes of Western rationality that set the basis for the systems of oppression. Based on the emphasis on hierarchical structures within patriarchal capitalist societies, it rejects the notion of a single universal experience of women as cultural feminism suggests. Instead, it asserts that women's identities are socially constructed through the interplay of not just gender but also other factors like race and ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc. (Warren, 2001).

Socialist ecofeminism, on the other hand, coming from socialist ecology centers on the traditional Marxist concepts of production and reproduction and uses dialectics instead of dualisms. Socialist feminism differs from socialist ecology by putting reproduction as a central concept, rather than production. Socialist ecofeminism suggests that nature itself as well as humans' relations with nature are socially and historically constructed. That being said, it does not attribute nature to a passive object status that needs to be dominated. Rather socialist ecofeminism attributes it to an active subject status in this relationship. Moreover, socialist ecofeminism offers a critique of capitalist patriarchy driven by the dialectical relationships between production and ecology as well as between production and reproduction (Warren & Cheney, 1991; Plumwood, 1993; Merchant, 2005).

Apart from the criticisms made on the subgroups of ecofeminism, various criticisms have been made to ecofeminism both from within and outside of this approach, and its limitations have been revealed. The essentialist criticisms have been made towards cultural ecofeminism also sometimes attributed to ecofeminism as a whole. The assumption that femininity is essential to women, and because of that women have an essential connection with nature, marked as a situation that ecofeminist thinkers should reflect on and try to avoid. Moreover, ecofeminism has the risk of strengthening gender norms by overvaluing qualities that are associated with femininity such as nurture, birthing, sentimentality, and so on (Agarwal, 1998; Biehl, 1991). Furthermore, ecofeminism is criticized for ignoring or overseeing the women who take part in the destruction of nature[4].

Ecofeminism is also criticized for being too broad and diverse that it becomes contradictory. More specifically, Biehl (1991) criticized ecofeminism as being theoretically self-contradictory and inconsistent, referring that while some ecofeminists claim a biological connection between women and nature, others advocate a socially constructed one. Moreover, Sargisson (2001) draws attention to another negative aspect of the broadness of ecofeminist theory that makes it hard to

[4] It should be added here is that ecofeminism sometimes criticized for its lack of attention to the animal suffering, and speciesism. Yet, big contributions from writers such as Carol J. Adams and Greta Gaard on this issue is enough to constitute a response to these criticisms.

recommend a clear policy framework. Furthermore, she asserts ecofeminism as utopian, a trait that is valuable in creating an alternative vision of life, yet, dangerous when it comes to making blueprints for such a change. Another criticism towards ecofeminism is that it treats as if there is only one single experience of women. By focusing too much on gender hierarchy, it sometimes overlooks other forms of social hierarchies like race, ethnicity, class, and so on. As a result of this negligence, ecofeminism, for the most part, fails to take the cultural differences of traditional societies into account. This critique also consolidated with the claim that white upper-class women who are either oblivious to the struggles of other groups or are speaking on behalf of their 'helpless' counterparts, were taking over the ecofeminist movement and theory (Agarwal, 1998; Narayan, 2022). To overcome the problem of overlooking multiple dimensions of social categories, and to avoid being essentialist, A. E. Kings (2017) suggests expanding intersectionality within ecofeminism, which is an inherent feature of it.

2.3.1. Materialist Ecofeminism and Food

In this thesis, materialist ecofeminism understanding will be used as it can answer many of the criticisms made against ecofeminism. Another reason for choosing this methodology is that materialist ecofeminism blames not only patriarchy but also capitalism for the destruction of nature and therefore offers a better method to oppose the dominant food regime.

Materialist ecofeminism opposes the projection of modern science as a universal, value-free, objective system of knowledge claiming that it created a form of justification for patriarchal capitalism and domination of women and nature. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies (1993) claim that modern science is a reductionist science because first, it reduced the human capacity of understanding by excluding all other forms of knowing, and second, it reduced the creational capacity of nature by attributing it as fragmented and vacant. The first point built the basis for the erosion of knowledge of local people and women. The latter point is also emphasized by Merchant (1980) saying that the reconceptualization of nature by modern science as an inanimate machine rather than a living organism sanctioned the domination of

women and nature. What then the reductionist science achieves through this is reducing complex ecosystems to a single component and to a single function which then allows for the exploitation of a single component by maximizing the single function. In this way, for example, a forest which is a complete ecosystem is reduced to a commercial wood. By doing so, modern science demolished the cycles of regeneration and forced them into linear flows of raw materials and commodities, that essentially put the science into patriarchal capitalism's service. This destruction of regenerative sources of nature created the ultimate ecological crisis. The important point to notice here is that Shiva and Mies do not disregard science as a whole, rather they advocate a science and knowledge that nourishes nature, instead of the current one that is disrupting the sustainable systems of nature with the aim of conquering nature.

The biggest stronghold of ecofeminism in facing the environmental crisis is its employment of the feminist perspective on environmental issues. With that, ecofeminism has the ability to restructure the relationship between humans and nature since it can go beyond the power structures of society starting from patriarchy. The materialist ecofeminism in that, repositions production and consumption within the context of regeneration. By doing so, it reconnects the issues that have been seen as separate like connecting production with reproduction. Linking these issues opens the possibility of reinterpreting nature as a living, active subject, not an inanimate resource to be exploited. It also reveals the destructive properties of what is called 'productive' in capitalistic patriarchy and opens room for the view of the creative act (Mies & Shiva, 1993).

When the issue is the relationships of production with reproduction between nature and humans, agriculture and food become the main issue. Since the break in the relationship between humans and nature is most evident in food production both in ecological and social terms, materialist ecofeminists have paid attention to these issues. They say that, for ages, agricultural societies operated in line with the flows and the limits of nature and provided renewability of plant life and soil fertility. However, in the eye of patriarchal capitalism, these natural processes are seen as a constraint that should be overcome. Within this understanding then, the seed

becomes a genetic resource that is engineered, patented, owned, commodified, and profited from by corporations. Seed is generally singled out and emphasized because of its significance as the beginning point. As Shiva puts it “Seed is the first link in the food chain. Seed is the ultimate symbol of food security” (Shiva, 2016). Shiva also interprets the patenting of the seed as the ownership of life that is the ownership of entire species. Moreover, the consequence of the engineering of seeds created genetically-modified seeds that are ecologically inviable. They are ecologically inviable because they cannot produce themselves as they require other inputs (such as chemicals and fertilizers). Furthermore, they cannot reproduce themselves as they are dispossessed of the seeds’ regenerative capacity.

This transformation of nature's synced process of reproduction into the linear process of production creates two important problems. First, it causes genetic erosion of indigenous varieties of plants especially crops that have evolved and domesticated for thousands of years. Second, it leads to the disposition of farmers since the seeds they help produce are eradicated and deemed to be valueless by making the corporate seeds the basis of wealth creation. Traditional agriculture is devalued and dismissed especially in the Global South. Labeling corporate seed as the only valuable option means that Global South rural farmer’s labor has no value whereas Western scientists’ labor adds value. The ramification of this is something gains value only in the market and value is measured only in terms of profitability. Transformation of seed which is a free common source that is under the control of farmers into a commodity and a mere input changes agriculture itself. Thus, peasants and farmers were robbed of their means of livelihood. Not only that, also in the previously mentioned example of commercial deforestation or the cultivation of trees for industrial purposes, forest villagers' food, feed, fuel, fiber, and medicine resources are confiscated, leaving them to face poverty, flooding, and drought. By looking at that, it would not be wrong to claim that the corporatization of agriculture becomes an instrument of poverty and underdevelopment (Mies & Shiva, 1993; Shiva, 2016).

Materialist ecofeminists also say the processes that condemned the traditional regenerative seeds as invaluable, farmers’ knowledge as unscientific, and Global South rural cultures as primitive are the same processes that declared women’s labor

as unproductive and invaluable. Once the value is determined by the market profitability rather than the continuation of life, then this vision sees both nature and woman's work as passive, and labels it ‘unproductive’. This ultimately leaves the woman's labor both their domestic labor and their labor in agriculture unrequited on the grounds that she is not a producer. Thus, establishing an exploitative relationship with nature also results in maintaining an exploitative relationship between genders. At this point, Plumwood (1993) draws attention to the insensitiveness of agriculture and forestry activities using advanced technology in the ecological environment. Materialist ecofeminism then claims that the consequences arising from this strengthen the economic power and management of upper-class men, while this not only impoverishes local communities it also increases gender inequality since women are more affected by natural disasters (Gaard, 2015). Materialist ecofeminists attribute the leadership and active participation of women in actions against the destruction of nature to this.

In summary, materialist ecofeminism says that policies produced in the light of modern science and technologies and with a developmental point of view, enable patriarchal capitalism to be strengthened and multinational companies to increase their profits through the exploitation of nature, women, and local communities. The result of modern understanding of production, especially in agriculture, leads to environmental degradation, gender inequality and exploitation of women, and ecological racism (Mies & Shiva, 1993).

2.4. Food Sovereignty and Ecofeminism Combined

As can be seen, the issues surrounding food systems are complex, multidimensional, and broad. Therefore, understanding the food systems and surrounding issues is not an easy task that can be achieved with a single lens. For this reason, it is required to employ intersectionality as the issue at hand is intersectional. Collins & Bilge (2020) defines intersectionality as “an analytical framework that examines the ways intersecting power relations affect social relations across diverse societies along with individual experiences in everyday life. Intersectionality approaches categories of class, gender, sexuality, race, nation, ethnicity, ability, age, and so on, as interrelated,

and mutually shaping one another. Intersectionality is generally used as a way of understanding and explaining complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences." Intersectionality is used to address, explain, and solve various issues and social problems that are multifaceted and thus require a more comprehensive approach.

In the light of transactional, to approach the food problem from a more comprehensive and inclusive perspective, this thesis will use the perspectives of food sovereignty and materialist ecofeminism together. The fact that these two perspectives are both overlapping and complementary has made conducting such a method possible. Along those lines, this section will first draw similarities between food sovereignty and ecofeminism and then present their complementary sides.

The most important commonality that can enable the use of food sovereignty and ecofeminism methods together is that both of them see that the environmental, economic, and social problems experienced are caused by capitalism and patriarchy. Thus, both points of view, by showing the problems of the dominant food regime oppose it or try to create alternatives. In that, both approaches take the food system as a whole meaning they are concerned with production, distribution, and consumption rather than taking an issue on just one. Another important commonality is both approaches emphasize the place of local people and women within food systems. They attribute a special place to local people and societies as they are the group most affected by destructive food policies, although being involved in food production, usually with the most environmentally compatible and self-sufficient methods. Therefore, both approaches dedicate a special place to the Global South. The reason they attribute a special place to women is because they are the ones who bear the burden of food production and provision in society and are the worst affected by food-oriented policies and also because of women's leading position within food movements. Against that, both approaches advocate and opt for an egalitarian society. Moreover, both of them are concerned with the environmental degradation that modern agricultural production methods cause.

In addition to commonalities, the most important benefit of using these two perspectives together is that these perspectives make up for each other's shortcomings. First of all, both concepts are criticized as being too broad, so taking the intersectionality of these two concepts can help reduce the broadness of both. In addition, it is interesting that while food sovereignty has been criticized for not giving enough space to women, or rather for not giving enough space to women's oppression and exploitation in the family and in agriculture focusing too much on local rural societies, ecofeminism has been criticized for not seeing traditional local communities and the social structures within these communities focusing too much on women. Considering that the area where one of them is very focused is the area where the other is missing, using these two approaches together will make up for their respective shortcomings. Thus, the understanding of food sovereignty will create a barrier to essentialism, which should be considered when using the ecofeminism approach, as it is discussed before. Moreover, the failure of ecofeminism to offer clear policy proposals which it is criticized for, will thus be overcome.

CHAPTER 3

FOOD SYSTEMS AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORLD

This chapter traces the transformation of the agri-food system on a global scale, the responses to this transformation, and the search for alternatives. By tracing the transformation of the global agri-food system, it will be possible to see the origin and formation of today's problems related to food and agriculture. Evidently, as well as these problems, the historical development of the movements against these problems and the search for solutions are also important in understanding the agri-food system we live in and in producing solutions to its problems. For that reason, the first part of this chapter tracks the transformation of the global agri-food system, while doing this, the three food regime periods revealed by the food regime analysis will be taken as a basis. The second part examines the food movements and AFNs that have emerged against these transformations. Inferences about gender equality were made in both parts.

3.1. The Transformation of Food Systems in The World

To be able to understand the current problems in agri-food systems, a historical analysis of the transformations and fractures in the agri-food systems is necessary. Although every region and state has its own unique history of food and agriculture it is possible to detect similar patterns around the globe. This section follows the transformation of the food system in the world with its gendered ramifications from the nineteenth century onwards, leaning towards the transformations that took place after the 1980s.

As mentioned before the food regimes approach distinguishes three food regimes from the nineteenth century onwards. The first global food regime took place in the

years between 1870 and 1930s. It was based on colonization, and it depended on the transfer of cheap raw materials and food from settler colonies to Europe in return for manufactured goods, labor, and capital. In that, the emerging settler states, led by the US, provided wheat and meat to Europe which are the staples of the working class's diet. This transaction provided the basis for increasing industrialization in Europe while establishing a system of national economies governed by independent states (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989).

The second food regime that took place between the 1950s–1970s, reversed the food flow of the previous period and started a flow from North to South. This flow started with the USA sending the surplus of agricultural production to the South under the name of 'food aid'. One of the most important characterizations of this period that shows its effect in later periods was the 'Green Revolution' which became synonymous with the global takeover of industrial agriculture. Green Revolution introduced varieties of high-yielding cereals, mainly wheat, maze and rice. Since these high-yielding crops required chemical fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and machinery to produce said high yields, the Green Revolution also introduced and extended the usage of those in the Global South. The chemical fertilizers and pesticides that the Green Revolution brought polluted the resources such as soil and water while the mechanization in agriculture increased the oil dependency on top of adding up to pollution. Moreover, the Green Revolution also commercialized seeds which took the power and resources of the local rural communities. Since these new varieties of high-yielding seeds were infertile meaning they didn't yield again the following year, the cost of seed added to the cost of fertilizers, pesticides, and oil, created a big expenditure and debt for farmers. With the transition to industrial agriculture and market-oriented production, peasant agriculture, rural knowledge, and crops have eroded while the power of big landowners and corporations increased. As a result of these, the agricultural lands were concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people. This combined with the mechanization of formerly labor-intensive activities, rural people fell into an increasing debt and in some parts driven out of their land (McMichael, 2009a; Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011).

The Green Revolution also intensified gender, class, and regional inequalities. The increasing cost of agriculture led to the impoverishment of small farmers,

mechanization of formerly labor-intensive activities led to many farm workers losing their jobs, and all those increased the rural-to-urban migration. The farmers of the South were increasingly impoverished and lost control over food supply chains while the corporates of the North increasingly got richer and more powerful. The gendered ramifications of the Green Revolution were clearly against women's advantage. With the Green Revolution's promotion of 'technological' and 'scientific' methods, traditional peasant agriculture and rural knowledge devalued, which resulted in women's traditional knowledge and roles being devalued, leading to a loss of women's autonomy and control over agricultural resources. The increasing economic burden of farming affected women more severely since they had limited access to resources and credit, which made it harder for them to cope with the changes. Moreover, the shift towards cash crops and monoculture, which became the widespread and dominant model with the Green Revolution, led to the loss of traditional crops and diversity in the agricultural system. This has had devastating consequences for both ecology and gender. The loss of species diversity and the cultivation of single crops reduced soil fertility and increased the vulnerability of crops to diseases, meaning one disease could wipe out entire crops in a village or even an area. The detrimental result of this in terms of gender was the nutritional loss of women since the high-yielding varieties that were primarily grown for market purposes took over the diverse food sources and crops that were previously cultivated by women for household consumption (Shiva, 2009).

The much debated third food regime (corporate food regime) stretches from the 1980s to the present. It is possible to say that this food regime developed with neoliberal capitalist expansion, and just like it, arose from the global economic shocks of the 1970s. Corollary, this new period in food systems had been in line with the neoliberal ideology, and the period is marked by trade liberalization, market integration, deregulation, privatization, financialization, and reduction in welfare spending among other things. This transformation was led by International Financial Institutions (IFI) such as the International Money Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), especially in the Global South. These institutions, through Structural Adjustment Programs, implemented some economic policies in return for loans or interest rate reductions, to the countries that experience economic downturns or

crises. These policies tariffs, tore off national marketing boards, abolished price guarantees, and shattered national agricultural research and extension systems in the Global South. These policies were inserted into international treaties through bilateral and international Free Trade Agreements (Holt-Giménez et al., 2009).

Another breaking point in the transformation was the establishment of the WTO in 1995. WTO was the embodiment of neoliberal ideology, and it carried the duty of liberalization, privatization, and integration of transnational agribusiness and food markets. Before WTO, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was carrying out these missions (McMichael, 2009c). These policies manifest themselves and are made compulsory through international treaties through bilateral and international Free Trade Agreements. One of the most important agreements in terms of both content and implications was the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Agreement on Agriculture (AoA). The IFIs have put membership in the WTO and commitment to these two agreements as a condition of their commitments.

