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FOOD SOVEREIGNTY MOVEMENT IN TURKEY: THE CASE OF KADIKÖY COOPERATIVE

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Food Sovereignty Movement in Turkey: The Case of Kadıköy Cooperative

Türkiye'deki Gıda Egemenliği Hareketi: Kadıköy Kooperatifi Örneği

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ÖNSÖZ/PREFACE

Oysa kesinlikle yazılmıştır
Her sevgi kitabında
Asıl olan açlıktır
Çoğunluktadır

- İşte o zaman diyorum ki -
Gelişin şen olsun senin
Her şey esirgesin seni
Çünkü açlık çoğunluktadır
Ve ezecektir gücüyle dünyayı
- İkimize bir aşk elbette yetmez
Türlü şeylerin savunulduğu -
Diriliğe eşitliğe tokluğa
Artık ayıp olan tokluğa
Çünkü açlık çoğunluktadır
Açlık.

Turgut Uyar

Zor günlerimi kolay kılan danışmanım Can Cemgil'e şükranlarımla;

Sevgiye aç kalanlara, özgürlüğe susayanlara, itiraz edenlere, isyan edenlere, umut edenlere, hayal edenlere, inadına yaşayanlara, dayanışanlara, sınırları yıkanlara, içi yananlara, gidenlere, kaybedenlere, tutunamayanlara, dokuz köyden kovulanlara, hep arayanlara ve hiç bulamayanlara ithafen…

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ABSTRACT

Recent privatization of sugar factories in Turkey re-initiated the discussion on food crisis. Among global efforts to respond the crisis, food sovereignty is located in the most radical position, demanding fundamental changes in governance of food systems. Yet, due to discrepancies in the discourse, food sovereignty as a discourse, analytical framework, and as a political project, is understood and practiced in authentic way in each localities shaped by their very own social and political economic settings. Immersing itself into growing body of critical dialogue literature, the research takes up food sovereignty movement in Turkey through local experience of Kadıköy cooperative within the framework of four main themes identified in the literature. Accordingly, the cooperative is ethnographically investigated around issues of (i) dynamics within and between the rural-urban; (ii) market insertion and long-distance trade; (iii) territorial restructuring, land and food sovereignty; and (iv) localization problematique. The research finally suggests that the movement has a potential, thanks to its libertarian tendencies, to offer a radical alternative to governance of food systems. Nonetheless, for now in its infantile era, it is too far from making visible political economic impact in food scene of the country.

Keywords: food sovereignty movement, Kadıköy cooperative, ethnography

ÖZET

Türkiye'deki şeker fabrikalarının özelleştirilmesi gıda krizi tartışmalarını yeniden başlattı. Krize geliştirilen küresel yanıtlar arasında gıda egemenliği hareketi, gıda sistemlerinin yönetişiminde kökten değişiklikler talep ederek radikal karakteriyle öne çıkmakta. Yine de söylemdeki uyuşmazlıklardan ötürü, gıda egemenliği bir diskur, bir analitik çerçeve ve bir politik proje olarak her yerelin kendine özgü ekonomi politik koşullarıyla şekillenmiş olarak anlaşılmakta ve icra edilmekte. Harekete karşı, gittikçe büyüyen eleştirel diyalog literatürüne katılarak araştırma, Kadıköy kooperatifinin yerel deneyimi vasıtasıyla, literatürde tanımlanmış dört ana tema çerçevesinde Türkiye'deki gıda egemenliği hareketini ele almakta. Bu doğrultuda kooperatif etnografik olarak (i) kır ve kentin kendi içlerindeki ve birbiri arasındaki dinamikler; (ii) piyasaya erişim ve uzun mesafe ticaret; (iii) teritoryal yeniden yapılanma, toprak ve gıda egemenliği ve (iv) yerelleşme problematiği meselelerini tahkik etmekte. Araştırma nihai olarak, liberteryen eğilimleri sayesinde hareketin gıda sistemlerinin yönetişimine radikal bir alternatif sunma potansiyeli taşıdığını öne sürmekte. Bununla birlikte, şimdilik emekleme aşamasındayken ülkenin gıda sahnesinde görünür bir ekonomi politik etki yapmaktan çok uzakta.

Anahtar Kelimeler: gıda egemenliği hareketi, Kadıköy kooperatifi, etnografi

INTRODUCTION

> *"All is for all! If the man and the woman bear their fair share of work, they have a right to their fair share of all that is produced by all, and that share is enough to secure them well-being. No more of such vague formulas as 'the right to work,' or 'to each the whole result of his labor'. What we proclaim is the right to well-being: well-being for all!"*
>
> Pyotr A. Kropotkin, the Conquest of Bread

Longer than a century later, since Kropotkin proclaimed well-being for all (Kropotkin, 1906), the ideal is nowhere near reality. Barbarous expansion of neo-liberalism across vast reaches of the world has continuously jeopardized prosperity for everyone. Gradually drown in ever-expanding neoliberal policies, Turkey is no exception. Government in the country recently announced its decision to privatize 14 of 25 state-owned sugar factories in the country. The move is the most recent burst of privatization boom intensified particularly aftermath of 2001 crisis. The decision led to revival of long haul public debate concerning devastating socioeconomic results of the neoliberal policies marking 16 years-long Justice and Development Party rule (Öniş, 2011). While the government seeks, as could be expected, extra funding for its significantly non-transparent actions (Botero, et al., 2015), public opposition raises serious concerns over the privatization regarding well-being of citizens.

The sell-off of the sugar factories is expected by contestants of the move, including union representatives, opposition parties, and producers of sugar beet, local residents, and mass of consumers, to further chronicle social illnesses of the country. While types of concerns from different figures vary, main objections revolve around collapse of agricultural sector which is at stake for long (Köse, 2012), economic status of workers and farmers to be affected by the privatization and public health through consumption of sugary nourishment.

Right after the decision to privatize the sugar factories, the government issued a decree ruling import of starch based sugar will not be subject to custom tariffs up to 20.000 tons of sugar. That amount is roughly equal to production quota of single sugar factory being in sale. While the decree reduced quota for starch based sugar from 10% to 5%, it removed customs barriers (Cabinet, 2018) leading to nutritional risks. Affects of nutritional ingredients with starch based sugar on human health is considered hazardous. Even a recent report from Turkish Ministry of Health remarks potential of starch based sugar to cause obesity, diabetic, and cardiovascular diseases (2018). While the report suggests taking public measures to reduce its consumption, the privatization opens up the way for sugar made of sugar beet to be replaced by starch based sugar.

The factories had produced %7 of global sugar beet supply making them sixth largest producer in the world. They account for half of 2.6 million tons of national sugar supply made from sugar beet (FAO, 2014). As the factories are located in mostly poor provinces of Turkey, the dissidents estimate quick closure of the factories once sold due to inefficiency of low production capacity. By 2016, 67.650 farmers spread across 54 provinces out of 81, across 1.904.000 decare area (TürkŞeker, 2016).

Turkey, characterized by strikingly high inequalities of income and welfare (Inclusive Development Index, 2018), is yet too far from being a land where everyone equally secures their daily needs and enjoys goodness of the life. Considering huge number of farmers, factory workers, and their families, already in economic risk, those communities making their living from the sector in which factories hold a central role; will be in greater risk further jeopardizing their livelihood.

Problems around food, its supply and distribution, price and accessibility issues, its health-related qualities, and overall governance of food systems are not exclusive to Turkey. It is rather part of global problem affecting well-being of

billions around the world. What the decision of the government brings once more into question is global food crisis.

Heartbreaker images, on the one side, of kids from United States of America suffering obesity and of kids from Africa, on the other hand, dying of hunger, slap the reality in our faces: food systems are in serious crisis. Three years prior to 2008 crisis, food prices increased 80 percent, leading to large social unrest from Mexico to Pakistan (Cribb, 2010). Food And Agriculture Organization of United Nations estimates 815 million people live in hunger counting for 10.7% of world population (FAO, 2017).

The crisis manifests itself as not only economic but also ecological one. Besides the accessibility problem due to uneven distribution of nutritional resources, the quality of the food consumed around the world, and environmental hazards of food production and consumption processes deepen the ecological dimension of the crisis. As the effects of the crisis became visible for range of local and global actors, overall efforts to respond the crisis have formed up multiple courses of action. Following classification of Holt-Gimenez, historically four different discourses responding the food crisis are observed: food enterprise, food security, food justice, and food sovereignty. Structured in the food regime- food movement matrix, each discourse has distinct political orientation, varying set of institutions, multiple modus operandi, approaches to deal with the food crisis, and different documents guiding the action. (Holt-Gimenez, 2010).

Discourse of food enterprise represents neoliberal edge of the matrix. Among others, its main institutions include World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), Heritage Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Guided by World Bank 2009 Development Report, the food enterprise is a corporate oriented discourse. Its model to deal with the food crisis presumes overproduction of food, provided by power concentrated in food corporations, mostly monopolies, in unregulated markets. Phasing out local agriculture of small peasants and families,

it advocates mass global consumption of industrial food produced with seeds of genetically modified organisms (GMO) through monoculture and use of chemical inputs supposedly increasing agricultural fertility in lands grabbed by the corporations.

In a reformist position of corporate food regime, orientation of food security is development. Main institutions of the food security are Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO), United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, most of food banks, and food aid programs. Its model presumes mainstreaming niche markets such as organic markets, and maintaining northern agricultural subsidies. The food security differs from the food enterprise with its emphasis on medium-scale farmer production. Since it relies on market-led land reform, it is tied to GMOs and bio-fortified food.

On the food movements' side of the matrix, food justice is a progressive discourse. Its main institutions are alternative fair trade and Slow Food chapters, many of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movements, and farm-worker organizations. The food justice appears as an empowerment project, focusing on agriculturally produced local food, investment in disadvantaged communities, prompting solidarity economies with alternative business models, and access to land and food. It advocates right to food, better networks for safety of food, sustainable production on the basis of agricultural development.

Food sovereignty came out as an answer to neoliberal establishment over governance of food and agriculture. The concept was coined by La Via Campesina at Rome Civil Society Organization Forum in 1996 with slogan of 'profit for few or food for all' in response to the term food security. As were declared at Nyeleni Forum where pioneers of the food sovereignty gathered:

> "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 the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and

> consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers and users. Food sovereignty prioritizes local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal – fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just incomes to all peoples as well as the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage 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 and economic classes and generations." (Declaration of Nyeleni, 2007)

At the core of food sovereignty movement, there is a focus on local food systems on the basis of social and economic justice with ecological sensitivity. In its own words, "Food sovereignty emphasizes ecologically appropriate production, distribution, and consumption, social-economic justice and local food systems as ways to tackle hunger and poverty and guarantee sustainable food security for all peoples." (Newsletter no 13 - Food Sovereignty)

In contrast to other responses to the food crisis, food sovereignty is located in the most radical position, demanding fundamental changes in governance of food systems. Yet, due to discrepancies in the discourse, food sovereignty as a discourse, analytical framework, and as a political project, is understood and practiced in authentic way in each localities shaped by their very own social and political economic settings. In parallel with this observation, the literature has

witnessed boom of academic research on various localities where food sovereignty movements exists.