The TRIPS treaty, which was signed on January 1, 1995, was and up to this date still is "*the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on intellectual property*" (WTO, n.d., para. 1). Geographical indications, industrial designs, integrated circuit layout designs, patents, new plant varieties, trademarks, trade names, and undisclosed or sensitive information are all included in the scope of "intellectual property" (WTO, n.d.). This has a number of terrible ramifications for the countries of the Global South, it implies that all local traditional agricultural practices, knowledge, and indigenous plant types will either be siphoned off by TNCs or taken over by them, at which point they would become commodities.

The AoA was implemented to prohibit artificial price support by imposing trade restrictions, production regulations, and state trading boards. This agreement not only eliminated state support mechanisms in agriculture but actually restricted the control of sovereign states over their own agriculture. The devastating consequences of this agreement for the Global South do not end there. The fact that the restrictions imposed by the AoA were not enforced on the EU and the US, allowed them to

benefit from significant subsidies. As a result, the AoA created an artificial comparative advantage in favor of these states. As a result, the lowest prices of grains, meat, and dairy in history have been observed in the Global South. Additionally, as a result of the AoA's "minimum import" rule, farmers and countries in the Global South have once again been denied access to sufficient food supplies and safeguards against market fluctuations and powerful market actors (McMichael, 2009c).

TNCs also expanded their reach with these policies and further added to the process. With the loss of power of Global South and their farmers over the food supply chains, TNCs began to dominate the whole of the chain. This unprecedented market power combined with the continuation of the green revolution of the previous period, TNCs that could only provide agricultural inputs before got involved in production, inputs, marketing, etc. On the production side, as the international demand from the Global South during this period was inclined towards cash crops and high-value-added food production, they promoted the production of these by displacing traditional and subsistence crops. They tried to achieve this goal by discouraging state subsidies for traditional crops and promoting contract farming (Aydın, 2010). In the case of the US, however, they had the government backing. On the marketing side TNCs domination led to the supermarkets becoming widespread and dominant model. TNCs also got into a key role in global governance through quality assurance schemes, certification, and labeling. As agriculture grows increasingly concentrated and integrated, big clusters have established oligopolies and this oligopolistic control over large portions of the agri-food chain enabled them to maximize profit while minimizing risk (Caiazza & Volpe, 2012).

In most sense, the neoliberal transformation of the agri-food system was not very different from the transformation of other sectors in terms of general ideology, aims, and methods. The distinctiveness of the neoliberalization of the agri-food sphere lies in the results of this transformation process because food is one of the basic necessities of survival. For this reason, the transformation of the agriculture-food sector affects many things from environment to health, from country development to individual livelihood.

For starters, with the production made in accordance with the global demand, food products are replaced with export-oriented luxury cash crops or industrial inputs, high-value food. In addition to those with the demands of growing middle class on meat, globalized animal protein chains also replaced food products with animal feed while increasing carbon emission. The transition from subsistence food production to export-oriented cash crops and industrial inputs brought with it increased mechanization in agriculture which increased the use of oil. The produced crops are exported to be processed, packaged, and then sold all of which take place in different countries. Both the import of raw materials from other countries and the processing of the product in different countries until it meets the end consumer created a long and multinational commodity chain. This long chain, which consumes large amounts of oil at every stop and at every transportation stage, plays a significant role in both the depletion of non-renewable resources and the increase of carbon emissions by increasing oil consumption (Shiva, 2009).

Aside from environmental issues, the replacement of export-oriented crops which required imported seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides caused many socio-economic problems in the Global South. First, it increased the production costs creating huge trade deficits in Global South countries. Second, it increased the dependence of the countries and farmers of the Global South on the TNCs for inputs, manufacturing, and so on. This combined with the erosion of protective mechanisms of the earlier periods resulted in small producers losing almost all of their bargaining power and information about the changes in the market. The dependence on inputs and manufacturing to TNCs and the lack of protection against market fluctuations compelled farmers to be dependent on the distribution networks of big companies. This further contributed to the rise of the supermarkets which eventually led to the change in western-style diet. This led to many nutrition-related health problems, especially obesity since this diet heavily relies on meat, sugars, salts, saturated fats, and processed grains which are high in energy but poor in nutrients. Moreover, it signified a rise in the ‘food from nowhere’ regime. ‘Food from nowhere’ was coined by Bové and Dufour (2002) to describe food that is globalized, ubiquitous, without any cultural indications, and often manifests itself in the form of ready-made or fast food, and therefore unknown where it comes from. Later, the term was expanded by

McMichael[5] (2009a) and Campbell (2009) to include the consumer's disconnection from the production of food in food relations. This formulation showed that this rupture conceals social and environmental harms and inequalities in the production, distribution, and consumption of food by not making people question where food comes from, its origin, health, nutritional value, and how it is produced[6].

This rupture and the increasing commodification of food also enabled increased financialization of food. This rising financialization of agriculture combined with the dependence on TNCs for agricultural inputs led to high levels of indebtedness of the farmers. The consequence of the financialization of agriculture for TNCs however was an increase in profits considering when the increased input costs put farmers in need of credits, the companies that sell the inputs also granted the credits to those farmers. This shows the extent of the market control that giant agri-businesses have. The last consequence of the neoliberal transformation of agriculture that will be mentioned here is depeasantization. When agricultural production lost its income-generating ability many farmers turned to non-agricultural jobs either in rural areas or they left those areas altogether and migrated to cities. Most of them got into the non-agricultural labor force in low paid insecure jobs in the cities. Moreover, when small farmers lose their land due to increasing production costs and indebtedness, land ownership increasingly becomes concentrated. This combined with the commodification of land led to the deagrarianization of previous farmland.

Changes during this period exacerbated the already deteriorated situation of gender equality within the agri-food system. First and foremost, as agriculture lost its income-generating propensity, and households had to diversify their livelihoods, it was mostly men who turned to non-agricultural jobs. With the rapid growth in industry and services sector and urbanization, many farmers migrated to the cities to find income-earning jobs. Women's migration to cities however was much slower because of women's lower levels of education, higher mobility, and time constraints

[5] McMichael (2009a) even called the third food regime the 'food from nowhere regime' as well as the 'corporate food regime' at times.

[6] In response to this, the term 'food from somewhere' is sometimes used in alternative food movements and in the study of these movements.

compared to men and social gender roles. This has left agricultural work largely to women. Even in households where men did not migrate to the city, the workload of women in agriculture increased, as there were men who tended to non-agricultural jobs for the mentioned reasons. Even in households still remaining in agricultural production, women's labor in agriculture has increased since new export-oriented crops were labor intensive and women do hand labor while men do work with equipment. This led to what is referred to as the 'feminization of agriculture' in the literature. The 'feminization of agriculture' in the broad sense refers to the increased role of women in agriculture, which can also be measured by the agricultural employment ratio between women and men or by the share of women whose main employment is in agriculture. This phenomenon can be clearly observed in almost all of the Global South with regional variations (De Schutter, 2013). Although the feminization of agriculture emerged in the 60s, it showed itself and its real impact in the 1990s with the neoliberal transformation of agriculture (Deere, 2009).

However, it should be emphasized here that the feminization of agriculture means the intensification of women's labor, not the increase in women's say and earnings in production. In fact, with the neoliberal transformation, the increasing necessity of having market and technical knowledge in agriculture has led to a further decrease in the involvement of women in decision-making on agricultural production (Shiva, 2009). Moreover, it is men who largely control the income earned from agricultural production (Sachs, 2014; De Schutter, 2013). This means that although women put more labor into agricultural production, men earn more from it and women are further left with little income if any. Not only that but, among those who work as agricultural workers there exists gender discrimination which is exploited by companies and contractors. Women in agricultural work are paid less, have less job security, and work half-time more than men. The women who engage in agricultural work generally are not exempt from the burden of domestic work that is assigned to women, which decreases their capacity to engage in non-agricultural income-generating jobs even further. Even if they acquire such a job, women have less bargaining power since they have fewer employment alternatives (Sachs, 2014). This combined with the fact that agricultural production could not generate sufficient income, and most of the generated income confiscated by men, the feminization of

agriculture also meant the ‘feminization of poverty’ which is a contributing factor to the decreasing food security of women. The cheap food that impoverished women turned to, the widespread supermarketization, and the popularization of the Western diet caused a serious decrease in women's nutrition. This decline affects not only women, but also the health of all future generations, and thus society, due to the fact that women do not get enough nutrients before pregnancy, during pregnancy, and breastfeeding (Mehra & Rojas, 2008).

3.2. Food Movements and Alternative Food Networks in the World

The changes that, commodified and corporatized agri-food chains from seeds to marketing, increased the total input costs creating a heavy burden on the producer, erasing the support mechanisms of the producers, and disrupting consumers' right to information and access to healthy, nutritious food; consequently, led to the emergence of different movements on food. Although these movements emerged from similar concerns, they differ from each other in terms of purpose, method, and scope. Examining all food movements is beyond the scope of this study, as there are many types of agri-food movements. Still, some of the influential and major food movements should be covered since they have led to the emergence of AFNs.

In order to draw a tidier picture, first the movements that focused more on agriculture and peasantry, and then the movements that focused more on consumption are described. Although there have been peasant movements seen in various parts of the world in every period of human history, the peasant movements mentioned here are the peasant movements that emerged as a reaction to the recent transformation of agriculture. In this period, the peasant movements that developed especially after the 90s have various forms of existence at local, national, and global levels. In this context, LVC and the Brazilian Movimento Sem Terra (MST) have been discussed.

LVC is an international peasant movement that is currently one of the biggest in the world. As mentioned earlier, LVC was established in 1993 in Mons, Belgium, after eight farmer organizations came together in Nicaragua in 1992. The main reason these organizations united to form LVC was the problems faced by small-scale

farmers and rural communities with the neoliberalization of agriculture. These issues were largely the same across Asia, the Americas, Europe, and Africa where these organizations were located. Therefore, the main purpose of LVC is to promote and defend the rights of peasants, small and medium-scale farmers, local communities, rural women, farm workers, and nature against the dominant food regime. LVC thus, focuses on a wide range of issues, from land reform to agroecology and sustainable agricultural practices, from seed access to women's rights (Desmarais, 2007). Perhaps the most important of the issues advocated by LVC is the concept of 'food sovereignty', which the movement itself introduced and which is discussed in the first chapter of this thesis. The food sovereignty concept is the embodiment of the worldview of LVC. Another important issue defended by LVC is the word 'campesina', meaning 'peasant', which is also materialized in the name of the movement. This word, which actually means 'people of the land', is a word with negative connotations both in Europe and Latin America and often reminds a lower class. The adoption of this word and this identity by the movement is an indicator of resistance in itself, indicating its stance against the ruling and capitalist classes (Desmarais, 2008).

Landless Rural Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra - MST) is a social movement in Brazil that has now become one of the largest movements in Latin America. It was mainly started in the middle of the 1980s by family farmers who occupied land and advocated for land reform throughout Brazil which continued to grow during the 90s. By addressing the issue of land concentration in Brazil, MST advocates the rights of groups whose access to land is historically denied, especially rural workers who aiming for a more sustainable agricultural system (Shennan-Farpón et al., 2022). While it may seen that this movement is aiming for a ‘re-peasantisation’, it actually defends a just redistribution of land and food and the right to farm as a social act and a way of living against neoliberalism and its impact. That way, MST advocates for food sovereignty especially in its interference with the vast transportation of food throughout the world and the defense of the right to work the land. By putting what is rural on a civic ground, MST accomplishes a few different things. It in a sense criticizes the narrative of Brazilian development, creates cooperative rural employment models,

generates basic food for the impoverished working class, provides unemployed people in urban with a secure source of livelihood, and overall stands for all groups that are excluded by the neoliberal model. Therefore, MST, which is a part of the LVC movement, establishes relations not only with other agrarian and indigenous movements but also with urban-centered movements. In fact, MST led to the 'sem-toto', "roofless" homeless movement, which is the urban version of the movement, with its emphasis on the 'sem-terra', meaning "landless" (McMichael, 2006).

This change in the agri-food system affected not only the producers and villagers but also the consumers as well. Increasing corporate control over the agri-food chain has raised questions and concerns among consumers about the quality, health, safety, and nutritiveness of food. The increase in nutrition-related health problems has further strengthened these concerns. Moreover, the concerns surrounding food were not only about health. Due to increasing environmental degradation caused by agriculture, consumers are troubled with the climate and ecological aspects of production. In addition to that, with the new food regime deepening inequalities in the food chain, movements have also emerged to fight against growing inequalities in consumption. Although these movements have been visible since the 1960s, they have gained popularity and strength since the 1980s, demonstrating the role of demand in transforming the food system. In this context, the movements to be discussed here are: the Food Justice Movement, the Fair Trade Movement, the Slow Food Movement, and the Organic Food Movement[7].

The Food Justice Movement emerged in the early 1960s and grew as one of the largest and fastest-growing grassroots food movements in the North, especially in the USA (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (2012, para. 9) defines food justice as "*the right of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, or community*." Still, since the Food Justice Movement came out of the environmental justice movement, working-class communities of color that struggle with diet-related diseases, and critiques of

[7] The exhaustive list of movements discussed here is entirely taken from İrem Soysal Al's 2020 doctoral thesis.

structural racism; it mainly focuses on inequalities in food supply chains that are born out of race and class (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). Aside from its fight against racism and white privilege, the Food Justice Movement also advocates values like empathy, pluralism, and gender equity in agriculture and food relations. However, some theorists criticize the Food Justice movement for lacking a strong stance in the face of other structural issues in food politics and participation in long-term national and international networks to have an impact on economic change and food policies (Soysal Al, 2020; Clendenning et al., 2016; Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010; Heynen et al., 2012).

Fair Trade Movement first began in the 1940s, often connecting Northern organizations that were religiously and politically motivated, with impoverished communities in the South, and, fully emerged with the involvement of Europe in the 1950s (Bacon, 2010). By addressing the power inequalities in conventional trade relations, it aims to improve supply chains in the countries of the Global South, enabling them to establish a fair trade with the Global North. In 1997, Fair Trade became a labeling initiative and with that, Fair Trade focused on three components: the formation of alternative trade networks, the licensing and marketing of Fair Trade labeled products, and campaign-based promotion of Fair Trade (Wilkinson, 2007). Due to the TNCs' goal of creating profits from ethical consumers, the Fair Trade label enabled a niche market where companies profited from both labeling and the label itself. Therefore, later on, fair trade became a mass market as more companies started using the Fair Trade label on various product types (Davies & Crane, 2003). Many scholars argue that the fair-trade movement, by engaging with licensing, has lost its radicalness and alternative character as a food movement (Low & Davenport, 2005). It is criticized for becoming part of a "certification economy" and a marketing model that benefits capitalist companies, especially considering that profit-oriented corporations have entered the Fair Trade markets with Fair Trade licensed products (Mutersbaugh, 2005; Stringer, 2012). Moreover, they point out that certification procedures reduce what is "fair" to what producers undertake to adhere to the criteria of fairness imposed by NGOs and other parties (Wilson & Mutersbaugh, 2015).

The Slow Food Movement, which was started by Carlo Petrini and a group of activists in Italy in the 1980s, was founded on preserving a slow pace of life, regional traditions, and local cuisines that build upon social relationships between producers and consumers against industrialized and standardized mass-produced fast food. Based on this, it also emphasizes the conservation of biodiversity, nature, and small local producers, in addition to having knowledge and awareness about food production. The movement became an international grassroots organization in 1989 that today includes millions of people in over 160 countries (Slow Food, n.d.). The Slow Food Movement later gave rise to other movements. The most well-known of these, the Slow City Movement, aims to create a slower, sustainable, livable, and multicultural city structure (Mayer & Knox, 2006). Some critics argue that the Slow Food Movement falls short in addressing the structural issues within the food systems thus seen as a niche movement that has limited impact on the overall food system. Another related criticism made towards the Slow Food Movement is being elitist due to its focus on high-quality, locally sourced, traditional, and artisanal products that are generally more expensive than conventional, mass-produced alternatives (Thompson & Kumar, 2018; Bommel & Spicer, 2011).

The organic agriculture movement emerged in the late 1960s, coinciding with the social and political activism of the 1960s and 1970s. The rising environmental activism and the concerns surrounding the detrimental effects of industrial agriculture influenced the movement and brought recognition[8] (Schösler et al., 2012). The movement was institutionalized in 1972 with the establishment of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). With the effect of this, the organic food movement grew seriously with increasing concerns in the 1980s and 90s. With this growth, various formal certification standards and labels have been developed by governments and organizations in several countries. Since then, the organic food movement expanded globally with the rising demands of the consumers for organic goods. At this point, the organic food movement came under criticism which says that the organic food movement has become a market

[8] Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring" in 1962, which it has been mentioned before, showed the negative impact of pesticides on the environment, increasing the concerns about industrial agriculture and thus the interest in the organic food movement.

phenomenon for the middle and upper class rather than an alternative food movement that addresses inherent problems within agri-food systems (Karakaya, 2016).