Importance of this study comes from compound of multitude of aspects. Firstly, current analysis on food sovereignty, as will be discussed in detail later on, requires more attention to anthropological research of local practices. Amplifying local experience of Kadıköy cooperative through critical ethnography, the research explores an urban food sovereignty struggle. Secondly, location of the focal organization, Istanbul, is an under-researched area in terms of the food sovereignty. The research, therefore, makes a geographical contribution to the literature as well. Last but not least, the research, following the relevant literature, also empowers a constructively critical dialogue with the food sovereignty movement in Turkey.

So far, in the introduction, I have presented the food crisis recalled by privatization of sugar factories in Turkey. Then, I briefly mentioned global responses to the food crisis with particular focus on food sovereignty movement.

Next section reviews discussions about food sovereignty in the literature. Elaborating more on other responses to the food crisis, first two sections of the chapter situate the food sovereignty within global political economic context, and present the critical dialogue with the movement in order to draw the framework of the research. Third section touches upon history of the movement in Turkey and reveals lack of academic interest in it which provides a gap for this research to fill in.

Second chapter starts with methodology section, explaining the research methods used in the research, the way data was collected, and methodological limitations in place. Section after the methodology presents findings of the research of local struggle of Kadıköy cooperative categorized as four main themes identified in the literature. First sub-section, following introduction of the Kadıköy cooperative, reflects on dynamics within and between the rural–urban. In doing so, it presents libertarian practices shaping in and out-group dynamics of the cooperative. It then

expounds attitude of the cooperative in regard to issues of gender and social hierarchies. Lastly, it explores value of solidarity being fundamental feature of newly established relationship between rural and urban. Second sub-section focuses on themes of market insertion and long-distance trade. It reveals role of the cooperative in provision of market access for small-scale producers and how the cooperative deals with high prices of ecological food. Then the cooperative's attitude toward long-distance trade is briefly discussed, being limited to trade of products sold in cooperative shop. Third sub-section extensively covers perception and practice of the food sovereignty concept within the cooperative as well as slight inquiry of territorial restructuring and land sovereignty. Fourth and the last sub-section refers to localization problematique with focus on scaling issue.

Subsequent conclusion chapter, briefly reviews the research, interprets the empirical data explored in the research, points out future research topics in relevance to matters discussed and finally makes conclusive remarks.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. RESPONSES TO THE FOOD CRISIS

As the global hunger and accompanying environmental crisis constantly arises; governments, relevant industries, local communities, and civil society developed wide range of initiatives in response to the crisis. Main initiatives could be observed as food enterprise, food security, food justice, and food sovereignty movement. Each response offer distinct methods, institutions, actors, and approaches characterizing nature of the responses. While for some, the solution is charity through food aids, for others, it also means business opportunity that calls partnership between public and private sector. Activists call for accountability of governments and food industry. Local community initiatives stress structural racism in the food regime. Some responses are internationally mobilized and institutionalized, while others are active in community level. Agendas of each strategy accordingly vary as well. Issues of land control, distribution policies, market reform etc. are dealt differently by each response. Understanding what each proposes and how effective each could be is essential part of dealing with the food crisis (Holt-Gimenez, 2010). In order to situate where the food sovereignty stands, first section of the chapter elaborates aforementioned four responses developed in regard to the food crisis.

1.1.1. Food Enterprise

Historically, neoliberal food regime is identified as third food regime following Settler Colonial regime and post-World War 2 consecutively. The first regime lasted from 1870 to 1914. Under British hegemony and extensive strategies of accumulation, the period witnessed transition from colonialism to settler states. Through creation of a potential for agricultural division of labor in international

level, settler states become provider of cheap food to metropolis of industrializing colonial states. Agriculture, in this period, become a capitalist sector, organized nationally though. Although agricultural products were exchanged internationally, its organization was done by nations. The latter regime lasted from 1945 to 1973, under the United States hegemony which made policies to support its agricultural sector. The United States made agriculture exempt from international free-trade regulations restricting it to national rules. Surplus created by national markets were directed to developing countries through food aids. Subsequently global south become dependent on cheap food import. Meanwhile, thanks to trade liberalization, and technological advance in preservation of food, agro-food capital was integrated and internationalized. As the rise of agro-food complexes, at the end of the regime, corporations steadily increased their domination in international integration of production and consumption processes in regard to food and agriculture. Eventually, due to instability in international markets, the regime was collapsed (Pechlaner & Otero, 2010). From early 60s, control of agro-food supply chains started to shift to supermarkets marketing branded products. The shift consolidated control of retail sector within domestic manufacture sites. Non-stop production and flexible production systems followed. Together with shift of production to global South, these systems were extended to all over the world. Western production systems shaped by energy and capital-intensive production were introduced to many developing countries (Burch & Lawrence, 2009).

Although the current neoliberal food regime is a result of previous ones, it has its own characteristics. Its 'organizing principle' is the market, rather than the empire or the state which were case in the previous regimes. States are founders of the regime through combination of Northern subsidies and liberalization of agriculture in the global South. The combination is legitimized through rules of the World Trade Organization and free trade agreements. States have served the markets via favoring corporate power with privatization and liberalization processes, and 'politicization of global value relations' (Altvater & Mahnkopf,

1997). In earlier stages of the food regime, in return of lowering wages in the North, the regime offered relatively cheap prices for agricultural commodities against small producers across the world. Later, the reverse was the case. Rise of food price worked this time, beginning of the millennium, against consumers. Two phases, harming small farmers and consumers respectively, paved the way to the food crisis. (McMichael, 2009)

The food enterprise consists of corporate control of the food regime, neoliberal actions and policy proposals with prioritization of corporate interests in dealing with hunger brought in by the food crisis. Monopolies such as Cargill, Walmart, and Monsanto are together sufficiently dominant in the food regime to make significant influence in national and international bodies governing the food systems. Their power is capable of changing rules of the game in regard to property control, use of technology, labor conditions, and trade regulations. Oligarchic consolidation of power of the monopolies through public-private partnerships, are supported by institutions such as World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Food Program. For instance, genetically modified food, backed by the WTO, is regarded as 'eco-crime' which stands at the crossroads of complex networks of the food regime controlled by the enterprises. It devastates small-scale and local economies, dismisses social and cultural practices, irreversibly damages biodiversity, and exploits the disadvantaged masses (Walters, 2012). The way the food enterprise deals with the food crisis results in huge damage to the environment and communities of not only consumers but also small-scale producers whose livelihood is dependent on their unfair economic engagement with the enterprises. As told in an advertisement of Monsanto:

> "Worrying about starving future generations won't feed them. Food biotechnology will. The world's population is growing rapidly, adding the equivalent of a China to the globe every ten years. To feed these billion more mouths, we can try extending our farming land or squeezing greater harvests out of existing cultivation. With the planet set to double in

> numbers around 2030, this heavy dependency on land can only become heavier. Soil erosion and mineral depletion will exhaust the ground. Lands such as rainforests will be forced into cultivation. Fertilizer, insecticide, and herbicide use will increase globally. At Monsanto, we now believe food biotechnology is a better way forward." (Monsanto, 2004)

As Shiva observes, industrial agriculture, main component of the food enterprise has not produced more food. It rather annihilated diverse food sources using gigantic amount of water, fossil fuels, and toxic chemicals in order to insert larger quantities of food commodities to the market. She contrasts the common judgment that the Green Revolution of the industrial agriculture miraculously prevented famine, thanks to its higher yields. Yet, considering total yields on farms, these higher yields disappear. Varieties of Green Revolution produced more grain by diverting products from straw. Less straw, however, means less fodder for farm animals and less organic fertilizer for the soil which feeds millions of organisms and refreshes the land. Wheat production could be increased by stealing food of cattle and organisms living in the soil. As those are parts of the food production, robbing their food leaves food production for humans not sustainable over time. Industrial agriculture also meant giving up many types of food small farms provide in favor of monolithic choice of crops such as wheat and maize. Many fruits and vegetables disappeared from production. Although more grain of few food commodities arrived in international markets, less food was accessed by the Third World. Thus, industrial production of food is a theft not only from other species but also from the poor. (Shiva, 2016)

1.1.2. Food Security

By definition of the FAO,

> "Food security exists 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 in order to lead a healthy and active life. In

> this regard, concerted action at all levels is required. Each nation must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security." (FAO, 1996)

Food security, in its developmental mindset, is pro-hegemonic concept deployed by international organizations such as United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), transnational agricultural businesses, and nation states. It promotes technological solutions developed by political and market institutions within national, regional, and global scales of frameworks (Jarosz, 2011). From the global perspective of the food security, nation states are regarded as a trouble in the free movement of food commodities. Accordingly nation states should be forced to trade barriers allowing in the food produced by the transnational agro-food corporations. They also should deregulate restrictions on foreign capital investment, biotechnology, and intellectual property. Such attitude implies a geographical imagination where old-fashioned agricultural economies of the global South must be developed by import of biotechnology of the global North (Hopma &Woods, 2014). The food security concept is observed as neutral in regard to power relations involved. It does not concern itself with various points of power concentration within the food chain or in the international trade, or ownership of means of productions key in the food production such as land or information. That constitutes one of the key differences between the food security and the food sovereignty which points out power asymmetry involved in food-related processes. The food security also, through pioneering of the FAO, involves in issues of good agricultural practices, precautionary measures in regard to genetically modified organisms, sustainable management of natural resources; yet it cannot take emphatic position in terms of different modes of food production due to its multilateral structure comprising governments. Three main technological standards involved in the food security are: industrial agriculture in which fossil fuels are intensively used; use of biomass and biotechnologies under

biological agriculture including genetically modified organisms; and organic agriculture which requires range of certification processes. (Gordillo & Jeronimo, 2013)

1.1.3. Food Justice

Food justice, as the progressive response to the food crisis, incorporates social values and issues about food-related processes. As one of the basic definitions explains:

> "Food justice is the rights of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, or community. [It] Includes: freedom from exploitation; ensures the rights of workers to fair labor practices; values-based: respect, empathy, pluralism, valuing knowledge; Racial Justice: dismantling of racism and white privilege; [and] gender equity" (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, 2012)

The food justice rests on the idea that current course of development is unjust and unsustainable. Reason for that is regarding people as consumers rather than citizens. The consumer perspective identifies people on the basis of a direct relationship with the market in which the highest value in economic, social, and political activities is profit. From school system to daily media, this identity is with people from the first moment of encounter. There are, however, in response, resistance movements refusing commodification of human relations in a struggle to create an alternative to neoliberal, capitalist marketplace and to reclaim democracy. Food justice activism is one of such resistances. The term has been used to describe common efforts of wide range of activists including farmers and consumers to create a just food system (Levkoe, 2006). It invites people to think about not only the food itself but also processes and issues behind it. Those include sustainability, culture, health, the tensions between local and global, and

impact of food practices. Theory and practice of the food justice asks for thinking as widely as possible in reflection of poverty, food, and hunger. It proposes recognition of the basic reality that 'if we feed each other, then we can dialogue with each other, and we can ask these important questions about food justice' (Werkheiser & Piso, 2017). Some of principle ideas of the food justice movements could be outlined as follows: Consumers has rights which must be fought for. Environmental and human healths are inseparable. Not only the food matters, but also how its distributed and produced matter. Common efforts are required to change policies for better (Lang, 1996). Originally the food justice appeared as community response to economic crisis in the mid-80s with particular focus to food service in emergency situations. Transition was witnessed to right to food as part of more just and democratic society. Most recently, it was reframed as social movement of food justice. It criticizes global food system and involves framing local initiatives as a democracy practice and as instrument for de-linking from global corporate controlled food system (Wekerle, 2004).

As Gottlieb and Joshi (2010) puts, ''Putting together the two words food and justice does not by itself accomplish the goal of facilitating the expansion and linkages of groups and issues. Nor does it necessarily create a clear path to advocating for changes to the food system or point to ways to bring about more just policies, economic change, or the restructuring of global, national, and community pathways.'' In order for the food justice to have intellectual and political significance, it must move rigorous food politics history toward more redeeming objectives. Food security of the community should be linked to food sovereignty to realize food justice. (Heynen, Kurtz, & Trauger, 2012)

1.2. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN THE WORLD

In comparison to the other responses, the food sovereignty appears as a radical project totally opposing the food enterprise, criticizing the food security, and moving beyond values of the food justice in greater political-economic context.

Second section of the chapter first presents history and main tenets of the movement with the key points marking development of the movement and basic principles shaping the food sovereignty movement. Then it moves to critical dialogue with the movement in the literature discussing current issues the movement has faced.

1.2.1. History and Main Tenets of the Movement

Food sovereignty is an emerging politics and discourse addressing failure of the food security measures to deal with hunger. It is also narration of supporting overthrow of neoliberal agricultural regime which makes farmers wretch. The food sovereignty is originally conceptualized in Latin America and publicly disclosed at the Rome World Food Conference in NGO Response to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security in 1996 by the international peasant movement La Via Campesina. The declaration presented the food sovereignty as the right of nation states in determination of their food systems and policies. A six-point plan was included to end hunger and conditions to achieve food sovereignty for nations were articulated. It outlines transformation of agricultural political economies wherever the food is produced, ecological objectives to decrease environmental degradation agriculture causes, political agendas, and cultural projects. At the core of the discourse, the movement demands for food producers to have more saying in decision making in food processes. Problems in the food system are defined as global capitalist markets and relevant property rights. Control of production and distribution are key to achieve food security (Trauger, 2015).

According to La Via Campesina, there is an historic conflict between two modes of development in rural world. The food sovereignty starts off with human rights including right to food but it goes beyond. It argues that rural people have rights to land and to produce as well. In the sense of food security and national security,;

if people of a country are dependent on price fluctuations of the global economy, on 'goodwill of a superpower not to use food as a weapon', and on unpredictable long distance delivery of food; then the country is not secure. In this sense, the food sovereignty goes beyond the food security which has nothing to do with how the food is produced and where it comes from. For proper food sovereignty rural people must have access to productive land must have decent living out of prices of their crops while feeding their fellow citizens. Detriment of domestic producers' protection in favor of trade negotiations on market access of exports is a critical problem. Liberalized agricultural trade denies local producers' access to markets via control power to access to markets on the basis of low, subsidized prices. It, thus, endangers local and regional development violating the right to produce (Rosset, 2011). Constantly under scrutiny and open to discussion and redefinition, the food sovereignty has range of manifestations seeking to challenge trans/multinational corporations and global agribusiness on pursuit of decentralization in food processes. (Andree, Ayres, Bosia, & Massicotte, 2014)

1.2.2. Current Issues and Critical Dialogue

As the food sovereignty movement has gained significant momentum since the Nyeleni Declaration in 2007 spreading globally, it has attracted academic interest of researchers from number of disciplines including political economy, political ecology, and social anthropology. Range of researches has extended to gender studies, public health, and human rights. Global conversation on the food sovereignty has brought out not only supporters and sympathizers but also skeptics both in academic and activist circles. As part of academic efforts to explore, understand, and contribute to the movement for deeper and broader conversation, several conferences with theme of critical dialogue with food sovereignty were organized by some international research institutions. (Alonso-Fradejasa, Jr, Holmes, Holt-Giménez, & Robbins, 2015)

The first conference was organized in 2013 at Yale University, the USA. The second one was in 2014 at International Institute of Social Studies, in The Hague,

the Netherlands. The two events has produced 94 conference papers, with participation of hundreds of academics, and non-academics, engaged with the food sovereignty movement bringing up large number of critical issues in question. The papers were brought together in three journal special issues. First one focused on agrarian dimensions of the food sovereignty in Journal of Peasant Studies, 41, no 6 (2014). Second issue was published by Globalizations, 12, no 4 (2015) journal focusing on globalization-related issues linked to food sovereignty in global North. Third one was Third World Quarterly, 36, no 3 (2015) whose focus was challenges and contradictions of the food sovereignty on which this research builds on.

Alonso-Fradejasa et al. have categorized challenges, contradictions, and dilemmas within four key themes confronting future research and contributing to further advance of the academic dialogue with the food sovereignty: "(1) dynamics within and between social groups in rural and urban, global South-North contexts; (2) flex crops and commodities, market insertion and long-distance trade; (3) territorial restructuring, land and food sovereignty; and (4) the localization problematique." (2015)

Although the food sovereignty originated as movement of peasants in rural areas of global South, thanks to its quick spread, it has been adopted by various communities and organization in urban areas of global North as well. Such an abrupt dissemination has brought in facing problems inherent in new social contexts. Particularly issues of gender, class, and ethnicity have become inevitable to be addressed. Despite of prominent role of women in agricultural production, social and economic power disparities between men and women maintain in most of societies. While the food sovereignty centrally recognizes women rights, gender yet to be included in systemic analysis of the discourse and practice of food sovereignty (Park & Julia, 2013). In connection with gender, power inequalities exist between classes and ethnic groups as well. Food is not equally accessible for each of those social groups. Aware of this necessity, food sovereignty presumes new set of social relations free of oppression between social

groups, ethnicities, peoples, races, and economic classes (Wittman, 2011). Building food sovereignty requires dealing with differentiating political class-based interest. However discourse of the movement does not provide a blueprint strategy. All localities, with their distinct configuration of social strata, be it nation states or grassroots movements, need to develop their own strategies to overcome inequalities within their unique circumstances (Schiavoni, 2009). The question of how local practices of the food sovereignty deals with aforementioned issues, then, becomes critical to understand political project of the movement with its territorial variations.

The second theme involves contradictions and challenges of the food sovereignty revolving around market-related issues including commodities and long-distance trade. Drawing on Fernand Braudel's non-market discussion, Handy argues that radical nature of the food sovereignty lies in standing against process of capitalist dispossession (Handy, 2013). In parallel critique of the capitalist markets, Kloppenburg argues that food sovereignty cannot be achieved without seed sovereignty. He, then, promotes Open Source Seed Initiative as a strategy to create protected commons on way to build sovereignty of food (Kloppenburg, 2013). Problems of food market naturally raise questions about the food being a commodity to be sold and purchased within markets. Pol's paper accordingly opposes it and proposes de-commodification of food as an essential substance of human existence in order to overcome accessibility problem. Elaborating on concept of commons, he rightfully suggests de-commodification of food through delinking the food from markets. What he then suggests is linking the food to schemes of welfare state (Pol, 2014). Shifting control of the food from markets to the states brings up question of sovereignty in the food sovereignty framework.

As Schiavoni sums up, broad definition of political construction of the food sovereignty leaves an unanswered question of who the sovereign is. While previous questions asked whether the sovereign of the food is state or communities, more recently, he argues, there is a growing consensus about existence of multiple sovereignties. There are multiple actors competing for the

sovereignty, engaging each other in multiple scales. Central governments, local cooperatives, and other societal actors including but not limited to grassroots movements (Schiavoni, 2014). Patel observes in parallel:

> "Food sovereignty has its own geographies, one determined by specific histories and contours of resistance. To demand a space of food sovereignty is to demand specific arrangements to govern territory and space. At the end of the day, the power of rights talk is that rights imply a particular burden on a specified entity – the state. In blowing apart the notion that the state has a paramount authority, by pointing to the multivalent hierarchies of power and control that exists within the world food system, food sovereignty paradoxically displaces one sovereign, but remains silent about the others." (Patel, 2009)

The last issue refers to localization and scale problem. Core of the debate is question if the food sovereignty project of small-scale producers could be able to adequately feed the world or not. How it can be done, according to Thiemann, cannot be answered universally since "translation of its theories into a particular landscape, and into practical terms of change" is required. He offers two layers to theoretically distinguish the sides of the translation: "(1) the layer of general notions and abstract analysis of food systems, where talk is about directions and principles; and (2) a second layer on which territorial proposals are advanced, experimented with and evaluated, and where talk is about concrete investments. (Thiemann, 2015)

His framework constitutes categorical base of themes discussed in this research. The research focuses on territorial experiment of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey from lens of Kadıköy cooperative.

1.3. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TURKEY

In terms of society and environment relationships, it's hard to talk about presence of environmental sensitivity in Turkey in general public level. Yet, there have been emergent environmental movements. Transformation process toward liberal market economy within Turkey in 80s witness accompanying environmental degradation. Rise of environmental movements in that era is no coincidence. At the time Turkey accelerated its industrialization, private sector became more prominent within the economy of the country. Encouraging the rising industries of the time for sake of development, the state left the private sector in its dealing with environment. Once went unchecked, the sector caused considerable amount of environmental damage. The situation has been effective in rise of environmental movements. Although first half of the decade witnessed suppressive administration of military coup, the second half was when the movements came to appear. It was indeed 90s, when Turkish public observed vibrant environmental dynamism (Tuna, 2015). More recent picture of environmental scene in Turkey shows three tendencies. First one is revitalization of Western style green politics. The second tendency is spread of 21st century eco-socialism in Turkey, and third one is internationalist and anti-capitalist campaigns particularly in regard to climate change (Şahin, 2010). Ecological struggle, despite being weak and ineffective in most cases, has been part of Turkish social and political life in last four decades. Recent food sovereignty movement might be seen as a continuation uniting the last two tendencies.

A key moment in emergence of food sovereignty movement might be dated back to release of Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP) by World Bank and Turkish government. The project, withdrawing subsidies from certain agricultural products, made legal amendments to the detriment of small-scale producers. Against the corrupting agricultural policies, farmers formed a movement with the motto of "WTO, keep your hands off our agriculture!". Protests against the ARIP were led by Çiftçi-Sen (Confederation of Small Farmers' Union consisting of several product-based unions. Çiftçi-Sen was first

caller of food sovereignty in Turkey in 2004. Three years later the confederation became founding member of La Via Campesina European branch making it first official actor of food sovereignty in Turkey (Doğançayır & Kocagöz, 2017).

More than a decade later since the food sovereignty entered and was heard in Turkey, the movement has not been researched well. Sole research, to my best knowledge, produced on the topic is the above-mentioned conference paper of Doğançayır and Kocagöz. They historicizes food sovereignty in Turkey with a national-level analysis, criticizes Alternative Food Initiatives (AFI), examines possibilities and limits of Kadıköy cooperative which is subject of this research as well. This research and theirs partly overlaps in terms of the focal organization. However, while their perspective looks down to local practice from a national analysis, this one looks up to wider political economic context from critical ethnographic discovery of the local. Another point of conjunction between the two studies is involvement with the critical dialogue. Yet, while they depict 'operationalizing' of the food sovereignty in Turkey, I engage in an ethnographic research of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey through lens of Kadıköy cooperative.