All of these movements led to the development of various forms of AFNs all around the globe. AFNs are a wide-ranging set of practices related to food systems and, in a general sense, are alternatives to the mainstream food systems (Murdoch et al. 2000). Common examples of AFN practices include community-supported agriculture, farmers' markets, urban agriculture, direct farm retail, as well as practices of above-mentioned movements like fair trade, organic agriculture, and the slow food movement. Corollary to the emergence of food movements, AFNs started appearing in the 1990s as a reaction to increasing corporatization and neoliberalization of the agri-food systems. That being said, its earlier emergence began in the second food regime period, as a resistance to the increasing detrimental effects of chemical use in agricultural production.

Although AFNs contain various forms of relationships, movements, practices, and organizations, it is possible to identify some common characteristics of the AFNs that aim to diversify and transform modern food provisioning by connecting producers and consumers in more ethical, local, and short ways. From that, some interrelated common characteristics of the AFNs can be derived.

First of all, AFNs are about the relationship between producers and consumers. As they seek to create alternative ways for connecting consumers and producers, they also address the emancipation from corporatized food chains, a search for new strategies of livelihood and autonomy for small farmers (Goodman & Goodman, 2007), and consumers' search for trust (Goodman, 2003). For this reason, the literature on AFN usually focuses on the new experiences of farmers and consumers as well as their social and economic repercussions in terms of agriculture, environment, and food relations (Soysal Al, 2020).

Secondly, since AFNs were born out of the concerns around the dominant food regime, they prioritize healthy and ecological food. They are concerned or claim to

be concerned with the ethics of food including environmental sustainability, social justice, animal welfare, as well as food safety. Subsequently, the products of the AFNs are thought to be quality, fresh, healthy, organic, environmentally friendly, and slow (Edwards, 2016).

Another important characteristic of the AFNs is localness. Alternative food markets are mostly categorized as localized agri-food systems. However, 'local' here is a broad term that includes various sizes and scales. There also exists a difference between "local" and "locality", as locality foods are not only consumed in their original location but also can be transported to consumers who are far away for their cultural significance. Localized food systems, aim to produce direct production, distribution, consumption, and waste management networks, encourage the use of local resources, reduce intermediary mechanisms, carbon footprint, transportation costs, and prioritize and culturally significant food. The localized food system has emerged as a kind of local rural development model based on the development strategies designed for small and medium-sized regions.

The last important characteristic of AFNs is being shortened food supply chains. Shortened food supply chains mean the shortening of physical distance of the way that producers provide food to the consumer and/or eliminating or sometimes lowering the number of intermediaries in the supply chain. In a way, the key feature of shortened food supply chains that distinguishes them from long supply chains is the form of relationship that directly connects the primary producer (farmer, peasant, etc.) with the end user (consumer). This shortening strengthens the relationship between producers and consumers by increasing knowledge and thus trust. Being short food supply chains is directly related to other characteristics since the concept of a short food supply chain focuses on the whole of the supply chain.

Although there are various forms of AFIs as mentioned above, cooperatives play a significant role within AFNs. Cooperatives provide a convenient framework for AFNs' aim to build just, sustainable, short, and local food systems. As defined by the International Co-operative Alliance (n.d., para. 3) as an "*autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs*

and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise", cooperatives have the propensity to create a solidarity or community-based enterprise that concerns with much more than just the economic sphere with its values that are self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. This understanding is represented in the seven principles of cooperatives: i. voluntary and open membership, ii. democratic member control, iii. member economic participation, iv. autonomy and independence, v. education, training, and information, vi. cooperation among cooperatives, vii. concern for the community (International Cooperative Alliance, n.d.). Moreover, although the origins of cooperatives cannot clearly be determined, the cooperative movement has always been positioned as an alternative path in the capitalist economy. Especially in nineteenth-century industrial England, the cooperative movement arose as a reaction to the systemic exploitation, exclusion, and poverty of workers (Birchall, 1997). Cooperatives enable farmers and consumers to work together, merging resources and sharing risks and benefits due to their features of equitable distribution of profits and democratic decision-making. The eligibility of cooperatives for AFN is not limited to the economic sphere, but also to the social and political sphere, cooperatives offer many opportunities. First, cooperatives are places where producers and consumers come together and do collective work. In this sense, cooperatives make it possible to both shorten the supply chain and establish a direct relationship between the producer and the consumer. Moreover, cooperatives provide space for collective action and socialization. In this way, by uniting producers and consumers both with and within enables them to gain awareness and power against the dominant food regime and big market actors. Cooperatives also support rural development by uniting producers and opening spaces for them. With all this, cooperatives that provide a platform to resist the dominant food regime, have become the go-to organization for AFNs, and food cooperatives led the way for many practices within the alternative food movements (Goodman & DuPuis, 2002; Renting et al., 2003).

Since the exploitation of women is related to the exploitation of the environment, it is possible to see women at the forefront of environmental resistance. This can also be considered valid for food movements. Women are involved in food movements and the search for alternatives at a wide variety of levels and areas, from the individual to

the collective. These actions range from buying local and organic products to actively participating in food movements. For this reason, women have played a significant role in developing and advancing alternative agrifood movements and institutions. On the consumption side, women are leading the way in ethical consumption, embracing local, organic, fair, and environmentally friendly food. These actions in the field of consumption range from individual actions of consumers and business owners to collective actions or sometimes a combination of the two. Moreover, women frequently take on roles on the front lines and in leading positions in urban agriculture, creating community gardens in a range of low-income communities. Women also take an important place in larger collective movements targeting the entire agri-food system. For instance, women are important leaders in the fight against globalization who are pressing for improvements in food and agricultural issues. Considering all it is not surprising that women are more visible, more represented, and more prominent in alternative food organizations and AFNs compared to conventional agricultural organizations or networks (Allen & Sachs, 2007).

CHAPTER 4

FOOD SYSTEMS AND GENDER EQUALITY IN TURKEY

This chapter traces the transformation of the agri-food system and evaluates the situation of AFNs in Turkey. Tracing the transformation of the agri-food system of Turkey enables to investigate both the process of formation of current problems related to food and agriculture and the problems themselves. From this point of view, the potential of AFIs in Turkey to be a solution to these problems will be investigated. To that end, the first part of this chapter tracks the transformation of the agri-food system in Turkey, starting from the foundation of the Turkish Republic. This process will again diverge inward with the food regimes perspective. Since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey coincided with the middle of the first food regime, the formation of this food regime was not mentioned. The second part examines the common AFIs and AFNs in Turkey. The last part presents the results of the fieldwork with women in cooperatives in Ankara.

4.1. The Transformation of Food Systems in Turkey

During the first food regime, in the newly founded Republic of Turkey, which inherited the Ottoman social structure, the majority of the population lived in villages and engaged in household-based subsistence production activities. In this period, agriculture serving as the primary economic channel, played a critical role in Turkey's incorporation into the global economy. The economic surplus was predominantly created by the selling of agricultural surplus in return for manufactured goods. Since agriculture was the only method of creating surplus through commodity production, Turkey's place in the international division of labor has been to specialize in agricultural production (Keyder, 1981). In the development strategy followed in the period after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey,

besides the goal of increasing agricultural production, the import substitution industrialization model, in which the state is the main actor of industrialization due to the inadequacy of private capital accumulation, was envisaged. Non-durable consumer goods that meet the basic needs of the people are largely produced through state-owned enterprises (Toksöz, 2012).

As observed in the entire Middle East region, where a classical patriarchal order is dominant, there is a definite age and gender hierarchy within the household in the agricultural society of Turkey, and this hierarchy also overlaps with the hierarchy in the labor process. Women's labor is the essential element of agricultural production as well as reproduction, and the serious loss of the male population, especially after the First World War and the War of Independence that followed, increased the importance of women's labor even more. In this period, agricultural production with primitive technologies mainly met the needs of the family (Toksöz, 2012).

Between the years 1950 and 1980, the Turkish state took on the task of managing, supervising, and protecting national development. With this task, the indirect and sometimes even direct interventions of the state in the relations of production and distribution have facilitated the capitalization, commercialization, and commoditization of agriculture. These interventions have focused particularly on policy design and implementation for agriculture and rural development. Some of the strategies the Turkish state has used included, providing inputs, credits, and extension services, promoting modern farming technologies and new crop varieties, supporting the formation of agricultural associations and cooperatives, and founding state farms and state economic enterprise marketing and distribution agencies. These methods like state economic enterprises such as producer and marketing cooperatives along with the Agricultural Bank (Ziraat Bankası), were aimed to expand and intensify commodity production yet, it also rendered the state significant control over agricultural and rural development.

Between the 1950s and 1980s, the economy was opened to foreign capital and foreign aid, and trade capital gained great efficiency. IFIs and transnational agribusiness companies supported the Turkish state's developmentalist policy, which

pursued attaining balanced agricultural and industrial modernization processes. The WB offered considerable financial aid for the modernization, capitalization, and export orientation of Turkish agriculture. Turkey's incorporation into the capitalist world economy required the adoption of modern farming techniques, including new technologies of the Green Revolution, and improvements in physical, economic, and social infrastructure such as roads, bridges, dams, irrigation systems, schools, healthcare facilities, and electricity (Aydın, 2010). At the same time, the rural area was opened to the market and a rapid urbanization process was experienced. In addition to the public sector, private sector enterprises have also acted to respond to the increasing demand, and public investments have increased their production to the extent that they are insufficient.

Small production and the self-sufficient production style of the household, which is dominant in Turkish agriculture, have changed after the 1950s, within the second food regime, with the introduction of market relations and the increase in commodification. The intensity of use of women's labor varies depending on the ownership structures in the land, the position of the households in agricultural stratification, the degree of mechanization in agriculture, the type and quality of the product produced, and the need for labor in the production process. In large landowner families, women are withdrawing from the production process to the extent that they have the opportunity to use paid workers and benefit from new technologies, and this has been observed especially in the central Anatolian region where grain production is made by machinery. On the other hand, with the transition to the production of labor-intensive products such as cotton and tobacco for the market, as seen in western Anatolia, women in peasant families with or without land, spent more labor in the stages of harvesting and hoeing, while men concentrated on the use of machinery and commercial activities. Thus, the division of labor based on gender has deepened even more. In the Black Sea region, where labor-intensive products such as tea, tobacco, and hazelnuts are produced, to the extent that the lands are small and not sufficient to support the family, women started to take increasing responsibility for agricultural work, while men began to migrate to find income-generating jobs (Yüksekkaya, 2018).

In this period that took place between 1950 and 1980, women's employment in non-agricultural activities was extremely low, and in cities, mainly a small number of highly educated and skilled women joined the workforce, mostly by performing specialized occupations in the service sector. Especially for women migrating from rural to urban areas, being a housewife in the city is the greatest longing after the heavy workload of the village. In the industry where a small number of women work, the sectors in which women are employed remain the same as tobacco, textiles-clothing, and food-beverage. Kazgan (1982, as cited in Toksöz, 2012) states that the branches of industry in which women are concentrated produce certain export goods and therefore their wages are low because they are open to international competition. In contrast, heavy industry, concentrated in men, produces highly protected import-substituting goods. Since they are in a monopoly position in the domestic market, they can sell their products at high prices and pay high wages. In addition, the fact that women work in more labor-intensive jobs in the manufacturing industry and that fewer women workers are subject to collective agreements are effective in lowering their wages (Toksöz, 2012).

The neoliberal transformation brought by the third food regime from the 1980s onward however had far more devastating consequences for Turkey. The agricultural sector in Turkey 'liberalized' with different waves which is not different from other sectors and Global South countries. Agricultural transformation in Turkey was a slow process, although transformation gave its earlier signs in the 1980s, it came into full effect only in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Aydın, 2010). The foundations of this transformation were laid by eradicating the pre-established protective mechanisms of the state. Thus, price supports and subsidies of the previous period were significantly reduced, the government guarantee of cooperative credit arrangements broke down, and the influence of international actors increased. This means that the protective measures that guard the agricultural producers against commodity and currency markets eroded to a great extent. As in the case for almost all of the Global South in this period, this resulted in the expansion of TNCs' reach to Turkish agriculture (Keyder & Yenal, 2011).

Clearly, this transformation was not voluntary, but a compliance as a result of certain obligations. Just like in all other Global South countries, all the changes just

mentioned have been brought about by the direct interventions of the IFIs. Similar to the other Global South countries at that time, Turkey was also in debt to IFIs and was experiencing economic and financial struggles due to these debts. In other words, Turkey was in serious need of credits. For this reason, Turkey had to accept all the terms and conditions put by IFIs, and the so-called new opportunities of the transnational agri-food corporations. With the Structural Adjustment Programs, state support in agriculture of the previous period was abolished; public expenditures were diminished, agricultural input subsidies and price supports were eliminated and interest rates on agricultural loans increased. According to Keyder and Yenal (2011), the most substantial contributor to the neoliberal transformation of agriculture in Turkey was the international agreements signed with the IMF and WB for debt rescheduling including earlier mentioned TRIPS and AoA agreements.

Although the agreements signed with the European Union are as important as the agreements with the IMF and WB, the EU has been involved in the neoliberalization process of Turkish agriculture a little later than other IFIs. The involvement of the EU in this process started to appear especially in the 1990s and was clearly revealed with the Customs Union agreement signed in 1996. This agreement was made ostensibly for the purpose of restructuring Turkish agriculture to raise its efficiency to the EU level. Turkey did not, however, have the privilege of active state backing that the EU enjoyed through its Common Agricultural Policy. In line with the previous discussions, Turkey settled on this only to secure additional funding from the EU following the fiscal and monetary crisis that broke out in 1994 (Aydın, 2010).

Yet, the IMF and WB agreements were more central to this transformation process. It is already established that these institutions required WTO membership, compliance with the TRIPS treaty, and the AoA for Global South. Yet another agreement that enabled the transformation of agriculture in Turkey was the Agricultural Reform Implementation Program (ARIP) that was introduced by the WB in 2001. Just like previously mentioned international agreements, ARIP was mainly aimed at neoliberal transformation and included the replacement of price and input subsidies with direct income supports, the eradication of subsidized agricultural credit, and the privatization of state economic enterprises. In line with those objectives and the

directives of the WB, the cooperatives law was reformulated to restructure the cooperatives to be autonomous in management and independent in financial affairs (Keyder & Yenal, 2011). Additionally, ARIP speeded up the process of the privatization of state-owned agricultural institutions including TEKEL, TZDK, Çay-Kur, and sugar factories. This made it possible for the WB to directly intervene in the agricultural support system and the production of some crops, like sugar beet, tobacco, and hazelnuts. The implementation of quotas on these products accelerated the transition to export-oriented crops that are demanded by global markets (Gürel, 2011). A notable illustration of the legal amendments implemented in accordance with the ARIP is the Tobacco Law of 2001. With the passage of that law, the Turkish state stopped purchasing tobacco, leaving the distribution of cigarettes and the producers of tobacco in the hands of TNCs and the global market (Aydın, 2010).

The Agrarian Law (2006) and The Seed Law (2006) were the final nails in the coffin. These two complementary laws, as an extension of the understanding of the TRIPS agreement, were enacted for ‘protecting intellectual property rights' in agriculture. While the Seed Law made it mandatory for seeds traded on the open market to be registered and certified, the Agrarian Law further broadened the agricultural sector's intellectual property rights in favor of TNCs. What the Seed Law actually did was to ban traditional seeds from being traded in the open market (Aydın, 2010; Gürel, 2014). As a result of these two laws, input prices rose, indigenous plant species started to go extinct, and another coping mechanism of the poor producers was destroyed. Furthermore, these laws cause agricultural producers to rely nearly entirely on big agribusinesses for inputs.

Evidently, these changes were not met with joy, especially when the poverty-increasing properties of these policies came to light. To soothe the tensions resulting from these policies, the Direct Income Support System was presented in 2000 by the Turkish state, along with the encouragement of the IFIs. According to this scheme, with the condition of having a title deed, a five USD value of TL per decares[9] is paid annually for agricultural lands up to 500 decares and only up to 500 decares of larger

[9] 1 decar= 1000 m²

land is included in the system. In addition, in order to benefit from DIS, the cultivation of the products determined by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs for the region was made compulsory. Direct Income Support System was actually a short-term plan to compensate for the losses experienced by farmers as a result of neoliberal policies and to keep them in agriculture and was terminated in 2010. Although the Direct Income Support System was put forward for poverty reduction, compensation for farmers, and easing social tension, it was criticized for not achieving these goals. This program excluded tenants, sharecroppers, and agricultural workers with its condition of title deed. It has even benefited medium and large-scale producers since this system allowed large landowners to get more support by dividing large lands into 500 decares (Kazgan, 2003; Aydın, 2010). Moreover, the application process was time-consuming, complicated, and expensive, again to the benefit of the large landowners. In addition, the condition of producing crops designated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs assisted in replacing traditional crops with export-oriented ones (Keyder & Yenal, 2011).