CHAPTER TWO

STRUGGLE OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TURKEY

2.1. METHODOLOGY

The research primarily attempts to find out potential and capability of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey to provide healthy and sufficient food for all and how could an anarchist perspective support this agenda. It does so via critical ethnographic investigation of local experience of Kadıköy cooperative with analysis of contradictions and challenges of the movement arising from political economic settings of the country and strategies of the cooperative employed to achieve its future aspirations. Then, evaluating the ethnographic data, the research utilizes anarchist theory to develop an answer to the research question.

2.1.1. Critical Ethnographic Approach

Use of ethnographic methodology in this research rests upon developing an understanding of the subject within its own domain while its real-life practices are in action. It allows qualitative depiction of causes and factors determining the course of an action. Furthermore, preference of critical ethnography over conventional ethnography reflects conduct of scientific research with a political purpose (Thomas, 1993). It implies that the research does not only attempt to understand what is researched but also engages in to change it with a political objective. Participant observation is viewed as participatory observation. That means the method is meant to create a collaborative inquiry towards transgression of traditional boundaries between the researcher and the researched. (Gordon, 2012) Specifically, what I attempt here is not limited to depiction of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey. The research also stretches to the movement's capacity to build food sovereignty.

2.1.2. Research Design and Data Collection

Main site of the research was Kadıköy cooperative. Primary qualitative data was acquired through combination of three methods: participant observation, informal and in-depth interviews, and archival research each serving deeper and wider understanding of the subject.

Participant observation was used to observe the collective actions, reactions, and interactions of the cooperative in a relatively long run. The method provided insight into how political economic circumstances affect operational processes of the cooperative, what initiatives are taken in response, what strategies are developed, what targets are set collectively in terms of the food sovereignty. From mid-fall in 2017 to late spring in 2018, I took part in cooperative activities as a volunteer along 7 months. Other volunteers were informed about my intention to make academic research as well. Along the process of participant observation, I assumed all responsibilities a volunteer expected to undertake, attended weekly meetings, took care of cooperative shop in regular basis, joined field visits to some producers, organized and moderated workshops, engaged in routine social activities with the volunteers, partook in discussions on theoretical issues along with daily tasks.

Informal talks and in-depth interviews with volunteers were employed to facilitate understanding of strains between individual and collective actions. I regularly engaged in informal talks with volunteers, small-scale producers selling food products to the cooperative, customers shopping from the cooperative shop, and volunteers of other food sovereignty organizations the Kadıköy cooperative collaborates with. The organizations include new cooperative initiatives following footsteps of the Kadıköy Cooperative, members of Çiftçi-Sen which is constituent of La Via Campesina in Turkey, and food-related collectives and associations. Names of the volunteers quoted within the research are replaced with disguise names for sake of privacy.

In-depth interviews with 6 volunteers were conducted accounting for one fourth of currently active volunteers. Interviewees were selected observing diversity of volunteers in terms of gender, education level, and duration of volunteering experience. As the cooperative is composed of women majority, so are the interviewees. All of them are at least bachelor graduates; some of them are being master or PhD students. The interviewees were picked towards end of the participant observation process when I sensed different types of engagement by the volunteers. Such diversity as well was reflected in the selection. Mutual exchanges with volunteers, producers, consumers and other activists revealed how they personally engage with the cooperative, what they politically and individually aspire to realize, how they perceive the food sovereignty, and what direction they want to take the cooperative to in future.

The data presented here contain dissection of archival documents as well. The archival research was conducted to supplement the abovementioned data. The documents include minutes of weekly meetings, workshop texts; bills for taxes and other costs, reports of visits to producers, and meeting notes of working units. The whole archive, kept since the first forum debates prior to official opening, was scanned and examined. The archive documents unveiled information on formation process of the cooperative, brief historical account of collective debates, and what has been done up to now.

Composition of the three methods is designed to collect data to engage in critical dialogue with the food sovereignty movement in Turkey in parallel with the relevant literature.

2.1.3. Limitations

As the focal point of the research is Kadıköy cooperative which is a consumer cooperative located in Istanbul, what the research finds is a vision acquired from a metropolitan area. While the cooperative is a prominent actor of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey, its agency is predominately urban based.

Hence, the data collected here is particularly concentrated around non-rural struggle of the movement. Although the research is informed, to some extent, of countryside conditions via the archive and operational network of the cooperative, it should be noted that an ethnographic inquiry with focus on rural actors of the movement in Turkey would lead to much deeper analysis than this research.

It should also be noticed that the cooperative's human force is constantly changing. Dynamic circulation of the volunteers poses another limitation to validity of the research. Along the participant observation process, it was the case that new volunteers kept involving in the cooperative, while some old volunteers halted or ended their involvement. As change in the cadres may lead to change in perceptions and visions of the food sovereignty, it is worth noting that the research's findings from in-depth interviews are limited to present time, being subject to quick change in near future.

2.2. FINDINGS

The cooperative is located in Kadıköy district on Asian side of Istanbul. Kadıköy is geographically small district with only 34 km square area of settlement on the edge of Marmara Sea and Bosporus strait with population of some half million people. The district is prominent commercial and cultural center hosting numerous business centers, theaters, cinemas, health and education institutions. It's also the biggest in the Asian side of the city as transportation hub where a harbor, a railway station, and coach terminal are situated. Economy of the district is mainly based on service sector in the areas of health, education, tourism, transportation, advertising businesses, construction, entertainment, and supermarket chains. Industrial working areas include automotive, printing press, souvenirs, and textile (Kadıköy Sub-governorship, 2018). Dense presence of private sector within the district makes it home to significant population of white collars, celebrities, managers, and business owners. In comparison to most other

districts of Istanbul, Kadıköy enjoys relatively higher level of wealth with its population mostly being middle-high class

Officially named as Kadıköy Consumption Cooperative Ltd., it is legally entitled to production as well. The cooperative operates a cooperative shop where it sells mostly food products it provided from farmers producing according to certain criteria in order for the food to be ecological. Few non-food products such as soap, surface cleaner, and cloth bags produced ecologically are sold as well. All people working for the cooperative are unpaid volunteers some of them being official shareholders. No profit share is distributed between the shareholders. The cooperative positions itself as part of food sovereignty movement in Turkey. It adopted five principles in reference to the food sovereignty framework.

Idea of Kadıköy cooperative arose from forums organized during Gezi protests in 2013 by people looking for alternative ways of self-organization in response to state politics getting more and more authoritarian. In July of that year, Active Politics Workshop, another outcome of the Gezi protests, compiled cooperative examples around the world as a model of organization. In early 2014 a workshop was organized to learn about cooperativism and prepare a model draft. Guest speakers were invited from ÇİFTÇİ-SEN and BÜKOOP (Boğaziçi University cooperative) both organizations being primary advocates of food sovereignty in Turkey. Meanwhile forums, together with the cooperative idea, withdrew from public space and returned back couple of times. Along 2015 and 2016 food packages containing mostly primary foods from small-scale producers, produced in ecological manner, were sold at 5 intervals. Finally in fall of 2016 the cooperative was legally founded and cooperative shop was opened. Umut, PhD researcher in early thirties explains the decision to found a cooperative:

> "While the forums had continued, in their last period… I went to support the meetings couple of times. I was just listening. As I already had contact with Çiftçi-Sen and had familiarity with BÜKOOP in one of those meetings we proposed: 'What would you say if we make a cooperative

> work?'The café where the meeting was held already had bought its products from producers of the Boğaziçi cooperative. We wanted to transform that relation with the producers to a participatory model that could be something permanent in Kadıköy. So we acted together to re-initiate the idea with some people in the forum who previously initiated a cooperativization work in Kadıköy which later halted.

Gaye, IT teacher in early thirties, follows on why idea of a food cooperative was chosen among other alternatives:

"Now in Turkey, even in the world, food is the common trouble either for rightist or leftists. Everyone wants to feed their children well. As Turkey is an agricultural country, if we would have founded a science cooperative we would not have advanced this far. Not everyone is able to buy house, for instance, but everyone buys their food. So its consumption is common point of us all."

Their quotes show that, to my understanding, essential motivation behind the cooperative idea was search of alternative politics. Instability of established politics of the time being far from giving hope to public, together with rising wave of nation-wide Gezi protests against the corrupt politicians prompted people to build alternatives in their locals. Not only government and state agencies but also democratic mass organizations and opposition institutions of the country failed to offer alternative to state of affairs going worse day by day. At a time when public opposition was (still is) busy with unproductive internal fights, citizens sought refuge in themselves as only hope of change. When the search of alternative politics coincided with food sovereignty activists, idea of consumption cooperative appeared and Kadıköy cooperative was born as a new urban actor of the food sovereignty in Turkey. In a country like Turkey, despite its central importance, food issue has not found its place on the top of public debates list. While in last two decades most of government actions on food production advanced neoliberalization of agriculture, media attention, which is highly scrutinized by the president, has been limited to price changes in food products

and nutritional values of some endemic, less-known plants while industrial food, particularly junk food, is constantly advertised especially in visual media. While food preferences of masses are highly affected by those ads (Yılmaz, Yılmaz & Uran, 2007), a local initiative in purport of making food politics is worth investigating. Since Çiftçi-Sen is rural advocate of food sovereignty with particular focus on production side, consumption cooperatives with food sovereignty orientation are newer phenomenon currently represented especially by the BÜKOOP and recently by the Kadıköy cooperative. In elaboration of the research's choice to pick one over another although it is newer than its predecessor, Kadıköy cooperative manifests itself as food politics actor in its locality and beyond to some extent. In slight contrast, BÜKOOP is less visible in public tending to act in narrower circle as cooperative of members of a particular university. Thus, for urban research on the food sovereignty, Kadıköy cooperative was chosen.

Before moving to findings, it would be useful to recall classification of issues in question that the research follows. As discussed in literature review chapter, four key themes are identified by Alonso-Fradejasa et al. including challenges, contradictions, and dilemmas confronting future research and contributing to further advance of the academic dialogue with the food sovereignty: "(1) dynamics within and between social groups in rural and urban, global South-North contexts; (2) flex crops and commodities, market insertion and long-distance trade; (3) territorial restructuring, land and food sovereignty; and (4) the localization problematique." (2015). The research organizes the findings in the same manner. Among the themes, those more inclined to international trade are not included; global South-North contexts, flex crops and commodities are excluded in order to the keep the research precise and more focused with the local experience. Also, issues of territorial restructuring and land sovereignty were not elaborated in-depth due to them being more related to rural struggle of the movement. The issues were only slightly touched upon together with the food sovereignty sub-section.