The agricultural transformation was a slowly evolving yet continuous process. These policies were never completely abandoned, even if they were changed and even occasionally temporarily suspended for a variety of social, political, and economic reasons. This transformation, which was carried out in line with the wishes of IFIs and TNCs, unfortunately, had a number of connected, detrimental effects on the environment, local people, and women.

First, the disappearance of traditional agricultural methods and plants also destroyed traditional lifestyles, culture, knowledge, and ecosystems in Turkey. In Turkey, as in the rest of the world, this loss has caused the emergence and increase of many problems in terms of human health and the environment, such as obesity, rise in infant mortality rates, water, and soil pollution, decrease in biodiversity, decrease in soil quality among others.

Second, when the TNCs gained full control of food supply chains, Turkey's ability to form an independent, balanced, and well-structured national economy and agri-food system has been weakened. Moreover, the turn to export-oriented luxury cash crops,

industrial inputs, and animal feed, which required imported seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, created huge trade deficits. These changes deepened the Turkish economy's and the farmers' reliance on TNCs for manufacturing, inputs, and other services. Farmers were reliant on the distribution systems of large corporations as a result of increased market integration, TNCs' complete control over food chains, and a lack of protection against market swings, among other factors. As grocery chains like Migros and Macromarket took the place of small, local shops, agricultural farmers became more dependent on the TNCs for market access, thus reducing their bargaining (Keyder & Yenal, 2011). This increased dependence and decreasing protection mechanisms and bargaining power have led to increased input prices, indebtedness, and often even loss of land, especially for medium and small producers.

Thirdly, deeper market integration meant that agriculture was incorporated into the accumulation process itself, which placed Turkish agriculture under the control of the capital. Farmers became heavily indebted as a result of the increased financialization of agriculture and their reliance on TNCs for agricultural supplies (Aydın, 2010). It should be mentioned that the private enterprises that provide loans to farmers who are forced to turn to loans due to increasing debts and input costs are also financial institutions of large TNCs. Thus, the last link of this intertwined chain is also controlled by TNCs. This situation demonstrates the extent of market power held by large agribusiness.

In addition, the risky and fragile environment created by this transformation for agricultural producers has greatly reduced not only their bargaining power but also their access to the market and information about changes in the market. According to Aydın (2010), this was further exacerbated by the depoliticization of peasants diminishing small farmers' ability to create a united and organized power in the policy-making in Turkey. For producers who became impoverished and lost their protection, the only way to stay in agriculture was to enter into contract farming which can be defined as an agreement between farmers and companies in which both partners agree on the terms and conditions for the production and purchasing of farm products beforehand (FAO, 2017). Contract farming was also encouraged by the

state and the Agricultural Bank (Ziraat Bankası) with various credits and laws. Contrary to what is written in the definition, contract farming in practice does not carry equality among both parties and is to the advantage of big companies due to the power imbalances between them. While those contracts include specific conditions such as product quality and quantity for producers to fulfill, areas such as pricing or payment period, which are the responsibility of purchasing companies, are left unclear and complex. Thus, contract farming has become a way for TNCs to outsource the risk, the importance of which became clear especially when the fact that agriculture is a very risky sector as it is highly affected by natural changes is considered. In other words, contract farming is a system that leaves the producers at the hands of the big agribusinesses places the risk on the producer yet seizes the created wealth by gaining control over the production and trade. Moreover, TNCs form partnerships with local businesses and get access to their manufacturing facilities, market reach, and reputation (Yenal, 1999). Tobacco, tomatoes, sunflowers, and corn are the main crops grown under contract in Turkey (Keyder & Yenal, 2011). In the production of tobacco, both international tobacco processing enterprises like Socotab and local exporting businesses like Türkiye Tütünleri, Sunel Tütün, and Özege Tütünleri engage in contract farming. Giant agribusiness firms like Monsanto and Syngenta engage in contract farming for the production of various seeds in the production of maize and sunflowers. Contract farming is used in the tomato industry to grow tomatoes in part for export markets and in part for local tomato processing businesses like Tukaş and Burcu, which typically manufacture tomato paste.

The final outcome of Turkey's agricultural transformation process, which will be discussed here, is the growth of deagrarianization and depeasantization. As a result of the commodification of land, which was a consequence of Turkey's agricultural development, land, which had previously served as the foundation of the rural economy, was put into the market as a commodity. Additionally, the common land that was formerly used for grazing operations was privatized as the property became more valuable, causing rural people to lose yet another of their support systems. Agricultural land is sold in the market to investors and construction firms with the expansion of urban areas and the tourism sector farmers' agricultural expenses and

debt rise. This allowed for speculation in the real estate market, which led to the purchase of agricultural property for investment purposes only, leaving the agricultural land uncultivated. Deagrarianization combined with the farmers' turn to non-agricultural jobs as agriculture lost its income-generating feature, sparked a growing wave of depeasantization. Although the phenomenon of depeasantization, which varies in different geographical regions in Turkey, existed before neoliberal policies, yet, it has accelerated with these policies. When agriculture ceased to be sufficient to support rural life, agricultural producers moved to the urban areas to obtain better employment. This depressed the wages and thus also had an impact on city workers. Even those who remained in rural areas had to enter the labor market for non-agricultural jobs. As a result, non-agricultural jobs have become the primary source of income for rural people.

Women, who were already in a more disadvantaged position in the social hierarchy, were more affected by these changes accordingly. The state of women which was inherently bad and already worsened in Turkey, in terms of ownership, land use, access to means of production and the market, and so on, especially in rural areas, worsened even further with the neoliberal transformation of agriculture. Similar to the rest of the Global South, the feminization of agriculture in Turkey increased the workload of women while deteriorating their share and say both in agricultural production and their households. As women increasingly lose influence over the production process, the real meaning of the feminization of agriculture has become the feminization of agricultural work, while the control and management of agriculture are being masculinized (Çelik, 2019).

The neoliberalization of agriculture in Turkey has worsened the situation of women by deepening patriarchal relations, impoverishing women, and taking away women's coping mechanisms[10]. The transformation process that established the corporate food regime, decreased property ownership, especially in rural areas. As a result, women who already had little ownership lost their assets since their assets were first to be sold to pay the rising costs. It should be noted here that although there is increasing

[10] The situation did not change much for seasonal agricultural worker women because their labor was always unpaid and invisible.

gender equality in property ownership among small producers and agricultural workers, this is due to the worsening of the situation of these classes as a whole, including men, not the improvement of women (Candan & Günal, 2013).

Besides property ownership, when the intensification of women's labor in agriculture is considered together with the invisibility of women's labor in agriculture and the fact that women work in agriculture at a high rate, it can be seen that the feminization of agriculture means an increase in the exploitation of women's labor in agriculture. This exploitation of labor manifests itself not only in agriculture but also in households as well. With the migration of men to the cities, women who stayed in rural areas had to take care of the children and the elderly on their own. As agriculture did not generate subsistence income and because of the insufficient money sent by men who migrate to the city due to high living expenses in urban areas, the workload of women in agriculture and in the household has increased while their income has decreased. Women who migrated to urban areas with men generally did not participate in the labor force, and even if they did, they joined with informal, precarious jobs. While this way of entering the workforce creates a double day for women, it also increases gender-based income inequality.

The situation of women in households that do not turn to non-agricultural jobs has not improved, on the contrary, their workload has increased even more. In the case of medium and large-scale producer households, the workload of most of the women in commercial agriculture, and of all of them both in subsistence agriculture and in households has increased, as agricultural workers employed have to be reduced due to increasing input costs. Moreover, most of the households remaining in the agricultural sector entered contract farming. Since almost all contracts are made with men in this model, contract farming meant the exchange and control of women's labor by men and companies. It has been observed that men often contract their wife’s labor without asking whether they approve of these contracts and the terms of these contracts. Thus, this situation gave men not only the right of ownership over women's labor but also the role of supervision (Yüksekkaya, 2018).

This transformation of agriculture also led to the deterioration of women’s status in the social sphere as well. Women both lost their visibility in public spaces and began

to be excluded from decision-making processes in the household. Increasing commercialization in agriculture has increased the distinction between private and public areas, especially in the rural. Since women are often identified and restricted to the private sphere, the visibility of women in the public sphere has decreased. Another factor that reduced the visibility of women in the public sphere was that many of them, especially women who migrated to cities, did not engage in non-agricultural jobs. The exclusion of women from the public sphere also resulted in their exclusion from decision-making processes in public spaces, production, and households. The exclusion of women from decision-making processes has also come with other consequences of the neoliberal transformation of agriculture. With the transformation of agriculture, the increasing need for information in areas such as production, markets, and banking, decreased the participation of women in decision-making processes, whose access to information is restricted, and thus knowledge of those issues was rather limited. Another reason was that women's declining property ownership reduced their bargaining power within the household and therefore their say in decision-making processes (Yüksekkaya, 2018).

The programs developed to reduce poverty arising from the transformation of agriculture, on the other hand, could not improve the situation of women because they ignored the patriarchal structures in the society. For example, women were largely unable to benefit from the above-mentioned Direct Income Support System program because it was based on land ownership. In addition, most of the agriculture and rural development projects of public institutions such as the Ministry of Forestry, Agriculture, and Rural Affairs could not contribute to the improvement of women's situation as they did not give women a separate area. The programs designed specifically for women as a separate category generally did not see the structural problems in rural areas. For example, micro-credits aimed at women's empowerment in rural areas created more workload and indebtedness for women due to their exclusion from decision-making mechanisms. Vocational courses for women, on the other hand, could not go beyond creating a side income opportunity for women, as they were in areas that could be called an extension of domestic labor and did not create job opportunities.

4.2. Food Movements and Alternative Food Networks in Turkey

The search for alternatives to the dominant food regime started in the early 1990s and has been growing ever since. Although it started with a small group at first and did not make much noise, the interest in AFIs is increasing every year. One of the most important factors in the fact that the food movements in Turkey, which has experienced the effects of the third food regime so deeply, have not made a sound, is the de-politicization of farmers in line with the IMF and WB policies. With the exception of Çiftçi-Sen (Çiftçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu – the Confederation of Farmers' Unions) which tries to mobilize small farmers, there has been very little movement that aims to re-politicizing farmers. Kadirbeyoğlu and Konya (2017), in their study of 55 food initiatives, revealed that AFIs in Turkey tend to emerge at the end of three processes. These three processes, one or more of which may be effective in the establishment of AFIs, are struggles against environmental conflicts like anti-mining movements, union activism, and individual or collective demands for healthy, accessible food. Various studies have observed the following points for AFIs in Turkey.

First, it is not possible to say that AFIs in Turkey are organized and connected. The AFIs in Turkey have been organized by different actors namely: consumers, producers, and intermediaries. In addition to those, there are also initiatives that are established to raise awareness about food. Since some consumer and producer initiatives are actively seeking to raise awareness about food-related issues and since prosumer cooperatives started to exist in Turkey as well, there are also initiatives located at the intersection of these four groups. It is the intermediary initiatives that are interesting here because the purpose of AFIs is to eliminate or minimize the intermediaries, as mentioned earlier. Still, there exist some commercial initiatives that engage with marketing for small farmers or traditional or organic products.

Moreover, the alternative food movement in Turkey is not a structure that has an umbrella organization. Among the AFIs in Turkey, the number of those associated with global organizations is also limited. This fragmented organization when considered together with the differentiation in the base principles of the initiatives

makes it difficult for the food movement in Turkey to reach a common goal in the context of food sovereignty, food justice, and food security. In addition, not being able to establish a holistic organization carries the risk of the fragility of initiatives – in the face of any negativity that may arise against such organizations with possible legal regulations. Owing to this, the ability of AFIs to create an AFN in Turkey is rather limited. It should be noted here that the various events that have been going on since 2016 and the organization initiatives that have started to sprout on a national scale have played an important role in increasing the number of initiatives, advancing solidarity and capacity to establish AFNs (Karakaya Ayalp, 2021).

Second, AFIs in Turkey do not have a common understanding or expectation of ecological food. For example, one initiative might collaborate with a farmer who creates vegetable-based pasta using chemical-free farming methods yet uses industrial flour instead of traditional wheat flour. On the other hand, a different group might view the use of original landrace seeds as crucial. Another ecological food community might prioritize environmentally friendly food packaging, while a separate group might not give as much importance to their packaging choices. Moreover, although a common understanding of ecological food is agreed upon there are still some limitations in opportunities for ecological agriculture in Tukey. Initiatives that try to create employment opportunities in rural areas for small-scale farmers and return them to the soil, and initiatives that directly engage in ecological farming experience various problems. The main of these problems are the low number of local and ecological producers, the lack of organic food understanding among producers, and the scarcity of lands where ecological production can be made.

Third, AFIs in Turkey are a relatively "bourgeois, middle class or upper-class, white-collar phenomenon" as discussed in the critical food studies literature in the world. This situation became apparent when the geographical distribution of AFIs in Turkey was looked at. Most of the initiatives that have emerged in Turkey have been in the three big cities (İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir), almost half of them in İstanbul, and the remaining ones have been concentrated on the Aegean coasts and have been emerging on the Mediterranean coasts for a while. In addition, this situation is

supported by the distribution of location choices within the three metropolitan cities. Looking at this, the role of universities in the first initiatives that emerged in the three cities can be seen. Considering that BÜKOOP (Boğaziçi University Members Consumption Cooperative) after the Anatolian Life Consumption Cooperative that emerged in Istanbul in 2004, the Ege University community supported agricultural groups in İzmir, and METU academicians in the founding team and coordination team of the DBB organization in Ankara, in all three provinces, the effects of academics is seen in the first initiatives.

Lastly, another issue mentioned in the world literature and encountered in Turkey is that the prices of the food reaching the consumers through these organizations are higher than the market prices. Although their prices are lower than the prices of products sold in "organic markets", this directly makes it difficult for low-income consumers to access “healthy, ecological and sustainable” food offered through these organizations. It is true that there are initiatives that particularly focus on or have the purpose of providing access to fair and healthy food for low-income groups. These initiatives prioritize affordable healthy food over ecological food. However, the number of initiatives centered on this problem is very limited. Many of these common situations in AFIs and AFNs in Turkey are also observed in cooperatives in the Ankara region.

4.3. The Potential of Cooperatives in Creating an AFN in Ankara

The field study is based on semi-structured, face-to-face, in-depth interviews conducted with women who are members of cooperatives producing and marketing in agri-food chains (for interview questions please see Appendix B). Cooperatives that set up an example for community-based AFNs that center around gender equality in Turkey are entirely selected from Ankara. Although the research centers around women’s role in food networks, cooperatives were selected without a strict criterion to be a women's cooperative. This selection strategy would reveal the women’s role in cooperatives at large, as well as would expose the situation where women’s participation is missing.

Within the scope of this study, 14 people from 11 cooperatives within eight districts (Ayaş, Bala, Beypazarı, Çankaya, Evren, Gölbaşı, Güdül, Haymana, Nallıhan) were interviewed. An attempt has been made to select one district from each level of development including the city center in order to reflect the whole of Ankara that would also give clues for Turkey. However, most of the provinces were selected from rural areas in order to focus on agri-food cooperatives and producers. In the selection of these districts, the development levels used in the Socio-Economic Development Ranking Research (Sosyo-Ekonomik Gelişmişlik Sıralaması Araştırmaları – SEGE) Report published by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Industry and Technology in 2022 were used. Of the five different development levels[11] of districts in Ankara defined in this report, the selected cooperatives correspond to at least two districts from each level except the second level (Acar et al., 2022). Significant differences in the status of cooperatives, agricultural structure, land use, etc. within this sample are suitable for obtaining important findings on community-based food production, gender equality, cooperative universe, and social development dynamics in the province of Ankara and especially in the rural districts. After determining the districts, active cooperatives, with special consideration on women's cooperatives, were selected from the list of cooperatives affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Trade through the Ankara Development Agency, and these cooperatives were reached through the contact numbers published on the internet. The interviews were mostly conducted in the production facilities of the cooperatives. Table 1 maps out the relevant information on the cooperatives.

In the interviews conducted with the women members of the selected cooperatives, the potentials and obstacles of community-based food production are examined along with how these cooperatives would improve gender equality that would be the basis of the establishment of food sovereignty through AFN. In this section, first the potentials and limitations of cooperatives to create a viable AFN, and then their contributions and obstacles to gender equality will be presented.