2.2.1. Dynamics within and Between the Rural–Urban

As it is put by Alonso-Fradejasa et al.(2015), "The multiple combinations of factors and contexts – the mix of agricultural biotech industrialization and market liberalization; North–South and rural–urban dynamics – are leading to variation, overlap, unevenness and contradictions among and within the communities and social movements struggling for dignified livelihoods and healthy, sustainable food systems. These are further complicated by layers of vulnerability rooted in diverse social attributes like gender, race, caste, nationality, religion and ethnicity, as well as localized conflicts over water, land, jobs and gentrification." Along the time of the ethnographic research I identified three main themes reflecting main feature of dynamics within the urban struggle of the cooperative and the relation it establish with rural. Within the cooperative, I observed attempt to build new model of organization based on what I will call libertarian social practices. Those include promotion of horizontal organization and consensus based decision making among others. Another relevant dynamic is observed as sensitivity of the cooperative in issues of gender and social hierarchies. Lastly, in terms of dynamics between urban and rural, I observe the cooperative newly establishes relationships with producers on the basis of solidarity and mutual trust. As the relationship yet to emerge, dynamics are vulnerable for both sides.

2.2.1.1. Libertarian Social Practices

Problems around food, as any other social issue, are outcome of complex network of relations people establish with each other. The food crisis, the ecological disaster, and the whole problem of well-being belonging only to small portion of the world population are result of the current occurrence of the social relations. The way of social relations presently perpetuated, bolsters vertical organizational structures in decision-making processes where patriarchal bosses or governments have the final saying in dealing with any issue, and encourages profit seeking

through promotion of competition regardless of its social and environmental costs. Huge amount of natural resources are wasted, people have been taken away their prosperity through a system based on such ill practices. In sharp contrast, the cooperative adopts and promotes practices based on another set of values including gender equality, cooperation, collectivity, social solidarity, direct democracy, and horizontality. While there are some troubles in practice of the values, at least its discourse promotes change of how people relate to each other towards more democratic and egalitarian way.

Decisions in the cooperative are meant to be taken by direct democratic methods with participation of all concerned parties. While daily tasks are decided by all volunteers together, meetings are open to public participation as food issue is perceived as concern of all people. The booklet explains:

> "Kadıköy cooperative, in its entire work, aims at developing participatory mechanisms enabling collective decision-making and tools to ensure participation of every volunteer and shareholder. At the same time, developing practice of trust and collective responsibility, collective evaluation and inspection of the tasks, and deciding collectively on which tasks to undertake; express modus operandi of the cooperative… In all levels of decision-making follows open and transparent methods… The cooperative encourages deciding with consensus in all decision making mechanisms. For controversial issues, it defines organizing workshops where the issues are thoroughly discussed as part of collective learning process."

This attitude is meaningful in understanding what type of food sovereignty the cooperative wishes to build up. It implies way of decision making in governance of food systems. Taking the decisions with consensus principle requires compromise between all parties concerned with food processes. It opens a way for both consumers and producers to negotiate their interests while paying regard to concerns of each other in any matter. Yet, the time I spent in the cooperative

disclosed certain obstacles in practicing the consensus-based decision making. Time limitation, for example, due to urgency to deal with a matter in meeting agenda does not allow full participation in the discussion by everyone in the cooperative. Or as the group size, number of volunteers, has increased, it becomes harder to reach on consensus and convincing everyone in a timely manner. It often causes volunteers to be exhausted by never ending discussions even in very simple matters. Still, the practice of the participatory decision-making is subject of a learning process for the volunteers, so the cooperative constantly search ways to improve efficiency of the method. In one of the last workshops I moderated, for instance, some rules were agreed to take faster decisions.

It should also be noted that the practice of horizontal organization is not fully adopted by all volunteers. While I used to see horizontal organization as essential, unchangeable feature of the cooperative until the last month of the research, a column piece published by a volunteer on an online news network astonished many in the cooperative. After elaborating ups and downs of both horizontal and vertical organization what Necla, a mechanical engineer in early forties, proposes turned my opinion totally upside-down:

> "Lenin says 'the individual melts down in the collective'. We first need to put individualism aside, then see ourselves as part of collective or become a collective individual… A complex organization where we will… blend horizontality and verticality is vitally important."

Her ideas have not been brought to collective debate yet but the piece made me re-think about earlier comments of her and some other volunteers. In spite of general discourse of horizontality within the organization, her words reveals partial discontent about the way the cooperative is organized. Although the piece offers the blended organization as an effective struggle tool and a free organizational model, some other volunteers have presented serious concerns about vertical association. It shows that the typical dichotomy between individual and collective and related model of organization remains a volatile dynamic within the group. In

regard to food sovereignty project, how the tension of the dichotomy will be settled, if ever would be, is centrally important. To recall, democratization and horizontal power relations in food systems are advocated by the food sovereignty against authoritarian neoliberal food politics enforcing vertical power over other actors in the food systems. Despite the fact that the cooperative is only a small actor of the food sovereignty, at least for sake of consistency, libertarian values reflected in ideals of the food sovereignty must be kept within the organization as well.

2.2.1.2. Gender Equality and Social Hierarchies

As most of the societies, Turkish society is patriarchal as well. Domination of men over women manifests itself in every aspect of human activities. Rural agricultural production and urban life are no exception. Women are significantly active in agricultural production in Turkey. Farm labor is undertaken by highly visible involvement of women. While share of the women in total adult labor is %26, in agricultural sector, the rate is 44% (Özekici, Tekinel, & Kıymaz, 2004). However, due to the patriarchy, even in family farms, revenue gained from the production is received and controlled by men. On the urban side, most of women are dependent on support of their fathers or husbands in order to meet their needs. The social disparities between men and women pose a grand threat in terms of livelihood and accessibility of the food. Women in patriarchal societies are more vulnerable to hunger and poverty.

The cooperative manages its activities paying regard to the gender issue. In fact, the cooperative is widely known in public as a women cooperative due to overwhelming number of women volunteers accounting for three fourth of all volunteers. When a producer to be picked from whom a new product would be supplied, it is questioned by the cooperative that if the producer exploits women or child labor. Also, if a product is available from multiple potential suppliers,

women-only production cooperatives are prioritized. I heard this story multiple times:

> "We were contacted by a woman producer to buy her products. We bought and started to sell in the cooperative shop. When payment time came, we asked via email bank account of the producer. It was sent. However, the account belonged to the women's husband. We objected and asked for a bank account belonging to the woman. Only then we made the payment. If the producer is the woman, why would her husband control the money she earns?"

A portion of women volunteers are, with their own words, part of various feminist circles. Apart from working units, there is a woman unit in the cooperative. While all the agendas, tasks and discussions of the all of the working units are transparent to everyone else, men in the cooperative has no access to running of the unit where only women-exclusive issues are dealt with, if arises any. Despite of visible women autonomy, I experienced a case that I would rather call women domination. Based on an endemically coined term called 'historical debt', the self-proclaimed feminist women have demanded men in the cooperative to work away cleaning of the cooperative shop. The demand was surprisingly accepted by the men. I objected to the case on basis that the cleaning is a collective responsibility and must be done collectively without gender segregation. It would be pleasant sign of protest against patriarchy, I argued, if men voluntarily undertake the cleaning; but charging patriarchal crimes of the society on the gender-sensitive men in the cooperative would be an act of counter-domination which should be avoided for consistency with our collective objection to male domination. Willingly cleaning by men must be distinguished from its imposition on the men on the ground of some hypothetically created debt as the first is an emancipative action, while the latter inclines to woman domination over men. If we dream of a gender-equal society, our practices should be accordingly, I concluded. Although finally the men were decided to perform the cleaning, for sake of urgent decision on the cleaning, my objection was reconciled through my

exclusion from the cleaning as I declared I will not be part of any activity foisted on me because of my gender. To my astonishment, my objection was supported by no men but later on by many other women. Yet, the issue is still subject to ongoing discussion. Vein of the alleged feminists, in the cooperative is such strong to extent that I transiently felt hate towards men is in place. During a bilateral discussion on gender issues in regard to debate on the cleaning, Nazlı, an architect in mid-thirties, stormed me saying: "You all are the same. You, all men, are patriarchs!"

When it comes to social stratification, gender issue is perhaps the biggest challenge in any political activity in context of Turkey. How men and women, and other genders are related to each other is an important question in politics of food sovereignty as well. Invisibility of woman labor in agriculture, and oppression of women in general is recognized by the cooperative and women are somehow prioritized in response to patriarchy. Yet, the abovementioned experience made me assume that inter-gender relations within the cooperative are not fully settled. In a very recent weekly meeting, a male volunteer was shouted by a female blaming him acting in masculine way and he was told many women in the women unit of the cooperative are uncomfortable with his behavior. What I observed is that a number of women in the cooperative feel quite free to define masculinity to their favor and occasionally use it against male volunteers with blame of creating male dominance. In contrast to general public, women of the cooperative, I would argue, enjoy larger domain of power in comparison to the men. The situation seems problematic in terms of gender equality which makes the cooperative fragile in building more egalitarian relationships between genders as the food sovereignty proposes.

In parallel with the gender issue, social hierarchies are another dynamic shaping the struggle within the cooperative. Especially my first months in the cooperative has witnessed long and often exhausting debates raised on concerns of some volunteers about existence of hierarchies within the cooperative. Although the common discourse is preventing emergence of a hierarchical organization, some

volunteers has presented a working experience in which some others take more privileged position due to their past experience with other social movements and/or more knowledge of how to get daily tasks done. Tuana, an undergraduate student in early twenties, told: “I sometimes ask myself whom the cooperative belongs to. I wonder whether there is a boss here.” Her words, echoed along the cooperative. The first workshop I participated that was designed to discuss internal functioning and communication problems was fizzled out by the debate her words initiated.

In parallel with democratization in food systems claims of the global food sovereignty discourse, the cooperative has sensitivity against emergence of hierarchies between its volunteers and attempts to fight against it, if any exists. During the workshop discussions, main tendency was to recognize differences between people in terms of age, education or knowledge level, particular skills, and life experience. Again the main tendency was to accept those differences but to search mechanisms against those differences cause power imbalance and any sort of inequality for volunteers in participation in the cooperative work and in decision making. That attitude is not limited to in-group. Outsider fellow citizens are welcome in any weekly meeting held open to public. While it is not case that the outsiders directly take part in decision making, there is no barrier for them to express themselves. They are strongly urged to be a volunteer and become part of local food politics. In many occasions, producers from rural areas, representatives of cooperatives from other provinces, or random people who heard and wondered about the cooperative took part in the weekly meetings as guests.

Thus, it could be argued that the democratization and horizontal power relations in the global food scene demanded by the food sovereignty is attempted to be practiced within locality of the cooperative as well. Although it is not in my full knowledge whether if there is any other example of issue-based grassroots political movement in Turkey, the food sovereignty movement in the country

opens up space for alternative way of politics in which egalitarian tendencies are more dominant in contrast to authoritarian political fashion of the country.

2.2.1.3. Urban Solidarity with Rural

Another value manifests itself in the cooperative's ongoing effort to create a framework of social solidarity. Geographical and psychological distance between urban and rural, between consumers and producers are attempted to overcome on the basis of solidarity. The solidarity is not limited to those, it includes almost all disadvantaged groups. The cooperative has already adopted it as its main principle:

> "The cooperative sees itself as part of the social structure and it aims at empowerment of solidarity between different networks, groups, and initiatives. Solidarity may take many forms; it depends on creative capacity of the society and is always open to be improved. In this sense, Kadıköy cooperative prioritizes developing solidarity with disempowered groups: producers liquidated from production, natural disaster victims, those whose livelihoods are suppressed, forcibly displaced people, those fired from their jobs, unsecured people, those whose right to health was taken away…"

As a result, the cooperative, instead of making profit, adds up a small percent to the product prices to be allocated for social solidarity fund. It is already used for supporting refugee women and some other cooperatives under political pressure. There is a separate shelf in the cooperative shop where products produced by disadvantaged groups are sold. The products are not expected to be produced ecologically; they are sold with sole purpose of solidarity. While regular producers are paid in some delay after the products have been delivered, those supported producers are paid immediately. Along my participation, the cooperative has received excessive number of call for solidarity and extended support to numerous groups. However, smallness of the fund has led to

discussions on whom to prioritize to help. Thereupon, a work to create a framework for social solidarity was initiated recently.

The cooperative, since the beginning, even prior to official foundation, has been favoring horizontality both within itself and with external actors it establishes relations, particularly with producers. It tries to break not only physical but also humanitarian distance between producers and consumers. Sarp, an industrial engineer in mid-fifties, elaborates: "The thing is to be able to touch each others' lives. When we contact the producers without middlemen being in between, when we go visit them in their places, they become our brother Abdurrahman or sister Hatice. In case of a trouble, we become able to easily call each other and talk about the problem. Our relationship goes beyond typical producer-consumer relationship; we establish a humanly bond." What he constantly has kept asking during weekly meetings is also worth noting: "The collective has to make a decision. Are we going to be a shopping group or a cooperative?" His question reflects concerns of some volunteers about mission of the organization. Although general discourse is based on being a cooperative promoting solidarity practices within and around food politics, mundane discussions pushed those volunteers to question if what is done is really what is meant. While solidarity with producers is constantly in place, there is still ongoing debate within the cooperative about type and extent of solidarity with other groups. In a recent case, some volunteers went on to solidarity visit to women workers of a cosmetic giant who have been on strike due to their sack following unionization efforts to respond terrible working conditions of the company. Those volunteers who participated in the visit demanded the cooperative to release some posts on social media accounts about the cooperative's solidarity with the kicked workers. However, the demand was not welcome by some with the excuse that the cooperative has not collectively decided on how to act with solidarity with them and with whom in general.

Coming back to relationship dynamics between urban consumers of the cooperative with rural producers it should be noted the connection between each is newly established as the cooperative being initiator in search of ecological

producers. It is hard to talk about deep-seated affinity spread across years except few producers with whom some volunteers previously had personal acquaintance. As consumers in a metropolis, the cooperative volunteers and regular citizens shopping from the cooperative were not used to have contact with producers of the food they consume. The connection is newly established between each making the dynamics just forming at the present. As the cooperative defines one of its main missions to support small-scale producers, the relationship is mainly smooth at the moment but it also gestates to future tensions. Such potential is further discussed in conclusion chapter.

2.2.2. Market Insertion and Long-Distance Trade

As Li (2014) precisely points out, 'even when small-scale farmers are untouched by land grabbing or corporate schemes, as in this case, expanding their capacity to exercise control over their food, their farms and their futures is still a huge challenge'. Since the research is focused to the Kadıköy cooperative, I take up market insertion issue limited to relevant function of the cooperative. Concerning the long distance trade, the issue is problematized in the literature particularly in regard to international trade (Burnett & Murphy, 2014). Again for sake of precision, it is here taken limited to long-distance trade of the products sold in the cooperative shop which are mostly circulated within the country except one product.

2.2.2.1. Market Insertion

During the preliminary workshops prior to official foundation of the cooperative, one of the main issues for producers was identified as small-scale farmer's problem to access markets. Farmer delegation who participated in the workshops requested the cooperative initiators to organize as consumption cooperative and support small farmers who have been overwhelmed by corporate domination within the market pushing small-scale producers away from markets. In recognition of the problem, the cooperative has taken up mission to provide a

channel for the producers to access the market. That is being the one of main functions of the cooperative, prices of the ecological food play central role for both producers and consumers. From the consumers' side, prices of any product in the cooperative includes costs of (i) payment to producer, (ii) logistics, (iii) bank transfer costs, (iv) taxes, (v) amortisement and operational costs, (vi) social solidarity fund. Each adding more to the final price, makes insertion of the ecological food to the markets limited. Aware of the high food prices, what are strategies the cooperative follows to defeat each cost item?

Payment to the producer for the products sold in the cooperative shop is the highest portion of the final price. Yet, the cooperative takes a position in support of the producer rather than seeking lower prices. As explained in a public meeting:

> "Regarding plain price of the food, we support the producer. We do not negotiate over the price. We pay what the producer demand us and give them annual purchase guarantee. As we now support them, they will be financially more stable, they will not need to submit to impositions of the food corporations. So they will be able to sell healthy food in lower costs."

Here we see commitment of the cooperative to prioritize needs of the producers over consumers. That choice is vital order of priority. Once the producers get not able to produce ecological food, consumers' last chance to eat healthy would be gone. Yet, for survival, the producers need financial support of consumers and that is what the cooperative attempts to do.

"Prices of the products are defined based on the information from the producers and their demands. Kadıköy cooperative does not aim at buying 'cheap'; works for creating conditions in which the producers get fair and honorable pay and their labor gets its value."

In a seemingly contradiction, the booklet subsequently says:

> "Ability to sell healthy, quality, fair products for cheap; increasing number of such producers in order for people of different purchase power to be able to access such products; spread of consumption organizations knowing values of those products are needed. This is one of the main purposes of the Kadıköy cooperative. Thereby, producers and consumers together may develop an initiative over a food system belonging them."

The strategy creates a dilemma which empowers the small-scale producer, yet puts its claim of 'healthy food for all' in danger due to the higher price outcome of the supportive position. Still, the alliance is not null. In relatively longer term, supported producer would return the favor as following. Abdullah Aysu, president of the Çiftçi-SEN, a farmer and an agricultural engineer, leading figure of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey says:

> "Once the land of producer who switches from industrial agriculture to ecological farming, it is expected to take 5 years for the land to clean itself up from poisonous chemicals. After five years, the land will be more fertile thanks to the ecological methods. The fertility will increase the supply and cause drop in the costs. So the consumer will be able to buy in cheaper prices."

So, the prices are expected to drop within 5 years. Then supposedly the access to food will be easier for larger masses of consumers.

Another problem with the market insertion is middlemen. In regular markets interval between producers and consumers is filled with middlemen. While the product, particularly foods in Turkey, leaves the producer in extremely low prices, it arrives at the consumer in extremely high prices. The reason for that is the middlemen's involvement, taking advantage of the gap between each. The cooperative aims at reducing high food prices by removing the profit of the middlemen from the prices:

> "Food being in the first place, in the processes of production-distribution-consumption, profit-based policies in which corporations are dominant,

> generate a relation of rant until the producers' products arrive in the consumers. This situation, for instance in the food area, causes the producer to sell its product for low prices and the consumer to buy the product for high prices. And it makes them sole dominant in the sector, especially the merchants who first buy the product from the producer, and corporations that are main undertaker of the distribution. Thus both production and consumption are shaped by benefits and manipulations of the corporations. Creating a direct relationship (dismissing the middlemen) between farmer and consumer enables farmers to receive recompense of their labor, and also consumers to consume more quality food for cheaper prices. In this respect, one of the main principles of the Kadıköy cooperative is removing the middlemen between producer and consumer."

This strategy, eliminating the profiteers, precisely targets and hits one of the biggest obstacles in front of wider accessibility of the food for everyone. It takes the rant away, and enables more people to connect with healthy, quality food.

Although the dismissal of the middlemen opens a significant way to increase accessibility, some other forms of cost items hinder further lowering the prices. Through numerous taxes, logistics costs of product transportation, and bank fees to transfer money to the producers; the state, cargo firms, and banks serve function of the expelled middlemen and re-increase the food prices making it harder for the producers to securely stay in markets.

Taxes constitute another significant cost item within the prices. Turkish state, famous with its excessive number and ridiculously diverse types of taxation, requires the cooperative to pay multiple taxes: withholding tax, stamp tax, annual return fees, value-added tax, and corporate income tax. However, at the beginning of the cooperative initiative, volunteers have decided to organize themselves as a legal cooperative. Therefore, despite of their commonly expressed discomfort of paying taxes, they agreed to do so in order to avoid judicial pressure and create them relatively safer domain of action. The tax requirements also cause an

additional cost. Since dealing with tax calculation and file tracking necessitates professional expertise, the cooperative has hired an accountant whom it pays monthly fee. So far, I have not witnessed any discussion about avoiding the taxes. In order to legally protect the cooperative, volunteers fussily process the payments.

Another pricey cost item is paid to cargo firms for the transportation of the food from the farms to the cooperative shop. As Doğu, an IT engineer and PhD student in mid-thirties, said: "We pay for cargo often almost as much as we pay for the producers. This is huge!" In a radio interview with some other food communities, it was reflected that this is common trouble. It was proposed to establish a logistics cooperative, by a volunteer participated in the radio program. As it is just an unelaborated idea for now, it is not clear how the establishment of such cooperative would help to reduce the transportation costs. Since cargo firms keep their fees as low as possible thanks to exploitation of their labor force, how a cooperative caring about fair and honorable pay for labor would be afloat without adding the fair pay to the prices, poses another dilemma for the cooperative.

The last cost item replacing the middlemen is bank fees. Due to legal obligations to prove payment is done and because of there is no alternative way to do that, producers are paid by the cooperative via bank transfer which is each time subject to transaction fee adding up to final food price. Although the cooperative consciously does not accept payment from consumers by credit card, it has to pay the bank transaction. Recently, upon suggestion of a volunteer, it was agreed with a bank, taking advantage of a promotion, to moderately lower the fees in return of regular use of the bank for a certain period.

Considering these new middlemen altogether, significant increase of the accessibility does not seem likely as long as these cost items are in place. Even though the cooperative has succeeded to provide some products cheaper than organically certified products and almost equal to regular shop prices, it does not

mean a lot for masses that cannot afford even unhealthy, industrially produced food in regular shops.

Another issue related to market insertion is organic certification. Organic agriculture was born as response to industrialization of the agriculture. However, due to regulations, today it corresponds to having an organic certificate (Surrett, 2016). The certificate, ironically, is issued by legally entitled corporations. It has turned into a weapon on the hands of the corporations to force the producers to buy their agricultural input products, such as pesticides and chemical fertilizers, so they could be eligible to be granted the certificate. Acquiring the certificate is costly for the producers and does not guarantee healthiness of the certified product. Abdullah Aysu says in a interview:

> "We should have organic production model but that the products are certified and controlled by corporations makes it industrial organic. And this restores not the ecology but the capitalist system… It functions as healthy food production not for whole society but for those who has money, those who has purchase power."

In order to overcome the organic certification problem, the cooperative, in cooperation with other food sovereignty-related organizations, has initiated an alternative process called 'participatory guarantee system'. While there are examples of the system in other countries, it has been newly developed in Turkey. The system opens dialogue between consumers and producers to collectively define ingredient and production process of the food and also the amount to be produced.

Participatory guarantee system provides a degree of financial security to the producer, gives consumers control over what they eat, and saves natural resources precluding excessive production. Another significant implication of the application is that it contests food market instabilities due to fluctuations in supply and demand as it allows producers and consumers inform each other about exact quantity to be produced and consumed.