[11] Each level corresponds to a certain level of socioeconomic development, from one to the most developed and five to the least developed. For further details see https://www.sanayi.gov.tr/assets/pdf/birimler/2022-ilce-sege.pdf

Table 1. General Information About the Cooperatives Included in the Study

Cooperative	District	Cooperative type	Foundation year	Production area	Main products	Number of members	Number of female members	Number of people interviewed
A	Beypazarı	Agricultural Development Cooperative	2020	Value-added food production	Home-made pasta, tarhana, baklava, jams	35	33	2
B	Beypazarı	Agricultural Development Cooperative	1979	Agricultural production	Carrot juice, storage	589	7	1
C	Ayaş	Agricultural Development Cooperative	2007	Value-added food production	Tomato paste	30	26	1
D	Haymana	Agricultural Development Cooperative	2018	Value-added food production	Home-made pasta, tarhana	17	17	1
E	Haymana	Women's Enterprise Production and Business Cooperative	2018	Value-added food production	production is suspended	15	15	1
F	Bala	Women's Enterprise Production and Business Cooperative	2019	Value-added food production	Legumes, tomato paste, tarhana,	20	20	1
G	Nallıhan	Agricultural Development Cooperative	2019	agricultural input	training	16	8	1
H	Güdül	Agricultural Development Cooperative	2020	Value-added food production	Legumes, jams	15	14	2
I	Çankaya	Women's Enterprise Production and Business Cooperative	2004	Value-added food production	jams, spices, training	19	19	1
J	Evren	Women's Enterprise Production and Business Cooperative	2021	Value-added food production	Home-made pasta, tarhana, pancake, phyllo	7	7	1
K	Gölbaşı	Women's Enterprise Production and Business Cooperative	2022	Value-added food production	baklava, cookie, stuffed vine leaves, home-made pasta, training	14	unknown	2

4.3.1. Capacity of Cooperatives to Create an Alternative Business Model Based on Solidarity

It is already established that AFNs are localized agri-food systems, shortened food supply chains, and civic food networks of ethical food. In the aspect of localized agri-food systems, it is possible to say that agri-food cooperatives in the Ankara district with their scope of activities could be accepted as localized agri-food systems. Almost all of the agricultural cooperatives produce endemic foodstuffs such

as tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, wheat, barley, and so on. The only non-endemic crop that is widely produced is corn silage, which is generally produced for local livestock. Cooperatives that produce value-added food also produce traditional local foodstuffs like tarhana mix[12], homemade pasta, jams, tomato paste, baklava, and so on for regional consumption. The agri-food cooperatives in Ankara district also seemed to form or are close to forming shortened food supply chains. Most of the agricultural cooperatives in the region assume the intermediary or collector role, enabling farmers to reach large companies without the corporate intermediaries. Since this function of the cooperatives requires large storage facilities, smaller cooperatives cannot assume such a role. In addition to these challenges of the small cooperatives in functioning as intermediaries between small producers and large companies, the large majority of the farmers are, currently, not members of any active cooperatives which further curtails the bargaining power of farmers on the prices. The cooperatives in value-added food production purchase their raw materials locally and from as short distances as possible. They also sell their products either directly in their own shops and online stores or with only one intermediary, usually a supermarket or online platform. All of the value-added food cooperatives in this study sell their products to a store chain 'Başkent Market' established by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality. This store chain is under the roof of Ankara Halk Ekmek ve Un Fabrikası Inc. [13], an economic enterprise of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality. Almost all of the products that are sold in the Başkent Market come from the cooperatives in Ankara, especially the women's cooperatives. However, it is still hard to talk about a direct relationship between consumers and producers through those cooperatives. The direct sales of cooperatives are rather limited and mostly remain in their locality. There is always at least one intermediary between the producers and consumers in most of their sales. The lack of consumer cooperatives and food collectives in the area is also evidence of the insufficient direct relationship between consumers and producers.

[12] Tarhana is a traditional fermented food product made from a mixture of yogurt, flour, and often vegetables, dried and later made soup by mixing it with water.

[13] Ankara Halk Ekmek ve Un Fabrikası Inc. (Ankara Peoples Bread and Flour Factory Inc.) is established in 1979 in order to produce quality and cheap bread under hygienic conditions for the people of Ankara and to be effective in preventing excessive and fluctuations in bread prices. For further details, please see https://ankarahalkekmek.com.tr/hakkimizda/

When it comes to ecological and healthy food, the issue becomes a little bit more complicated. The field observations and interviews suggest that most cooperatives had no perception of organic, ecological food production. It seems that only after a certain production cycle and volume, cooperatives could and would indulge in organic food and sustainable food production methods. It is also observed that no predominantly male cooperative within the scope of this field study works on organic food or sustainable farming practices. Although this may imply the relationship of women with ethical food practices, this may also be a marketing strategy for women who are trying to gain a share in the agri-food sector. This second point becomes even more meaningful considering that almost half of the cooperatives examined in this study have applied to obtain organic certification. Yet, they strived to obtain organic product certification due to the costly and bureaucratically complex certification processes. The experiences of these cooperatives confirm the criticisms concerning organic certification that they create an extra-costs for small farmers, in addition to its complex bureaucracy. It is one of the contributing factors behind the shifting to ethical and quality food production only after a certain production cycle.

In the sample, there are two cooperatives that were initially established with a sustainable, healthy agriculture-food approach, and they happen to be the cooperatives established by relatively more educated upper-class people. This observation aligns with the findings of other studies conducted in Turkey which reveal a similar characteristic that this is the case for other samples and geographical areas as well (Karakaya Ayalp, 2021; Öz & Aksoy, 2019; Kadirbeyoğlu & Konya, 2017). The situation observed in Turkey in general is that food initiatives with high awareness and alternative features are generally established by high educated middle- or upper-class people as it is discussed in the previous part. The findings of this study align with this general trend. Aside from that, it is possible to say that people who enter cooperatives gain consciousness in consumption as well as production. The women who entered the food production in the cooperatives stated that they gained awareness of food after a while and that they started to question where the food they consume came from and how it was produced and made.

The awareness of the interviewed members of the cooperatives on cooperatives' alternative character also seems to be related to the awareness of organic production. Cooperatives that see themselves as AFIs, aware of the alternative character of cooperatives, are also cooperatives with organic and fair food awareness, and this awareness seems to be very limited considering the number of interviewees expressing such concerns. The majority of cooperatives see themselves as small businesses or enterprises rather than AFIs. Again, corollary to the above argument, it is observed that the awareness of being an alternative increased in cooperatives that have had a certain production cycle. Although this does not reduce the alternative feature of the business-model established by these cooperatives, it creates significant differences in women's self-positioning within agriculture-food chains.

As for the ability of cooperatives in Ankara to create an alternative business model based on the solidarity economy, two issues may be raised. First, as a minimum requirement, cooperatives should establish a financially self-sufficient business model which would mean that their revenue would balance out their expenses including labor and rent without needing outside loans. Secondly, not only a business model that seeks profit, but cooperatives must also build upon community-based production and provide internationally accepted principles of cooperatives (International Cooperative Alliance, n.d.).

In terms of the first feature, it is hard to say that the majority of the cooperatives in Ankara demonstrate fully established self-sufficient, and profitable businesses. Although most of the cooperatives involved in the study can generate a certain gross revenue, they are far from being able to generate a living income for their members. When these cooperatives are compared with each other, the differences between the cooperatives that can establish a more profitable business model can be observed. The most important thing in creating a stronger economic business model stands out as state support. While the most important factor in the survival of the cooperatives in the region seems to be Başkent Market, which belongs to the municipality, it is observed that the more profitable cooperatives are the ones that benefit more from the state support and opportunities. Tire Dairy Cooperative and Ovacık Agricultural Development Cooperative are the best examples in Turkey of how much

cooperatives can be developed with government support. Many interviewees stated that the survival of the cooperative, especially during the pandemic period, was thanks to their ability to sell and promote their products in Başkent Markets. Nevertheless, this cooperation with Başkent Markets also has some disadvantages, such as Başkent Markets not making a distinction between cooperatives regarding production or production quality, acting as an intermediary between the producer and consumer, isolating the consumer from production, and not being able to provide effective answers to the needs of the producer. Still, this type of state or municipal support has more advantages than disadvantages for AFNs.

There are other factors to establish a self-sufficient business model besides government support. It is observed that cooperatives, which are sometimes referred to as "project cooperatives" during the interviews, and which are founded on receiving grants through projects, are more unsuccessful than others in establishing a business model and solidarity networks that support local development. Cooperatives, that work better both as a business model and as solidarity organizations that support rural development, are generally cooperatives that have members from the same village and are established in that village, which can be called bottom-up cooperatives. That being said, although those can be called bottom-up, almost all cooperatives were established with the help and support of someone within the bureaucracy. Still, this indicates that a community-based production understanding leads to more successful results in terms of establishing economic sufficiency and rural development.

When examining the second feature, in terms of compliance with the principles listed, and having an understanding of community-based production, it can be said that the cooperatives in Ankara are more promising. First, most of the cooperatives stated that they prioritize labor over profit and in recruiting members they prefer people who work and put in labor. At the same time, many women's cooperatives stated that they received support from other cooperatives in the region during the establishment and production stages. In addition to these, some cooperatives stated that they are in solidarity with the cooperatives in other provinces and they organize technical trips to and/or with these cooperatives. However, it would be wrong to say

that the cooperatives and their members are more about social solidarity than financial gain. Cooperative representatives stated that they do not think that both cooperative members and cooperatives will come together unless there is financial gain.

4.3.2. Limitations on Creating AFN

It is possible to identify some of the reasons for the limitations of cooperatives in Ankara. The first reason why the cooperatives in Ankara cannot create a viable AFN is that cooperatives are still in the early stages of development. Although cooperatives in Turkey have a long history, especially in the field of agriculture, food cooperatives, and women cooperatives are relatively new whereas consumer cooperatives are new, and not yet widespread.

In addition to that, another important reason is the insufficient cooperatives training. In Turkey, where establishing a cooperative is relatively easy in terms of bureaucracy, there is no training required to establish a cooperative. For that reason, people can establish and become a member of a cooperative without understanding the values and principles of cooperatives that are beyond the purpose of profit-seeking. Most of the interviewees pinpointed this as the reason that detracts cooperatives from being an alternative business model based on solidarity by reinforcing the competitive, profit-oriented, individualistic production understanding. Another reason related to this situation is the dispersed structure of the governmental institutions that manage and support cooperatives. Cooperatives in Turkey can be established under two ministries: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Trade. This dual structure creates a lack of coordination for the establishment, supervision, and support of cooperatives. In addition to the lack of coordination between these two ministries, there is also a lack of coordination between those ministries and other public institutions such as municipalities, NGOs, and public and private banks that support cooperatives. Some interviewees stated that this dispersed structure creates obstacles in areas such as reaching state support for cooperatives, creating a common policy, listening to the problems of cooperatives, and producing solutions.

Another obstacle for cooperatives to form an alternative network is people's distrust of cooperatives. In all the districts covered in this study, there is a negative experience with cooperatives that has happened before. This story can range from the villagers leaving with high debts as a result of unsuccessful cooperative experiences, to the one person in the cooperative to use the cooperative's money for his/her own personal expenses. The hesitations of people as a result of these negative experiences have been a problem that all newly established cooperatives interviewed said they encountered during the establishment phase.

4.3.3. The Role of Women in Cooperatives for Food Sovereignty

The gendered analysis of the cooperatives in Ankara gives us another part of the puzzle. It does not seem possible to draw a general model of the women participating in cooperatives. Women from very different ages, classes, education levels, and backgrounds co-exist in the cooperative universe. Then again, if a generalization can be made about the women in the cooperatives, it is only that almost all of them are women who produce and put in labor. Yet, most of the time their work has been redeemed to be ‘unproductive’ and ‘unworthy’ by the patriarchal capitalism. Nevertheless, their work both in cooperatives and their households builds the pillars of food sovereignty.

During the interviews with the women in the cooperatives, many dynamics were observed within the cooperative structure that would strengthen the foundations of food sovereignty. From these dynamics, the most promising observation, both in terms of creating an alternative to the dominant food regime and in terms of building a pillar of food sovereignty, is intergenerational knowledge transfer. The ages of the cooperative members range from 18 to 65, which means that different generations work together in these cooperatives. This enables the transfer of traditional local production methods, culture, cuisine, and knowledge to younger generations while transferring information about technology and the market to the older generations. That transformation unlocks many possibilities. First, by increasing the knowledge of older women about emerging technologies and market conditions, it will increase their voice and decision-making power in production and their households. The

interviews conducted in the field also prove this, almost all of the women interviewed said that their say in the household increased after they joined the cooperative. Second, the traditional local practices and lifestyles that started to dissolve with the second food regime and are on the verge of disappearing with the third food regime can be passed on to the next generations. Lastly, younger generations can combine that traditional information transferred with new information about agriculture, food, and technology to find solutions to current and upcoming food problems. In addition, it is observed that the children of women who are partners in the cooperative are also included in the cooperative after a while. Most of the interviewees said that after a while, their children became interested in the work they do in the cooperative, and almost half of them said that one of their children also worked in the cooperative or became a member. This not only provided intergenerational knowledge transfer within the family but also increased the status of women in the family.

Another observed dynamic that can reinforce the foundations of food sovereignty in Turkey is the strengthening effect of cooperatives on women's solidarity. The important point here is that cooperatives that can create this effect are usually women's cooperatives or women-dominated cooperatives. As a result of the observations made, it is possible to say that women-majority cooperatives are more solidaristic than male-majority cooperatives. While the majority of women's cooperatives said that they cooperated with other women's cooperatives during the establishment or production stages, the cooperatives with a majority of men said that for the most part, they did not collaborate in such a way. At the same time, it has been observed that almost all of the women's cooperatives in Ankara are aware of each other and come together in training and activities for cooperatives. Even though these activities are made by invitation to all cooperatives, it is observed that there is almost no participation by the male majority cooperatives. This could be due to the fact that men generally work in non-agricultural jobs during the daytime. Still, those cooperatives do not show participation with female or retired members. Not only about cooperative-related issues, it has also been observed that women show examples of both economic and social solidarity with other women through cooperatives. As an example of economic solidarity, the insured employees of the

cooperatives are generally women from within the cooperative or from that district, who are in a difficult situation. Sometimes women in distress are recruited for existing jobs, sometimes job opportunities are created in the cooperative just because these women need subsistence income. In addition to that, it has been said by many interviewees that women from the same rural area who are not a member of the cooperative nevertheless need money, are selling the surplus of agricultural or domestic production through these cooperatives, and the entire income is given to the woman who owns the product.

The solidarity of women has not only remained in the economic sphere and has also turned into a form of social solidarity. Most of the cooperatives have formed side activities such as choirs, trips, and picnics, and some of them even organized activities such as literacy courses. In addition to these, a few cooperatives organized trips outside the city and provided the opportunity for women who would not normally leave their district without family supervision, which allowed them to able to travel to other places more freely. In addition, some women, usually in managerial positions within the cooperatives, said that they brought other members with their personal vehicles to reach their remote production facilities, and even got a driving license for this. This not only provided safe transportation to member women but also contributed to the self-realization of women. In addition, it is possible to see women's solidarity in public and cooperative cooperation. The importance of state support in the development of a cooperative business model has already been established. The gender aspect of it is no exception. Half of the cooperatives included in the study stated that their establishment was initiated by a woman who is a district governor or district agriculture, municipality official. This shows that women who hold positions in the state can also support women in the region through cooperatives.

It has also been observed that cooperatives established upon market integration and profitability, without a clear understanding of gender equality, even if they are women's cooperatives, are relatively unsuccessful in providing rural development and creating a positive change in women's lives, These cooperatives are generally established by men, and sometimes women, arguably to benefit from the support

given to women's cooperatives without understanding the principles of solidarity and gender equality. These cooperatives, examples of which can be seen in many parts of Turkey, not only fail to empower women but also cause further exploitation of women's labor by using this public support for personal gain, instead of rural development. Examples of such cooperatives have also been seen in the Ankara region, and when compared with cooperatives that are more committed to the principle of gender equality, it has been observed that they cannot support rural development and even often cannot create a sustainable cooperative business model because principles such as solidarity remain in the background.

Another observation is that the success or failure of the cooperative determines not only the locals' view of the cooperatives but also their view of women, especially in rural areas. Generally, it was said that "you cannot do this job", "you will be defrauded", "you will lose money"[14], etc. during the establishment phase of cooperatives, yet, as the cooperatives became more profitable, more and more people wanted to join the cooperatives or tried to establish a separate cooperative. In fact, the success of cooperatives in one district affected other districts, changing the negative perspective on cooperatives and causing the establishment of cooperatives in other districts. Half of the cooperatives interviewed stated that the successful cooperative models they saw in other districts were effective in establishing their cooperatives and gaining members. Moreover, the interviewees stated that people who previously did not want to join the cooperative due to negative examples wanted to become members of the cooperative when their cooperative began to gain financial strength. At the same time, it was said that during the establishment phase of the cooperatives or during the times when the cooperatives were experiencing economic difficulties, they encountered comments such as "Women can't do this job, what are they doing?", "Women couldn't do it"[15], however, when the cooperative was successful, these comments disappeared and were replaced by expressions of appreciation like "Our women can do this", "Our women have done great things" [16].

[14] In Turkish "Bu işi yapamazsınız", "Dolandırılacaksınız", "Paranızı kaybedeceksiniz"

[15] In Turkish "Kadınlar bu işi yapamaz, napıyolar", "Kadınlar beceremedi"

[16] In Turkish "Kadınlarımız yapabilir", "Kadınlarımız güzel işler başardı"

Hence, the cooperatives that give more importance to gender equality are more successful in providing both economic and social development in rural areas and maintaining local agri-food practices.

The cooperative structure also provides some benefits to the emancipation of women. First and foremost, within the cooperatives, women's perception of themselves and their labor is developing. As one of the interviewees puts it, “I exist here by producing”[17]. This situation seems to be one of the most important factors for women to get involved in cooperatives. Many women interviewed in this study, especially those who migrated from rural to urban areas, said that they could not feel like they were a part of production or even life in general at home and that they even felt excluded. These women stated that one of their motivations for joining the cooperative was to see the value of their labor and to participate in life and production. At the same time, most of the cooperative interviewees said that other women members as well as them gained self-confidence after being involved in the cooperative. Some of them even stated that this was the biggest change they saw in the women who were members of the cooperative. Producing something in cooperatives, the recognition of the value of labor, being a part of a community, and the feeling of being needed seem to be the factors behind this raised self-confidence. Moreover, women begin a continuous learning process in cooperatives. They learn while producing, attend training programs, and gain knowledge and experience not only about cooperatives but also about market conditions, new production techniques, and new products.

Cooperatives have also relatively increased the visibility of women in public spaces. During the interviews, women stated many times that they started to be visible in social life thanks to cooperatives. An interviewee stated that before the cooperative was established, women had to go out in public with a veil over their mouths and could not pass by the local traditional coffee shop, yet that is not the case now. Cooperatives not only increased the visibility of women but also increased their right to speak in other areas of life and within the household. Most of the interviewees also

[17] In Turkish “Ben burada üreterek var oluyorum”.

said that after joining the cooperative, they take more part in the decision-making processes in the household and in the village.

4.3.4. Limitations of Cooperatives in Promoting Gender Equality

Despite all this, unfortunately, cooperatives in Ankara have a long way to achieve gender equality. First of all, while the workload in the household increased for most of the women interviewed, the overall workload increased for all of them. Although some of the interviewees said that after they joined the cooperatives, their spouses contributed to the domestic work, most of the interviewees said that their spouses did not contribute which increased their workload. Moreover, the majority of the interviewees stated that half of the women who are workers or members of the cooperative can work only as long as their families and spouses allow. Since this permission is usually given only for earning money, women are not allowed to go to the cooperative if they cannot be paid for a while. This shows that being involved in a cooperative cannot create independence for women for the most part.

The biggest problem regarding gender equality within the cooperative, which may also be related to the last point, is that the cooperatives have become a tool for the exploitation of women's labor. Even, this exploitation can lead to the exploitation of women not only by men but also by women. Women working in cooperatives, whether they are partners or employees, generally work with daily wages, without security or insurance. Moreover, the money earned in cooperatives does not create a living income for any working women, with a few exceptions. The main income that maintains the household still comes from non-agricultural work, usually engaged by men. That being said, half of the time women do not hand in the money they earned from cooperatives; however, this does not allow them to be economically independent, just simply helps them to ask for less money from their spouse or family. Cooperatives, like the programs implemented before, cannot go beyond just creating an additional income for women. Thus, cooperatives contribute to the exploitation of women by being added to the insecure, low-paid jobs that women work.

With this, it has been observed that cooperatives are also inadequate in making women's agricultural labor visible. All of the women-majority cooperatives produce products such as tarhana, homemade pasta, baklava, tomato paste, jam, pickles, and vinegar, which can be considered as surplus of domestic production. However, almost all of these women are also engaging in agriculture in rural areas. The membership of women in agricultural cooperatives is overwhelmingly low. For example, although there is an active dairy cooperative in the same village as a women's cooperative, and although most of the women who are members of the women's cooperative have cows that are usually handled by women, there are no female members in the dairy cooperative.

It is observed that one of the biggest reasons for this is the requirements of the registration process of the "farmer registration system" (Çiftçi Kayıt Sistemi - hereafter ÇKS in its Turkish acronym). The vast majority of agricultural cooperatives require ÇKS for membership. ÇKS, which is a database of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for the registration of agricultural activities of farmers, has a property-based (ownership or lease) system (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, 2014). It has been stated that women pass on their inheritance rights in the family lands to their brothers, women who do not transfer land to their brothers or who inherit land from their husbands either sell it or rent it. Due to the low ownership of property by women in rural areas, they cannot register with the ÇKS. In fact, the ratio of all female farmers registered to the ÇKS remained at 13.8% in 2021 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2022).

In addition to the issues concerning ÇKS, there are other factors that reduce the capacity of the cooperatives to make women's labor visible in agriculture. The first one is that the fact that women do not feel comfortable in male-majority cooperatives also reduces women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. While there are many economic and social barriers to women's participation in male-dominated cooperatives, the fact that women often enter cooperatives with the permission of their families and husbands is also a barrier to women's active participation in male-dominated cooperatives. Since most of the agricultural cooperatives are male-majority cooperatives, women's participation in these cooperatives and thus the

visibility of their labor in agriculture through these cooperatives is noticeably low. Another obstacle to cooperatives' capacity to make women's agricultural labor visible is the perception of women's labor in agriculture as a continuation of domestic labor. Many of the women interviewed described field maintenance work, such as taking care of cows, milking, hoeing, and irrigation, as housework they did outside the cooperative. This indicates that the perception of women's labor in the household and in agriculture as unproductive labor is internalized. Although there are signs that their labor in production in the cooperative is perceived as productive labor, this perception does not seem to have spread to their labor in agriculture yet. Thus, cooperatives are unable to make women's labor visible in agriculture.

Moreover, cooperatives have been insufficient to prevent, let alone reverse the rural-to-urban migration since, as mentioned above, subsistence income comes from non-agricultural work done by men mostly in the urban areas. Although cooperatives have created a source of income for the people of that rural area, they have not been able to stop the trend towards turning to non-agricultural jobs because they cannot create a subsistence income. Most of the women interviewed classified themselves as 'housewives' despite the fact that they are engaged in agriculture with their husbands who work in non-agricultural jobs and mostly work and live in the city center.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Both experience and data show that there are multifaceted and deepening problems related to food systems. The same data and experience show that women play a key role in solving these problems due to their key position in food systems. Turkey, as one of the countries most affected by the food crisis, is in urgent need of solutions to these problems. Many movements and research suggest community-based AFNs focused on gender equality as a solution to problems created by the current dominant food regime. Thus, the question is what is Turkey's potential to create community-based AFNs focused on gender equality that can solve food-related problems?

In order to enable us to understand the formation and consequences of food-related problems in the most holistic way, the perspectives of food sovereignty, which defines food as the right of societies as well as people, and ecofeminism, which examines the relationship between food and gender, have been used together, focusing on production and distribution problems related to food. In observing the historical formation of these problems, food regime analysis was employed, since it is the most appropriate tool that can be used and enables both a holistic analysis and historical classification.

In this context, when the transformation of food systems under dominant food regimes is examined, it is possible to see what the food-related problems are and how they occurred both in the world and in Turkey. When we look at the transformation of food regimes in the world, the self-sufficient food systems of the Global South, which began to slowly disintegrate with colonization, were seriously hit after the 1950s by the increasing industrialization, commodification, and the introduction of genetically modified crops in agriculture. Accordingly, this period was the period

when agriculture became industrialized, the debt burden of local farmers increased, large landowners and companies gained power, traditional knowledge regarding production became devalued, women's autonomy and control over agricultural resources decreased, and ultimately rural communities were left with hardship, especially in agricultural production. As the effects of the neoliberal transformation that began in the 1980s began to be fully manifested in the 1990s, agriculture-food chains from seed to marketing have been commoditized, a heavy burden has been placed on the agricultural producers as a result of the increase in total input costs, the support mechanisms of the producers have been eliminated, the rights of the consumers to obtain information and access to healthy, nutritious foods have been disrupted, and all over the world, especially the Global Food systems in the South have become externally dependent, fragile, under corporate control and environmentally harmful. Since agricultural production could no longer support rural life, agricultural producers either migrated to cities or turned to non-agricultural jobs. In this process, since women's migration to cities and their involvement in non-agricultural employment progressed slower than men's, the burden of agriculture in the fields fell on women. However, the food movements that gained momentum all over the world in the 1990s showed that AFNs based on gender equality have great potential in solving these problems.

In the context of Turkey, it was seen that the formation of food-related problems had similar characteristics. In the period between 1950-80, agriculture in Turkey shifted from self-sufficiency production to commercial agriculture, and with this and the Green Revolution, the return to export-oriented products began, and urbanization and rural-to-urban migration increased. With the neoliberalization process that began after the 80s, local production practices, knowledge, lifestyles, and ecosystems have begun to disappear completely. With that, foreign dependency on TNCs has increased for both input and sales. This combined with the elimination of support systems of agricultural producers in the same period, increased the reach and control of the TNCs over the Turkish agri-food system. As a result of all these with the increased input costs, agriculture lost its income-generating feature, agricultural producers turned to non-agricultural works, and a great wave of depeasantization was experienced in Turkey. The feminization of agriculture that grew because of this,

increased the women’s labor in agricultural production and increased the domestic workload of women. At the same time, women's income, their visibility in social areas, the visibility of their labor in agriculture, and their participation in decision-making processes have decreased.

The study conducted with women who are members of cooperatives in the Ankara region has shown that there are serious limitations and capacities of Turkey to create community-based AFNs focused on gender equality that can solve food-related problems. The study showed that cooperatives in Ankara could not create financially self-sufficient businesses that can offer a living income for its members and workers. This eradicates cooperatives' capacity to prevent rural-to-urban migration. Moreover, they have not made sufficient progress to gain and raise awareness about ecological and ethical food production and consumption. Additionally, the inability of cooperatives to create subsistence income and secure jobs for women, diminishes the capacity of cooperatives to ensure the visibility of women’s agricultural labor, increasing the exploitation of women's labor and their overall workload. The reasons for these inadequacies were observed as the fact that the cooperatives are at the initial stage of development, the underdevelopment of understanding of cooperatives and solidarity, and the inadequacy of structural policies to ensure gender equality.

However, many capacities were also observed in establishing community-based AFNs centered on gender equality in the field study. It is possible to say that cooperatives in Ankara were able to create localized agri-food systems and shortened food supply chains. Establishing these allows for many improvements such as reducing transportation costs, preserving local culture, reducing environmental pollution, and diminishing company control and dependency. Besides these, it has been observed that cooperatives strengthen social and economic solidarity among women and among rural communities. Cooperatives with a sense of solidarity, which constitute the majority of the cooperatives included in the field study, not only contribute to economic growth in the region but also strengthen socio-economic development by contributing to rural development. This point also proves the key role of women in establishing food sovereignty. This role arises not only from women's role in society as food producers and family food managers but also from

their active role in the field of ecological food and their capacity to transform society. The learning and teaching processes and the intergenerational knowledge transfer that women engage within cooperatives, significantly increase their knowledge gained from producing. The strengthening of women's positive perception of their own labor in cooperatives shows that this knowledge itself becomes a source of emancipation for women. This points to the potential of cooperatives to resolve the paradoxical position of women in food systems. Other observations indicating this emancipatory potential of cooperatives are the increase in women's visibility within society and their right to have a say in decision-making processes within the household after they join the cooperatives. However, it should be taken into consideration that there are many obstacles to the realization of these potentials, as mentioned above.

Nevertheless, the field in which these inferences are made is limited to the cooperatives in the Ankara province. Therefore, it provides limited information to assess and make inferences on the situation of other forms of AFIs and other regions of Turkey. While the results of the study point to the potential of AFIs, they also show the strong influence of women in this potential. Therefore, in order to ensure food sovereignty in Turkey, it is necessary to increase studies on this issue and to include a gender perspective in these studies. Thus, more studies are needed to fully evaluate Turkey's potential in creating AFNs. Considering the limited number of studies approaching this field from a gender perspective in Turkey, the necessity of future studies that include all AFI forms in different parts of Turkey becomes more evident.

Another issue that is important for future studies is the alternative character of the alternatives. The fact that cooperatives, or even AFIs as a whole, thought to be remain as an alternative forever, seriously hinders their potential to solve food problems. Realization of these potentials is possible if AFIs reach a point where they can bargain with strong companies in the agri-food sector.

As the fact that food problems cannot be solved within the dominant food system becomes more evident day by day, the need for alternatives also comes to light.

Considering the deepening of food problems, understanding the potentials and limitations of AFNs may be the only line of defense between us and hunger in the future.

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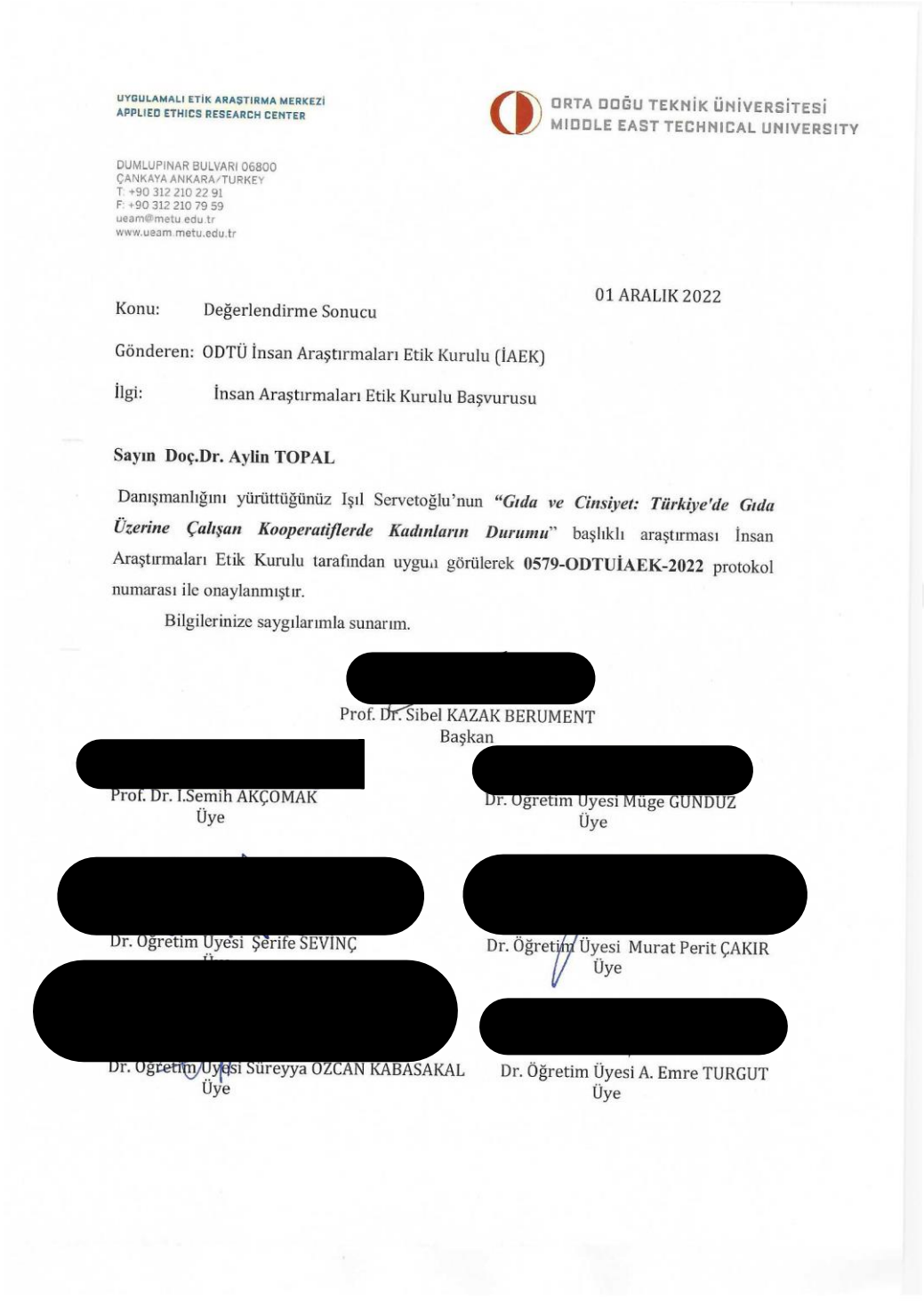
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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE



UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

01 ARALIK 2022

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Aylin TOPAL

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Işıl Servetoğlu'nun ***"Gıda ve Cinsiyet: Türkiye'de Gıda Üzerine Çalışan Kooperatiflerde Kadınların Durumu"*** başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek **0579-ODTUİAEK-2022** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

[redacted]
Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT
Başkan

[redacted]
Prof. Dr. İ.Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

[redacted]
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

[redacted]
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

[redacted]
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

[redacted]
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

[redacted]
Dr. Öğretim Üyesi A. Emre TURGUT
Üye

B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) Kooperatifin Adı:
2) Kooperatifin Üye Sayısı: Toplam: Kadın: Erkek:
3) Yönetim kurulunda görev alan kadınların hangi pozisyonlarda yer aldığı
4) Kooperatif faaliyetlerinde ve yönetiminde ne tür sorumluluklarınız var?
5) Daha fazla sorumluluk ve yetki almamanızın sebepleri nelerdir?
6) Kooperatif içinde alınan kararlarda kendi düşüncelerinizi nasıl iletiyorsunuz?
7) Kooperatif içinde ve alınan kararlarda daha fazla söz sahibi olmanız gerektiğini düşünüyor musunuz?
8) Tüm kadın üyelerin verilen kararlarda erkek üyeler kadar etkili olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?
9) Kooperatif ortaklarının karar alma süreçlerindeki rollerinde bir eşitsizlik var mı? Var ise bu eşitsizliğin nedenleri sizce neler olabilir?
10) Kooperatifin size kattığı şeyler neler?
11) Öncesine kıyasla kooperatife katılmak hayatınızda neleri değiştirdi?
12) Kooperatifin sağladığı faydalardan/kaynaklardan (para, üretim aracı, pazarlama, kurs vb.) eşit olarak yararlandığınızı düşünüyor musunuz?
13) Üretim sürecinizi anlatabilir misiniz? Ne üretiyorsunuz, nasıl üretiyorsunuz? Ne gibi farklı işler yapıyorsunuz?
14) Siz en çok hangi noktada çalışıyorsunuz?
15) Birlikte mi çalışıyorsunuz yoksa herkes kendi yerinde mi çalışıyor?
16) Diğer aşamalarda daha az yer almanızın sebebi nedir?
17) Kooperatifte kararlar nasıl alınıyor? Acil bir durum veya bir sorun olduğunda nasıl bir haberleşme ve sorun çözme yolu izleniyor?
18) Tohum, un, süt gibi hammadeleri nerden temin ediyorsunuz?
19) Üretim için gerekli kaynaklara rahat ulaşabiliyor musunuz?
20) Kooperatife girmek tarladaki iş yükünüzü nasıl değiştirdi?
21) Kooperatife girmek ev içindeki iş yükünüzü nasıl değiştirdi?
22) Kooperatife girmek üretim aşamalarındaki söz hakkınızı arttırdı mı?
23) Kooperatife girmek ev içindeki söz hakkınızı arttırdı mı?