At the moment, Çiftçi-Sen is working on a project of agro-ecology school. The project and the participatory guarantee system are meant to support each other. The school will train producers who would then disseminate knowledge of ecological production among other producers. Although the movement relies on knowledge of the wise peasant, it is observed that the traditional knowledge of production methods is getting lost due to intergenerational intervals and loss of small-scale farms.

While providing market access to producers is fundamental role of the cooperative at the moment, following observation is worth-noting. I witnessed emerging non-monetary exchange practices from producers' side. During a field trip to Devrek, Zonguldak where a women-only cooperative which produces wheat based products for the Kadıköy cooperative as well, one of the producers told: "We do not deal with money as much possible. We started bartering products. For example, we give from what we produce to butcher, the butcher gives us meat in return." Hearing her words, I and another volunteer with whom I previously discussed about the food being a commodity, suddenly and unwittingly caught each other's eye with excitement and amazement. Apart from the collective endeavor, some volunteers, including him, revealed their aspiration for non-monetary organization of economic life. Handan, PhD researcher in early thirties, said: "We should seek for other practices. Barter method could be evolved, for instance. Places where we can eat, and give product in return. I do not want to meet my needs through working from nine to six, but I would like to be able to produce and consume within such a network."

The observation reveals dualistic, perhaps dialectic momentum within the food sovereignty movement. As extensively discussed in this sub-section, the cooperative serves facilitating producers' access to food markets. On the other hand, some producers, even if to limited extent, develop their own practices making themselves more secure against market volatility by partially pulling their products away from markets and channel them into non-monetary exchange with some other producers. These two streams, despite both being quite modest

exertions, reflect movements' potential to create alternative way of dealing with markets.

2.2.2.2. Long-Distance Trade

The cooperative is aware of the need to produce locally in order to avoid ecological cost, e.g. carbon footprint, of long distance trade. Particularly two products in the cooperative shops are bought from significantly long distances. First one is coffee which is imported from Zapatista controlled region of the Mexico. Although the cooperative itself buys it from a coffee collective which is the exact importer, still it is somehow involved in the trade. When I asked about it, I was answered: "We are aware of the long distance. Coffee is not produced in Turkey but is highly demanded in Kadıköy. And our main point of its purchase is solidarity with Zapatistas. The coffee will be consumed by people even if we do not sell it. So why not they would consume ecological Zapatista coffee?" The other product, actually a group of products, is endemic cheese types which are brought from Kars, in far northwestern Turkey. Reason for that was explained with non-availability of ecological cheese producers near Istanbul. I was told that once a producer in surroundings of Istanbul is convinced to produce ecologically; the cooperative would immediately switch its cheese producer. Both coffee and cheese, especially the types of cheese sold in the cooperative shop, are luxury products which create a contradiction with a previous decision of the cooperative to sell only staple food. Pressure of market demand, together with the cooperative's need to sell high revenue-margin products seems more influential than ecological concerns.

2.2.3. Territorial Restructuring, Land and Food Sovereignty

Istanbul is a giant metropolis with nearly 15 million official residents. Particularly in suburbs, the city is home to visible number of homeless sleeping in ATM

cabins, amputated beggars, fathers unemployed for years, underpaid manual laborers, transgender sex workers living on the razor's edge, barefoot refugee kids selling trivial stuff; shortly millions who has little or no access to healthy food, leave alone industrial food. On the other hand, territory of Istanbul is filled with dense population. There is nearly zero farming fields within residential areas. Despite presence of some kitchen gardens, farms and villages in the outskirts of the city, they are null and void in comparison to the huge population.

One of the top enemies of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey, industrial agriculture destroys the environment, jeopardizes livelihood of farmers, and disorders consumers' health for sake of profit. Although Turkish agricultural sector is characterized by small-size farms, corporations are taking over arable lands and turning the farmers to workers on their own land. Profit based industrial agriculture forces farmers to use GMO seeds, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers. Increasingly proven, those inputs into food products pose major threat to human health and damaging ecological cycles by polluting the land and water, killing pests and some other organisms which are natural part of the ecosystem (Kimbrell, 2002).

In parallel with global food sovereignty framework, the cooperative promotes what is called 'wise peasant agriculture'. The concept presumes agricultural production without any chemical input and genetically modified seeds. It is done in belief of traditional, pre-industrial agriculture knowledge of peasant farmers using ecological methods to grow crops. As explained in the cooperative's booklet: "In Turkey, traditional small-scale farming model is based on peasant agriculture. Farmer in this model uses local seed and local knowledge, produces for his/her own family, lives his/her own village so protects the environment in which s/he lives and produce." Small-scale producers are expected not to be employing enterprises but rather family farms. Even if the producer has to hire labor for a period, e.g. increasing need of manual labor during harvest time, the producer is expected to pay a fair wage to the recruited labor.

Not being producer itself at the moment, the cooperative aims to transform producers from whom it buys its products towards use of wise peasant agriculture. As joyfully and repeatedly exemplified by many volunteers:

> "We encourage producers to switch from industrial agriculture to ecological production. When we first contacted a production cooperative to buy pasta, we noticed that wheat they used in the pasta is not from non-GMO seeds and told the producer about that. They did not even know harm of the wheat seed they grow up When they learned from us, they agreed to change their wheat seeds but they did not know where to find ecological seed. We had them contact another producer we know who could find the seeds. Now our pasta producer is fully using healthy wheat just because we asked them so and they even plan to start their own ecological wheat production."

The cooperative advocates support of small-scale producer producing ecologically. This attitude is reflected in founding principles of the cooperative:

> "…However; agricultural, husbandry, food and environmental policies in Turkey liquidates small-scale producers from the agriculture, generalizes corporatization of agriculture. Corporate agriculture, on the other hand, prefers industrial agriculture in way to endanger human life. In this respect, support of urban consumers to small-scale agriculture may be regarded as a strategy. We neither support corporate industrial agriculture nor the commerce system. Instead of this, we support natural, wise peasant agriculture; ecological agriculture."

That is to say, as the cooperative is not a producing actor, land issue is not its primary concern at the moment. However, it recognizes its importance in building food sovereignty. A couple of cooperative volunteers make academic research on commons. As other natural assets, land is also seen, for many, as common property of people. At least, it is safe to say that rather than commercial privatization, land is perceived being belonged to producers.

The sovereignty question is not purely result of neoliberalism itself. Neoliberalization of Turkish agriculture is led by government policies favoring giant corporate interests over survival of small-size farmers (Öztürk, 2012). Beyond that, ongoing loot by the government of natural resources has brought the agriculture in the country to edge of terminal illness. So-called development projects of the current government leave fatal impacts on sustainability of ecological agriculture. To illustrate, infamous boom of hydroelectric dams across Turkey or giant housing, airport, and highway projects endanger large regional ecosystems via destroying forests, rivers and other habitats. Those projects served out mostly by self-styled public-private partnership are symptomatic epitomes of share of the state in the as one of the partners in crime. However, while the food sovereignty discourse directly contests neoliberal control of the food systems, it does not challenge the states' illicit as it does not identify who should have the control instead. Moreover, it contradictorily advocates control of food systems by both nation-states and local communities. Uncertainness of who the sovereign is, as previously discussed, one of the main contradictions of the food sovereignty movement.

Understanding and implementation of the food sovereignty cases around the world, accordingly, vary. For instance, MST movement in Brazil contests state power seeking territorial autonomy as part of their food sovereignty struggle (Clements, 2012). In contrast, food sovereignty concept is legislated in constitution and has been implemented as nationalization of the agriculture in Venezuela (Kappeler, 2013).

In case of Turkey, the movement's, particularly the cooperative's engagement with state in regard to the food sovereignty is seemingly contradictive. On the one hand, the cooperative recognizes the food crisis as failure of the state as well. The booklet argues:

> "Corporations stand before us as source of these problems. Governments develop policies that are supporting sovereignty of the corporations. In this

> sense, we have not got any option other than organizing ourselves independently from the corporations and the state on the basis of searching collective solutions for common problems."

On the other hand, elsewhere in the booklet:

> "Building the food sovereignty in Turkey has become direct problem of small-size farmers, peasants, and food producers. It has become survival matter to develop social policies aiming at public benefit and at the same time to found and spread… alternative food systems."

Positions of volunteers as well are not consistent on engagement with state. While one said: "…when I think of these issues, I do not give the state a place, the state is not one I speak to", another one said: "What do we want? Ecological agriculture. We may ask the state this, for instance, as public politics."

The research has found out that despite of general discontent among cooperative volunteers with the state policies regarding agriculture and surrounding issues, still, most of the volunteers implicitly or explicitly recognized the state's responsibility to ease up cooperativism in the country and regulate the agriculture in support of small-scale producers against giant food corporations. In contrast, some volunteers expressed antagonism against role of the state in the food sovereignty. These individual attitudes are manifested themselves in collective action as a mixture of positions in the movement. Çiftçi-Sen, for instance, had organized protests in front of the national assembly and keeps contact with legislatures to in regard to agricultural law proposals presuming legal amendments in favor of industrial agriculture and the food corporations.

While the cooperative and the other urban cooperatives related to the food sovereignty mostly opt to operate in reliance of their self-power without financial assistance from any governmental funds, they somehow attribute a role for state in food politics. However, in general, the cooperative tries to make food politics with local people, for local people. Despite public participation has been limited so far, idea is to massify the struggle to be more influential at least in nation level food

politics through promoting cooperativization across various districts and neighborhoods of the city. When occasion arose, cooperative initiatives in several other provinces were supported too.

Adding more to what the data above suggests, the cooperative recently organized a workshop to build theoretical compromise among the volunteers on conceptual references the cooperative makes in its discourse. Hence, I would argue that multiple manifestations of the food sovereignty as a theoretical framework, discourse, political instrument, and a local practice walk arm in arm in case of Kadıköy cooperative where each expression leverages each other.

2.2.4. Localization Problematique

Intersectional point of consideration regarding the food sovereignty and localization is issue of scale. While it requires gigantic urban planning the cooperative encourages agricultural production in and around Istanbul. Ümit says:

> "If all agricultural areas of Istanbul are enabled, they suffice to feed only 10 to 20 percent of population but Marmara region could feed the Istanbul. The problem is that Istanbul became somewhere to be fed. We need to think of two aspects: 1. We should not want such an Istanbul. All the injustices are reproduced through structure of the city. 2. We should encourage urban production as much as possible. We need to encourage production in urban gardens, its agricultural fields, border villages. Public, especially municipalities should embrace them. We have not taken serious stance on this so far; I hope we will."

The scaling issue was discussed in an educational vacation of the cooperative volunteers. The discussion arose inquires regarding relations between potential cooperative initiatives within and outside of Kadıköy, inter-relations of different neighborhoods, size of the cooperative. What Şahin, a PhD researcher, said is

worth noting in-terms of larger organization of cooperativism and the food sovereignty movement in the city:

> "If a will (to establish a cooperative) arises in sub-localities of Kadıköy, it does not make sense to ask them to do this within Kadıköy cooperative. Shall we ask people to establish their own cooperatives wherever we go? We have to clarify this. I cannot think of that neighborhood organizations in Kadıköy would evolve independently from cooperative organizations in other districts. If (cooperatives are) founded in 7 districts, we can build up an association of cooperatives after 5 years. Our power to sanction and to have a say would increase."