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

İnsanın hayatta kalmasının şartı olan yeterli beslenme gün geçtikçe daha da kırılgan bir hale gelmektedir. Öyle ki dünyanın en zengin ülkelerinin vatandaşları bile artık insanın hayatta kalmasının temel gerekliliklerinden biri olan gıdaya erişmekte zorlanmaktadır. Son yıllarda yaşanan Covid-19 Pandemisi ve Ukrayna Savaşı bu kırılgan gıda sistemine daha fazla baskı yaparak, yaşanan gıda krizini daha da somutlaştırmıştır. Gıda erişimine yönelik son yayınlanan veriler de bu durumu kanıtlar niteliktedir. Dünyada 2022 yılında daha önceki tüm dönemleri geçen ve en yüksek döneminde %60'ı bulan gıda enflasyonu ve 2019 yılından beri büyük bir artış göstererek %7.9'dan %9.2'a çıkan yetersiz beslenme yaygınlığı durumun ciddiyetini göstermektedir. Burada dikkat edilmesi gereken şey yaşanan gıda krizinin savaş veya pandemiden kaynaklanmadığıdır. Pandeminin çok öncesinde yaşanan gıda krizleri hem pandemi sürecinde hem de sonrasında sağlık alanının dışında ekonomi, siyaset, çevre gibi alanlarda yaşanan çoklu krizler, yaşanan sorunların pandeminin çok ötesinde olduğunu kanıtlamıştır. Yani bu tarz münferit olaylar halihazırda problematik olan gıda sistemine daha fazla baskı yaparak çatlakları daha da belirginleştirirler, sorunların asıl kaynağı ise toplumun tümüne sirayet eden üretim, dağıtım ve tüketim ilişkileri içinde gömülüdür.

Bu durum elbette ataerki ile toplumlara sinen eşitsizlik ve dışlanmaların kendisini gıda sistemlerinde de göstermesi anlamına gelmektedir. Kadınların tarım-gıda alanında yoğunlaşan emeği ve toplumsal cinsiyet rolleriyle yüklendikleri ailenin yemek sağlayıcı sorumluluğu onları gıda üreticisi ve sağlayıcısı konumuna koyarken bir yandan da gıdaya erişimde daha dezavantajlı ve kırılgan olmaları, kadınları tarım-gıda sisteminde paradoksal bir konuma koymaktadır. Bu paradoksal konum toplumsal cinsiyeti, gıda sistemleri çalışmaları içinde kilit bir yere taşımaktadır. Türkiye'de gıdaya ilişkin sorunlardan ve onun toplumsal cinsiyet ışığındaki yansımalarından muaf değildir. Hatta, Türkiye gıda krizini en derinden yaşayan ülkelerden biridir. Bu sorunların çözümüne yönelik araştırmalar ve gıda hareketleri,

gıdaya ilişkin sorunların dünyanın her yerinde uzunca bir süredir hissedilmesiyle birlikte artmıştır. Bu hareketlerin hemen hemen hepsi de toplumsal cinsiyete de ayrı bir önem atfetmektedir. Gıdaya ilişkin sorunları üretim, bölüşüm ve tüketim dinamiklerinde gören çalışmalar ise topluluk temelli alternatif gıda üretim ağlarının bu sorunlara çözüm olabileceğini düşünmektedir. Çeşitli formlar alabilen alternatif gıda inisiyatifleri, Türkiye'de en çok kooperatif formunda gözlenmektedir.

Bu sebeple bu tez, Türkiye'de gıdaya ilişkin sorunların toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini merkeze alan topluluk-temelli gıda üretim metotları ile iyileştirilmesinin potansiyelini araştırmaktadır. Dünya literatüründe alternatif gıda yaklaşımıyla yapılmış pek çok çalışma olmasına rağmen Türkiye'de yapılan çalışmaların sayısı sınırlıdır. Bu konuda Türkiye özelinde yapılan tüm çalışmalar, tarım-gıda kooperatiflerinin gıda sistemini iyileştirmek için sunabileceği birçok şey olduğu konusunda fikir birliğine varıyor. Yine de Özden (2020), Gürler & Bozlu (2022) ve Öz & Aksoy (2019) gibi bazı araştırmacılar Türkiye'nin alternatif gıda ağıları oluşturma potansiyelini çok güçlü görürken, Karakaya Ayalp (2021) ve Kadirbeyoğlu & Konya (2017) gibi diğerleri ise, elle tutulur bir "alternatif" gıda ağı oluşturma potansiyelinde bazı ciddi sınırlamalar olduğunu söylemektedir. Her ne kadar dünya literatürü toplumsal cinsiyete gıda çalışmalarında önemli bir rol atfetse de Soysal Al ve Küçük (2019), Soysal Al (2020), Karakaya Ayalp (2021), Kadirbeyoğlu ve Konya (2017) dışında toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifini içeren çalışma yok denecek kadar azdır. Bahsedilen çalışmalar ise toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini merkeze koymaktan öte belli ölçülerde değinmektedir. Bu durum literatürde önemli bir boşluk oluşturmaktadır.

Türkiye'de toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği odaklı topluluk temelli gıda üretim metotlarının kapasitesini inceleyebilmek için bu tez, Ankara'da tarım-gıda kooperatiflerine üye kadınlarla yapılan bir saha çalışması içermektedir. Bu çalışma yarı yapılandırılmış yüz yüze derinlemesine mülakat şeklinde düzenlenmiştir. Bu çalışma dahilinde Ankara'nın Ayaş, Bala, Beypazarı, Çankaya, Evren, Gölbaşı, Güdül, Haymana, Nallıhan ilçelerindeki kooperatiflere üye kadınlarla görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Görüşmecilerin belirlenmesinde amaçlı örneklem kullanılmış ve

görüşmecilerin kadın olması şartı aranırken kooperatiflerin kadın kooperatifi olması şartı aranmamıştır. Çıktıların incelenmesinde tematik analiz kullanılmıştır.

Gıda ile ilgili sorunlar, bu sorunlara neden olan ve derinleştiren çerçeveler, ilişkiler ve yapıları taşıyan ana akım bakış açısıyla anlaşılamaz, bu nedenle, bu tez teorik olarak tarım-gıda sistemlerine alternatif bakış açılarını kullanacaktır. Bu bakış açılarından ilki gıda rejimi analizidir. Tarım-gıda sistemlerinin tarihsel gelişimini ve dönüşümünü politik, ekonomik, sosyal ve ekolojik ilişkilere özel bir mercekle incelemek için Harriet Friedmann ve Phil McMichael, 1980'lerin sonlarında "gıda rejimi" kavramını oluşturmuşlardır (Friedmann, 1987; Friedmann ve McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). Gıda rejimi, gıda üretimi, dağıtımı ve tüketiminin küresel ilişkilerini, 1870'ten bu yana kapitalist dönüşüm dönemlerinin birikim biçimlerine bağlayan tarihsel olarak anlamlı ilişkiler kümesi olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Bernstein, 2015; McMichael, 2015; Friedmann, 2009). Bundan yola çıkarak 1989'daki ilk çalışmalarında Friedmann ve McMichael, 19. yüzyılın sonlarından bu yana gerçekleşen iki ana gıda rejimini belirlemişlerdir. 1870 ile 1930'lar arasındaki döneme karşılık gelen ilk gıda rejimi, İngiliz hegemonyası, sömürgecilik, serbest ticaret ve piyasa odaklı tarımla karakterize edilmiştir. 1950'lerden 1970'lere kadar süren ikinci gıda rejimi ise, ABD hegemonyası, savaş sonrası dünya ekonomisi, devlet sisteminin genişletilmesi ve tarım sektörünün tarım-gıda şirketleri tarafından yeniden yapılandırılması ile karakterize edilmiştir. Daha tartışmalı olan üçüncü gıda rejimi ise daha sonra McMichael tarafından geliştirilmiş ve şirket hegemonyası, neoliberalizm ve küreselleşme gibi özellikler ile öne çıkmaktadır. Gıda rejimlerinden yola çıkan "gıda rejimi analizi", tarımın ve gıdanın zaman ve mekânda sermaye birikimindeki rolünü anlamaya yönelik analitik bir çerçeve olarak tanımlanmaktadır (McMichael, 2009a). Üretim, dağıtım ve tüketim kalıpları arasındaki ilişkileri ve her gıda rejiminin altında yatan ekonomik, sosyal ve ekolojik sonuçları araştırır (Bernstein, 2016). Bununla birlikte, gıda rejimi analizi sadece gıdayı değil, kapitalist gıda ilişkilerindeki geçişleri ele alarak, kapitalizmin bu ilişkiler aracılığıyla nasıl (yeniden) üretildiğini ve kapitalizmin tarihini de ortaya koymaktadır (McMichael, 2009b).

Tarım-gıda sistemine alternatif yaklaşımlar söz konusu olduğunda bir başka önemli yaklaşım da "gıda egemenliği" kavramıdır. Gıda egemenliği kavramı ilk olarak uluslararası çiftçi örgütü La Vía Campesina tarafından, 1996 Dünya Gıda Zirvesi'nde, "insanların ekolojik ve sürdürülebilir yöntemlerle üretilen sağlıklı ve kültürel olarak uygun gıdaya hakkı" olarak ortaya atılmıştır. Bu kavramın ortaya atılmasındaki en önemli neden FAO, Dünya Ticaret Örgütü gibi kurumların kullandığı "gıda güvencesi" kavramının çiftçilerin, kırsal komünitelerin ve gıda tüketicilerinin sorunlarını yeterince ifade edememesidir. Bu sebeple gıda egemenliği konsepti en iyi, gıda güvenliğiyle kurduğu zıtlıkları aracılığıyla anlaşılabilir. Bu eleştirilerin de etkisiyle 2001 yılında anlamı genişletilen gıda güvencesi "bütün insanların her zaman aktif ve sağlıklı bir yaşam için gerekli olan besin ihtiyaçlarını ve gıda tercihlerini karşılayabilmek amacıyla yeterli, sağlıklı, güvenilir ve besleyici gıdaya fiziksel ve ekonomik bakımdan sürekli erişebilmeleri" olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu tanım gıdayı bir hak olarak tanımlayıp, gıdaya ilişkin sorunların sonuçlarını analiz etse de bu sorunlara neden olan üretim, bölüşüm ve tüketim pratikleriyle ilgili bir yargı barındırmamaktadır. Bu nedenle gıda güvencesi çerçevesi, gıdayı bir meta, gıda üretim araçlarını da özel mülkiyet olarak algılamakta, üretimin amacını markete arz saplamakta ve çözümü market mekanizması içinde daha "verimli" üretim pratiklerinde görmektedir. Buna karşılık gıda egemenliği, gıdayı yaşamın temel ihtiyaçlarından biri olarak insanların ve topluluklar için bir hak, gıda üretim araçlarını kırsal çiftçiler ve yerel toplulukların sahipliğinde, özellikle de tohumu insanlığın ortak mirası olarak algılamakta, üretimin amacını yerel tüketim olarak görmekte ve çözümü çevreye duyarlı ve adil gıda sistemlerinde görmektedir. Gıda güvencesi konseptini kullanan organizasyonların savunduğu endüstriyel üretim, fiyatların market üzerinden belirlenmesi, patent hakkı, küresel gıda politikası ve tarımsal kalkınmaya karşı gıda egemenliği, agro-ekolojik üretim, adil fiyatlar, yerel gıda politikaları ve kırsal kalkınmayı savunmaktadır. Yani gıda güvencesi semptomları yok etmeye yönelikken gıda egemenliği hastalığı tedavi etmek için çalışmaktadır denilebilir.

Her ne kadar bu iki konsept de toplumsal cinsiyete kilit bir rol atfetse de bunun neden ve sonuçlarıyla ilgili görüşleri farklıdır. Gıda güvenliği yaklaşımı, dünyadaki gıda üretiminin yarısından fazlasından sorumlu gıda üreticileri, tüketicileri ve aile

gıda yöneticileri olarak konumları nedeniyle kadınlar için özel bir yer atfetmektedir. Bunu gıda güvenliğinin açlığı verimsizlik olarak yorumlaması ile birleştirerek, gıda ile ilgili sorunların çözümünü, kadınların 'güçlendirilmesi' ve kadınlara yönelik eşitsizliklerin ortadan kaldırılmasında, pazara daha bilgili ve girişimci bir şekilde katılmalarını ve verimliliklerini artırmalarında görmektedirler (Agarwal, 2015; Mehra & Rojas, 2008). Bununla birlikte, gıda egemenliği anlayışı, kadınlara yalnızca gıda üretimi, hane halkı gıda yönetimi ve gıda kültüründeki kilit konumlarından dolayı değil, aynı zamanda gıda sistemlerindeki eşitsiz konumları ve çifçi hareketleri içindeki kadınların bu hareketler içerisinde ve protestolarda güçlü duruşlar ve lider pozisyonları nedeniyle de özel bir yer vermektedir. Bu nedenle, gıda güvenliği anlayışının aksine, gıda politikalarının kadınlar ve çiftçiler için değil, kadınlar ve toplum tarafından yapılması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır (Patel, 2012; Park & White, 2018).

Yine de gıda egemenliği kavramı bazı zorlukları ve eksiklikleri de beraberinde getirmektedir. Kavramın büyük bir çatı oluşturacak şekilde "aşırı tanımlanmış" olması, kavramın kapitalistleri ve toprak sahiplerini içermesi gibi bazı tutarsızlıklar yaratmaktadır. Ayrıca gıda egemenliğinden bahsederken kimin egemen olduğu veya kimin bu hakkın sağlayıcısı ve koruyucusu olduğu gibi konuları da muallakta bırakmaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra toplumsal cinsiyet, sınıf gibi konulardan doğabilecek güç eşitsizlikleri ele almakta da yetersiz kalmıştır.

Bu tezde kullanılacak son çerçeve, ekoloji ve feminizm arasında bir bağ kuran ekofeminizm perspektifidir. Doğanın sömürüsü ile kadının sömürüsünün aynı kaynaktan çıktığını savunan ekofeminizmi üç alt kategoriye ayırmak mümkündür: liberal, kültürel ve materyalist ekofeminizm. Ana akım çerçevelerin bakış açısına uyan liberal ekofeminizm, çevreyle ilgili sorunların çözümünü kadınların erkeklerle eşit haklar sahip olarak çevrenin iyileştirilmesi, doğal kaynakların daha etkili kullanılması gibi konularda katkı sağlamalarında görmektedir. Kültürel ekofeminizm, kadınların regl dönemi, hamilelik, doğum, emzirme gibi doğal süreçleri nedeniyle doğayla daha yakın bağları olduğu ve öne bundan dolayı ekolojik kaygılara daha duyarlı olduklarını ve dolayısıyla çevresel sorunlarla baş etmeye daha uygun olduklarını söylemektedir. Materyalist ekofeminizm ise kadın ve doğa

arasında özden gelen bir bağın olduğuna karşı çıkarak, kadına ve doğa arasındaki ilişkinin ikisine yönelik baskının aynı kaynaklardan yani ataerkillik ve kapitalizmden gelmesiyle oluştuğunu söylemektedir. Materyalist ekofeminizm, ekonomik ve sosyal hiyerarşileri silerek kadının ve doğanın özgürleşmesini amaçlamaktadır. Alternatif gıda çalışmalarına daha uygun olduğu için bu tez materyalist ekofeminizm bakış açısını kullanmaktadır.

Ekofeminizm kavramı da bir takım sınırlılık ve eleştirilerden muaf değildir. Bunlardan ilki, ekofeminizmin, kadınlığın kadınların içinde olduğu ve bu nedenle kadının doğayla özden gelen bir bağa sahip olduğu varsayımını eleştiren özcülük eleştirileridir. Ayrıca ekofeminizm, doğanın yok edilmesinde rol alan kadınları görmezden geldiği için de eleştirilmektedir. Ekofeminizmin aynı zamanda çok geniş ve çeşitli bir kavram olması içerinde birtakım çelişkiler barındırması anlamına gelmektedir ve bu da net bir politika çerçevesi önermeyi zorlaştırır (Janet Biehl, 1991; Sargisson, 2001). Ekofeminizme yönelik bir diğer eleştiri ise kadının sanki tek bir deneyimi varmış gibi ele almasıdır. Bunun nedeni cinsiyet hiyerarşisine çok fazla odaklanarak bazen ırk, etnik köken, sınıf vb. gibi diğer sosyal hiyerarşi biçimlerini gözden kaçırabilmesidir.

Bu makalede materyalist ekofeminizm anlayışının seçilmesi, bu yaklaşımın ekofeminizme yöneltilen pek çok eleştiriye cevap verecek nitelikte olmasıdır. Ayrıca, materyalist ekofeminizm, modern bilim ve teknolojilerin ışığında ve kalkınmacı bakış açısıyla üretilen politikaların, ataerkil kapitalizmin güçlendirilmesine ve çokuluslu şirketlerin doğanın, kadınların ve yerel toplulukların sömürülmesi yoluyla kârlarını artırmasına olanak sağladığını söylemektedir. Özellikle tarımda modern üretim anlayışının sonucu, çevresel bozulmaya, cinsiyet eşitsizliğine, kadınların sömürülmesine ve ekolojik ırkçılığa yol açtığını da savunmaktadır (Mies ve Shiva, 1993).

Ekofeminizm ve gıda egemenliği bakış açılarının bir arada kullanılmasının nedeni bu iki anlayışın da kesişimsellik taşıması ve birbirleri ile dominant gıda rejimine karşı benzer bakış açılarına sahipken, birbirlerinin eksik kaldıkları noktaları tamamlamalarıdır. Bu iki bakış açısının benzerlikleri: yaşanan çevresel, ekonomik ve

sosyal sorunların kaynağının kapitalizm ve ataerkillikte görmek, dominant gıda rejimine karşı alternatif arayışlarına yönelmek, yerel komünitelere, Küresel Güneye ve kadınlara özel bir yer atfetmek, eşitlikçi bir toplum yapısını savunmak ve çevre tahribatıyla ilgili farkındalığa sahip olmaktır. Bu iki bakış açısının birbirlerini tamamladıkları noktalar ise gıda egemenliğinin kadınlara yönelik eşitsizlikleri kaçırmasının ekofeminizmle, ekofeminizmin ise cinsiyet dışında kalan sosyal hiyerarşileri gözden kaçırabilmesinin gıda egemenliğiyle çözülebilmesinin mümkün olmasıdır. Ayrıca gıda egemenliği anlayışı, ekofeminizmin özcülüğü önünde bir engel oluşturacak ve net politika önerileri sunmasına imkân verecektir. Bunlara ek olarak, çok geniş olmakla eleştirilen bu iki kavramın kesişimselliğini almak her ikisinin de genişliğini azaltmaya yardımcı olacaktır.

Bu perspektifler ışığında 19. yüzyıldan bu yana bu yana gıda sistemlerindeki dönüşümlere baktığımızda, gıdayla ilgili yaşanan sorunların neler olduğu ve nasıl ortaya çıktığını görmek mümkündür. 1870-1930 yılları arasında gerçekleşen ilk küresel gıda rejimi imal edilen mallar, emek ve sermaye karşılığında ucuz hammaddelerin ve yiyeceklerin yerleşimci kolonilerinden Avrupa'ya aktarılmasına dayanmaktadır. Bu, bağımsız devletler tarafından yönetilen bir ulusal ekonomiler sistemi kurarken, Avrupa'da artan sanayileşmenin temelini oluşturmuştur (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989).

1950-1970 yılları arasında gerçekleşen ikinci gıda rejimi, ABD'nin Küresel Güney'e tarım ürünleri fazlasını ‘gıda yardımı’ adı altında aktarmasıyla, ilk dönemin tam tersine bir gıda akışını temsil eder. Bu dönemdeki önemli olaylardan biri, Yeşil Devrim olarak adlandırılan hareketin yeni geliştirilmiş, genetiği değiştirilmiş yüksek verimli tahılları tanıtmasıdır. Ancak bu tahıllar, kimyasal gübreler, tarım ilaçları ve makineleşme kullanımına ihtiyaç duyduğu için doğal kaynak kirliliği ve petrole bağımlılığı da beraberinde getirmiştir. Buna bağlı olarak bu dönem tarımın endüstriyelleştiği, yerel çiftçilerin borç yükünün arttığı, büyük toprak sahipleri ve şirketlerin ise güç kazandığı, üretime yönelik geleneksel bilgilerin değersizleştiği, kadınların özerkliğinin ve tarımsal kaynaklar üzerindeki kontrolünün azaldığı ve nihayetinde kırsal toplulukların zorluk yaşamaya başladığı dönem olmuştur.

1980'lerden günümüze uzanan üçüncü gıda rejimi, tarım-gıda sistemlerinin neoliberal ideolojiyle dönüştüğü ve buna uygun olarak ticaretin liberalleşmesi, piyasa entegrasyonu, serbestleşme, özelleştirme, finansallaşma ve refah harcamalarının azaltılmasıyla karakterize edilmektedir. Bu dönüşüme, özellikle Küresel Güney'de, Uluslararası Para Fonu ve Dünya Bankası gibi Uluslararası Finans Kuruluşların, Yapısal Uyum Programları aracılığıyla, ekonomik kriz veya gerileme yaşayan ülkelere kredi veya faiz indirimi karşılığında uygulanan ekonomi politikaları neden olmuştur. Bu politikalar, tarifeler önceki dönemlerin ulusal pazarlama kurullarını parçaladı, fiyat garantilerini kaldırdı ve Küresel Güney'deki ulusal tarım sistemlerini paramparça etmiştir. Bu politikalar, uluslararası Serbest Ticaret Anlaşmaları aracılığıyla uluslararası anlaşmalarla dayatılmıştır. Bu anlaşmalardan en önemlileri Dünya Ticaret Örgütünün Ticaretle Bağlantılı Fikri Mülkiyet Anlaşması (TRIPS) ve Tarım Anlaşmasıdır (Holt-Giménez ve diğerleri, 2009). Bu dönüşümün sonucunda, tohumdan pazarlamaya kadar tarım-gıda zincirlerini metalaşmış, toplam girdi maliyetlerini artması sonucu üreticiye ağır bir yük binmiş, üreticilerin destek mekanizmalarını ortadan kalkmış, tüketicilerin bilgi edinme ve sağlıklı, besleyici gıdalara erişim haklarını sekteye uğratılmış ve dünyanın her yerinde, özellikle de Küresel Güney'deki gıda sistemleri dışa bağımlı, kırılgan, şirketlerin kontrolü altında ve çevreye zararlı hale gelmiştir. Tarımsal üretimin kırsal yaşamı destekleyemez hale geldiği için, tarım üreticileri ya şehirlere göç etmiş ya da tarım dışı işlere yönelmişlerdir. Bu süreçte kadınların, kentlere göçü ve tarım dışı istihdamda yer almaları erkeklere göre daha yavaş ilerlediğinden tarlalarda tarımın yükü kadınlara kalmıştır. Nerdeyse bütün Küresel Güneyde belirgin bir şekilde gözlemlenebilen bu fenomen ‘tarımın feminizasyonu’ olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Ancak bu, kadınların tarımsal üretimde tam özerklik kazandığı ve özgürleştiği anlamına değil, aksine, tarımsal emek kadınlaşırken kadınların üretim sürecindeki kontrolünü giderek kaybetmesi anlamına gelmektedir.

Bütün bu değişimler çeşitli gıda hareketlerinin ortaya çıkmasına neden olmuş ve dünya genelinde çeşitli uygulamaları içeren ve ana akım gıda sistemlerine alternatif olan Alternatif Gıda Ağlarının, ortaya çıkmasını sağlamıştır. Alternatif gıda ağlarıların ortak özellikleri, üretici ve tüketici arasında doğrudan bir ilişki kurmayı amaçlamaları, sağlıklı, ekolojik ve temiz gıdaya odaklanmaları, yerelleştirilmiş

tarım-gıda sistemleri ve kısaltılmış gıda tedarik zincirleri olmalarıdır. Bu ağlar, gıda konusunda farkındalık yaratmayı ve en nihayetinde tarım-gıda sistemlerini dönüştürmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Pek çok çeşitli alternatif gıda inisiyatifi biçimleri olmasına rağmen kooperatifler alternatif gıda ağları içerisinde önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Bunun nedeni kooperatiflerin, ekonomik alandan çok daha fazlasını ilgilendiren dayanışma veya topluluk temelli bir girişim yaratma ilkesi sayesinde alternatif gıda ağlarının adil, sürdürülebilir, kısa ve yerel gıda sistemleri kurma hedefleri için çok uygun bir çerçeve sunmasıdır.

Türkiye bağlamında gıda kaynaklı sorunların oluşumuna ve alternatif gıda ağlarına baktığımızda, dünyanın geri kalanıyla benzer özellikler taşıdığı görülmektedir. 1950-80 arasındaki dönemde Türkiye'de tarım, geçimlik tarımdan ticari tarıma kaymış, bu ve Yeşil Devrim'le birlikte ihracata yönelik ürünlere dönüş başlamış, kentleşme ve kırdan kente göç artmıştır. 1980'li yıllardan sonra başlayan üçüncü gıda rejiminin neoliberalleşme süre de yine dünyanın geri kalanıyla benzer niteliktedir. Türkiye'de TRIPS ve Tarım anlaşmasına ek olarak Dünya Bankasının getirdiği Tarım Reformu Uygulama Programı ve Tarım Kanunu (2006) ile Tohumculuk Kanunu (2006) Türkiye'de tarımın neoliberal dönüşümünün yasal zeminini oluşturmuştur. Bu dönüşümle birlikte yerel üretim pratikleri, bilgi, yaşam tarzları ve ekosistemler tamamen yok olmaya başladı. Bununla birlikte hem girdi hem de satış açısından çokuluslu şirketlere olan dışa bağımlılık artmış ve tarımsal üreticileri destekleme sistemlerinin ortadan kaldırılmasıyla, çokuluslu şirketlerin Türk tarım-gıda sistemi üzerindeki erişimini ve kontrolünü artırmıştır. Tüm bunların sonucunda artan girdi maliyetleriyle birlikte tarım, gelir getirici özelliğini kaybetmiş, tarım üreticileri tarım dışı işlere yönelmiş ve Türkiye'de büyük bir köylüleşme dalgası yaşanmıştır. Bunun sonucunda artan tarımın feminizasyonu, tarımsal üretimde kadın emeğini ve kadının ev içi iş yükünü artırmıştır. Aynı zamanda kadınların geliri, sosyal alanlarda görünürlüğü, tarımda emeğinin görünürlüğü, söz hakkı, karar alma süreçlerine katılımı da azalmıştır.

Türkiye'de alternatif gıda ağlarının genellik şu üç sürecin sonunda ortaya çıkmaktadır: madencilik karşıtı hareketler, sendika aktivizmi ve sağlıklı, erişilebilir gıdaya yönelik bireysel veya kolektif talepler gibi çevresel çatışmalara karşı verilen

mücadeleler. Türkiye'de alternatif gıda ağlarının ortak özellikleri düzensiz ve bağlantısız olmaları, bir üst örgütlenme yapısı olamaması, ekolojik gıdaya ilişkin ortak bir anlayış veya beklentinin olmaması, genellikle İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir başta olmak üzere büyük şehirlerde yoğunlaşmaları, ürünlerinin piyasaya kıyasla yüksek fiyatlı olması ve bundan dolayı nispeten orta veya üst sınıf, beyaz yakalı bir olgu olarak görülmesi olarak sayılabilir (Karakaya Ayalp, 2021).

Ankara bölgesindeki kooperatif üyesi olan kadınlarla yapılan çalışma, Türkiye'nin gıda ile ilgili sorunları çözebilecek toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği odaklı topluluk temelli alternatif gıda ağları yaratma konusunda ciddi kısıtları ve kapasiteleri olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışma, Ankara'daki kooperatiflerin, üyelerine ve çalışanlarına geçimlerini sağlayacak bir gelir sunabilecek, mali açıdan kendi kendine yeten işletmeler yaratamadığını göstermiştir. Dahası, ekolojik ve etik gıda üretimi ve tüketimi konusunda farkındalık kazanma ve artırma konusunda da yeterli ilerleme kaydedememişlerdir. Bu durum kooperatiflerin kırdan kente göçü önleme kapasitesini ciddi anlamda sekteye uğratmaktadır. Ayrıca, kooperatiflerin kadınlar için geçimlik gelir ve güvenceli iş yaratamaması, kooperatiflerin kadınların tarımsal emeğinin görünürlüğünü sağlama kapasitesini azaltmakta, kadın emeğinin sömürülmesini ve kadınların toplam iş yükünü artırmaktadır. Bu yetersizliklerin nedenleri arasında kooperatiflerin henüz başlangıç aşamasında olması, kooperatifçilik ve dayanışma anlayışının yeterince gelişmemiş olması ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini sağlamaya yönelik yapısal politikaların yetersizliği gösterilebilir.

Ancak saha çalışmasında toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini merkeze alan topluluk temelli alternatif gıda ağları kurulması konusunda pek çok kapasitenin de olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Ankara'daki kooperatiflerin yerelleştirilmiş tarım-gıda sistemleri ve kısaltılmış gıda tedarik zincirleri kurabildiğini söylemek mümkündür. Bunların oluşturulması, nakliye maliyetlerinin azaltılması, yerel kültürün korunması, çevre kirliliğinin azaltılması, şirket kontrolünün ve bağımlılığının azaltılması gibi birçok iyileştirmeye olanak sağlamaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra kooperatiflerin kadınlar ve kırsal topluluklar arasındaki sosyal ve ekonomik dayanışmayı güçlendirdiği de gözlemlenmiştir. Saha çalışmasına dahil edilen kooperatiflerin çoğunluğunu oluşturan dayanışma duygusuna sahip kooperatifler, bölgede ekonomik büyümeye

katkı sağladığı gibi kırsal kalkınmaya da katkı sağlayarak sosyo-ekonomik kalkınmayı güçlendirmektedir. Kadınların kooperatiflerde gerçekleştirdikleri öğrenme-öğretme süreçleri ve nesiller arası bilgi aktarımı, onların üretimden elde ettikleri bilgileri önemli ölçüde artırmaktadır. Kooperatiflerde kadınların kendi emeklerine ilişkin olumlu algılarının güçlenmesi, bu bilginin bizzat kadınlar için bir özgürleşme kaynağı haline geldiğini göstermektedir. Bu, kooperatiflerin, kadınların gıda sistemlerindeki paradoksal konumunu çözme potansiyeline işaret etmektedir. Kooperatiflerin bu özgürleştirici potansiyelini gösteren diğer gözlemler ise kadınların kooperatiflere üye olduktan sonra toplumdaki görünürlüğünün ve hane içindeki karar alma süreçlerinde söz haklarının artmasıdır. Ancak yukarıda da belirttiğimiz gibi bu potansiyellerin hayata geçirilmesinin önünde pek çok engelin olduğu dikkate alınmalıdır.

Sonuç olarak Türkiye'de özellikle tarım-gıda sistemlerinin neoliberal dönüşümüyle birlikte ortaya çıkan gıdaya yönelik sorunları, kadınları merkeze alan topluluk temelli alternatif gıda ağlarıyla çözmenin pek çok potansiyeli bulunmaktadır. Yine de bu potansiyeli gerçekleştirmenin önünde önemli sınırlılıklar bulunmaktadır. Bu sınırlılıkların aşılarak Türkiye'nin gıda egemenliğini kazanması hem içinde bulunduğumuz hem de gelecekte olabilecek gıda krizlerine karşı önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışmanın boyutlarının limitli olduğu düşünüldüğünde, ileride bu tarz çalışmaların yaygınlaşması, gelecekte açlıkla aramızdaki tek savunma hattını oluşturabilir.

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YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : Servetoğlu
Adı / Name : Işıl
Bölümü / Department : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi / Political Science and Public Administration

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