Although the cooperative is officially entitled as a consumption cooperative, it does not limit itself with the consumption. The volunteers commonly refer the cooperative without saying the consumption word. They do that on purpose. It's dreamed, and recently was started to be planned, to start production activities within urban sphere. For now production ideas are limited to service provision, but there is ongoing indirect production plan. The cooperative is working on a logistical cooperation project with a production cooperative in Prince Islands of Istanbul. I couple of times heard some volunteers telling their aspirations for the cooperative to buy/rent an arable land near Istanbul so the cooperative could produce and help its volunteers/shareholders to make living out of it.

The localization problematique marks end of the research's findings. The following conclusion part briefly reviews the research, points out future research topic in relevance to matters discussed in this research and finally makes conclusive remarks.

CONCLUSION

The research commenced the discussion with reference to recent privatization of sugar factories in Turkey, re-initiated the discussion about global food crisis of neoliberalism characterized by increasing hunger, social inequalities, and destruction of the environment. The crisis produced multiple global replies addressing the global issue of food.

The neoliberal reply, advocated by international institutions such as IMF and WTO claims the solution is in monopolistic corporate industrial overproduction and mass global consumption of food in unregulated markets which was actually essence of the crisis. As a rather reformist reply food security concept offers development oriented solution advocated mainly by FAO on reliance in medium-scale farming and market-led land reform. More progressive reply is food justice discourse advocated by Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movements which have sought right to food, better networks for safety of food, sustainable production on the basis of agricultural development.

The most radical answer has been food sovereignty movement. It was harsh opposition from disadvantaged global South to neoliberal governance of food systems. It basically advocates '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 the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. However, because of discrepancies in its discourse, the food sovereignty, as a discourse, analytical framework, and as a political project, is understood and practiced in authentic way in each localities shaped by their very own social and political economic settings. In parallel with this observation, the literature has witnessed boom of academic research on various localities where food sovereignty movements exists. While most of the studies focus on global South where the movement has originated, researches on the movement in the

global North have not been extended to Turkey. The country has remained understudied in terms of the food sovereignty. By use of critical ethnographic methods the research attempted to explore food sovereignty struggle in Turkey. As focal point, an urban consumption cooperative in Istanbul, Kadıköy cooperative was researched in the framework of four main themes defined in the literature as topics of investigation.

The research, accordingly, has immersed itself into growing body of critical dialogue with the food sovereignty movement. Together with them, base of the research was taken from the Thiemann's second layer on which territorial proposals are advanced, experimented with and evaluated, and where talk is about concrete investments (Thiemann, 2015). Another gap in the literature, methodological one, was revealed and addressed. Since tensions, limits and challenges emerging from interactions between market, policy, and local practice remain unexplored to a large extent (MacRae, 2016), ethnographic methodology gains importance to discover local dynamics.

As a scientific conduct with political objective, critical ethnography was preferred over conventional ethnography. The data of the research was collected accordingly, through participatory observation, in-depth interviews and archival research in Kadıköy cooperative an urban actor of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey. In regard to limitations of the research, as the focal point of the research is Kadıköy cooperative which is a consumer cooperative located in Istanbul, what the research finds is a local experience from a metropolitan area. While the cooperative is a prominent actor of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey, its agency is predominately urban based. Hence, the data collected here is particularly concentrated around non-rural struggle of the movement. Although the research is informed, to some extent, of countryside conditions via the archive and operational network of the cooperative, it was noted that an ethnographic inquiry with focus on rural actors of the movement in Turkey would lead to much deeper analysis than this research.

It was also noticed that the cooperative's human force is constantly changing. Dynamic circulation of the volunteers poses another limitation to validity of the research. Along the participant observation process, it was the case that new volunteers kept involving in the cooperative, while some old volunteers halted or ended their involvement. As change in the cadres may lead to change in perceptions and visions of the food sovereignty, it is worth noting that the research's findings from in-depth interviews are limited to present time, being subject to quick change in near future.

In this background, main conclusions of the research are presented as follows.

Regarding dynamics within and between the rural–urban, the research detected a way of practice in parallel with the global food sovereignty movement. The cooperative applies direct democracy in it decision making processes in which every volunteer has his/her own saying. Decisions are taken on the basis of consensus which means a move is made only upon everyone convinced to do so. In order to guarantee equal participation, the cooperative is sensitive against emergence of social hierarchies between volunteers whether it is based on age, level of knowledge or experience. The activities are transparently conducted with open call to public. This was understood as part of grassroots political endeavor since the food issue is understood as common concern of all people. In compliance with those libertarian practices, horizontal organization model was adopted. Gender equality is also observed. Women have a degree of autonomy with them having their separate unit to which male volunteers has no access unlike all other working units of the cooperative. When producers would be picked to supply new products to the cooperative shop, women producers are prioritized. Producers who are known to exploit child or women labor are out listed, if attempt to transform them fails.

While this is the rough picture of local dynamics, they are not all settled down. Not all volunteers favor horizontal organization. Inter-gender relations sometimes, if not often, causes crisis between the volunteers. While women enjoy certain

level of power exertion, acclaimed horizontality between genders remain fragile. Social hierarchies are as well not fully absent despite of tendency to avoid them. When it comes to the way relations established between producers and consumers, it challenges conventional logic of the capitalist markets. Deployment of sense of solidarity as an instrument of connection between consumers and producers goes directly against competitive capitalist market structures. While cooperatives are less exploitative places where its members enjoy relatively fairer conditions of economic activity, located at the margins of the capitalism, they are subject to impositions of market mechanisms (Wigger, 2014). That brings us to the second theme of the research.

The research presented that the cooperative, acting with solidarity, takes a supportive position toward small-scale producers. The producers who normally can not easily reach the markets due to domination of agro-industrial corporations, are supported by the cooperative. One of the things done is to provide a guarantee of an annual amount of purchase by the cooperative to the producers on the un-negotiated price demanded by the producers. The rationale behind this strategy is building mutual trust and to enhance ecological food among producers on whom urban consumers dependent for their access to health food. Now the producers are supported, they are expected to increase their production and drop the prices to make the ecological food accessible for larger masses once more cooperatives are founded and demanded more food from the producers. Direct connection established between the parties with expel of rant-maker middlemen in-between, removes conventional barriers between them. Producers get involved to consumption processes of the urban population, and consumers get involved to production processes thanks to freer dissemination of knowledge between them which is not case for producers and consumers of the regular industrial food markets. Another implication of such practice is found that removing barriers between the parties allow them to mutually determine supply and demand. That gives them power to avoid vulnerability and uncertainty against price fluctuation of the food originating from conventional market imbalance between supply and

demand in which no parties have sufficient information about amount of production and consumption. Although the ecological production is for now too limited to make sense in to affect the national economy, it is projected by many volunteers that with spread of more consumption cooperatives across the city and the country, both producers and consumers will be more powerful to resist against political and economic pressures jeopardizing livelihoods of the both. Considering emergence of couple of cooperative initiatives in various neighborhoods of Istanbul, it is foreseen that, there will be enough number of cooperatives to found a federation of consumption cooperatives within five years. Then, the movement is expected to have political power to negotiate its demands with policymakers. Despite the fact that ground for grassroots politics is getting narrower day by day as transformation of the established politics accelerates toward more authoritarian and neoliberal situation, such projection does not seem all pessimistic.

In terms of territorial restructuring, land and food sovereignty, it must be kept in mind that the movement is in its infantile era, particularly in urban scene. At the moment, the cooperative encourages small-scale farmers in order for them to switch their production from industrial to conventional what is called 'wise peasant agriculture'. While the food sovereignty is attempted to be advanced by above-mentioned strategies, the cooperative does not have a clear-cut understanding of the food sovereignty as a theoretical framework on which all volunteers agreed upon. It could be said that theory and practice of food sovereignty are made up as they go along. The experience of the food sovereignty is in the process of comprehension and implementation at the same time. Those two processes cultivate each other, as it was chosen to develop their own understanding of food sovereignty in the context of the local rather than identically copy the global discourse. Land sovereignty and territorial restructuring remain as bigger questions to which power of the movement, particularly of the cooperative does not suffice even to put on the agenda.

Lastly, the problematique of localization is currently taken up by the cooperative in concern with defining scale of the local. While priority is given to local

producers rather than products brought by long-distance trade, the cooperative is having difficulty to find out local producers producing ecologically for certain demanded products. As in the case of coffee, for instance, which is not produced in Turkey at all, it is imported from Zapatistan Mexico. While the cooperative advocates consumption of local products for local people, ecological costs occurring out of it seems tolerable for many volunteers if not all. Choice between ecological sensitivities and economic interests would continue to pose a big challenge in regard to consistency of discourse and practice of food sovereignty.

Before making the final remarks, it would be of use to point out some possible future research areas in relevance to food sovereignty movement in Turkey. As mentioned earlier, the research has been kept limited to urban perspective through the Kadıköy cooperative. Among the themes of investigation, those more inclined to international trade are not included. Namely global South-North contexts, flex crops and commodities are excluded in order to the keep the research precise and more focused with the local experience. Also, issues of territorial restructuring and land sovereignty were not elaborated in-depth due to them being more related to rural struggle of the movement. The issues were only slightly touched upon together with the food sovereignty theme. Future researchers could be interested in focusing on those themes left out in this research. What happens in rural struggle of the food sovereignty movement in Turkey also remains undiscovered so far. A future research with more focus on production-related themes would fill a huge gap in the literature. Besides, another ethnographic and political economic research in upcoming few years focusing on evolvement of the current relationship established between small-scale farmers and urban consumers would be beneficial to understand functionality of horizontal connection between each in contrast to verticality competition imposed by markets. Another area of research could be about efficiency and effects of direct democratic administration of consumption and production cooperatives as economic actors. Laslty, statistical measurement of following data would be of great use to screen economic development of the movement: types and amounts of food produced ecologically

year by year, change of number of small-scale farmers producing ecologically, annual price of fluctuation of ecological foods, and their comparison with regular market equivalents.

Getting to the final words, the food sovereignty movement in Turkey presents a significant experience in changing the way people relate to each other and in building a base model for popular control of food systems. The cooperative is a place, in some degree, resembling to the eco-anarchist Bookchin's (1982 & 2015) design of popular assemblies where ideal of direct democracy is practiced around libertarian values of mutual aid, self-organization and social solidarity. It has been roughly 14 years since the food sovereignty movement stepped in food scene in Turkey and been less than two years since the Kadıköy cooperative was officially started operating. It is yet far from leaving visible political economic impact in food scene of Turkey. Still, it presents an example of libertarian organizational model which may later evolve to larger federations that could constitute, in long term, local autonomous bodies of food governance making food politics a starting point for radical political transformation.

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ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU/RESULT OF EVALUATION BY THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır /This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in research on Humans)

Başvuru Sahibi / Applicant: Hüseyin Gürel

Proje Başlığı / Project Title: Gıda Egemenliği ve Gıda Güvenliği: Kadıköy Kooperatifi Örneği

Proje No. / Project Number: 2018-20622-64

1.	Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision	XX
2.	Ret/ Application Rejected Reddin gerekçesi / Reason for Rejection	

Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation: 5 Haziran 2018

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