

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Institute of Economic Studies



**Agrarianism Over The Course of Turkish History**  
Bachelor Thesis

Author: Simal Imrak

Study Programme: Politics, Philosophy and Economics

Supervisor: Prof. Antonie Doležalová

Year of Defense: 2022

## **Declaration of Authorship**

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Prague, 3 May, 2022

Simal Gulyaz Imrak

Key Words: Agrarianism, Turkish Republic, AKP government; Comparison, Neo-liberal politics

Title: Agrarianism Over The Course of Turkish History

Author's e-mail: [simalgulyaz@gmail.com](mailto:simalgulyaz@gmail.com)

Supervisor's email: [antonie.dolezalova@fsv.cuni.cz](mailto:antonie.dolezalova@fsv.cuni.cz)

## Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor Prof. Antonie Doležalová for her valuable and thoughtful comments, for her kindness and importantly, for her guidance since the very beginning. Her support throughout the whole process was important to complete this project. I am also thankful to my family and friends who supported me during the entire journey.

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## Bachelor Thesis Proposal

Institute of Political Studies and Institute of  
Economic Studies  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Charles University in Prague



Date: 29.09.2021

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<b>Author:</b>	<b>Simal Gulyaz Imrak</b>	<b>Supervisor: doc. PhDr. Mgr. Ing. Antonie Doležalová, Ph.D.</b>
E-mail:	73671008@fsv.cuni.cz	E-mail: antonie.dolezalova@fsv.cuni.cz
Specialization:	PPE	Defense Planned: June 2022

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### Proposed Topic:

**Agrarianism and It's Change Over the Course of History in Turkey**

**Registered in SIS: No**      **Date of registration: 30.09.2021**

### Topic Characteristic / Research Question(s)

As Michael Freeden suggests, ideologies are our link to the Political World in which they create a mental representation of the proposed concept or idea. Throughout my studies, I have learned that ideologies hold a predominant position in each region, country, or person. I believe Freeden's argument to be justified and would like to pose my research question to ask "if or can ideologies survive over a course of time". For my particular research question, I have chosen to examine Turkey's relation to agrarianism. Agrarianism can be described as "a system of belief which expresses a preference for agriculture as the dominant form of economic activity within a society is defensible if one is prepared to recognize that agrarian thought is grounded in pre-fact-value distinction methodology." (Foshee, W., Andrew). Therefore, in my Thesis, I will be focusing on the impact of agrarian thought in Turkey's history. To do so I would like to divide my research into three important periods. Firstly, I will be examining the stance of agrarianism in Turkey during the Interwar period. Secondly, I will discuss the impact of modernization on the ideological stance of Turkey and lastly, I will be examining the neo-liberal period. By analyzing three different periods, I intend to answer my question and argue whether or not ideologies can stand the changes of time.

### Working Hypotheses

1. Turkey's historical background since the Ottoman period had always been grounded in agrarian thought.
2. Political parties and economic institutions in Turkey have established agrarian policies since the 20th century.
3. Throughout history, with the new ideologies rising, Turkey's history of agrarianism has been changing.

## **Methodology**

My thesis will be based on a qualitative method, specifically the historiographical approach which I have chosen to base my analysis of Turkey's history of agrarianism. To do so along with my research, I am intending to use descriptive and comparative analysis. Firstly, in order to examine Turkey's historical background on agrarian ideology, I will be using the descriptive method whilst discussing collected supportive arguments by chosen writers. By discussing it through the descriptive analysis method I will be able to associate agrarianism with Turkey, then I will be able to synthesize supportive arguments and I will base my descriptive arguments on the periodization method in which I will divide historical periods of Turkey. Secondly, by choosing the comparative analysis method I intend to use the longitudinal method in which I will be able to contrast supportive arguments with my research question.

## **Preliminary Contents:**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Evolution of Agrarianism in Turkey
  - 2.1 Interwar Period
  - 2.2 Modernization Period
  - 2.3 Neo-liberalization Period
- 3.0 Comparative Analysis
- 4.0 Conclusion

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## **Abstract**

**This thesis will be based on examining and discussing the role of agrarian ideology in Turkey, analyzing its influence in the field of politics during the two predominant periods. Firstly, the Interwar period will be discussed, in which I intend to critically examine the rising stance of agrarian populism by focusing on the role of Kemalist state politics and Turkish society. In this thesis, the importance of ideologies will be considered and the question regarding whether or not ideological discourse be embedded in society by influencing them and if it can impact politics.**

**This thesis will be based on a qualitative method, specifically the historiographical approach which I have chosen to base my analysis of Turkey's history of agrarianism. To do so along with my research, I am intending to use descriptive and comparative analysis. Firstly, to examine Turkey's historical background on agrarian ideology, I will be using the descriptive method whilst discussing collected supportive arguments by chosen writers. By discussing it through the descriptive analysis method I will be able to associate agrarianism with Turkey, then I will be able to synthesize supportive arguments and I will base my descriptive arguments on the periodization method in which I will divide historical periods of Turkey. Secondly, by choosing the comparative analysis method I intend to use the longitudinal method in which I will be able to contrast supportive arguments with my research question.**

**Supervisor: doc. PhDr. Mgr. Ing. Antonie Doležalová, Ph.D.**

# 1.Introduction

During my bachelor studies at Charles University, I was lucky enough to learn and study the three important entities of the modern World: philosophy, politics, and economy. My studies guided me to a path of self-knowledge and observation, in which I was able to understand and identify the interconnections between them. I have learned the irreversible impact of philosophy on human life, how it has shaped and formed our thoughts and beliefs. I have examined and discussed different forms of politics, its ideologies, and manifestos, and simultaneously, the role of politics in our societies and communities. I also have learned how economic ideas came to life, how policies work, and what they entail. By studying these three entities, and understanding their interconnections I was able to come to a conclusion to study and write my bachelor thesis about a unique ideology in which all three entities are linked.

Firstly, I would like to define ideology and emphasize its importance in our complex societies. Micheal Freeden identifies ideologies as “human and social products that bind together views of the world—in the most general sense, a` la Mannheim, a political Weltanschauung—and enable collective action in furthering or impeding the goals of a society”. (Freeden, 2007, p.12) By quoting Freeden’s definition of ideologies, I wanted to establish a basis for the focus of my thesis and stress its undoubtedly impact in our current world. For ideologies to enable collective action and impede the goals of the society, it has to have a background in political thinking. Just as Freeden states “political thinking—particularly in the shape of ideologies—is a cultural construct designed for public consumption” (Freeden, 2007, pp.12) in this essay, I will be arguing based on Freeden’s definition and remarks that our consumption of political thinking sublimates identities. Therefore, the agrarian political thought embodied in Turkish society can be defined as a form of peasentism as “a component of populist ideology in general and Kemalist populism in particular” (Nuran, 2007, pp.3) But

what does it entail? Karaomeroglu states, “in the so-called peasantist discourse and practices, the advocates of peasantism, among other things, denied class-based ideologies; aspired to a static, undifferentiated society; attempted to find a mass base for nationalism in a predominantly agrarian country” (Karaomeroglu,2002 pp.59). Therefore, if such agrarian political thinking will sublimate identities as suggested by Freedden, then our identities can be considered as our new political clothing materialized by an aspect of a political ideology. In the latest development of 21st-century societies our identities - no matter racial, national, or social, are being used as a “legitimate political tool in the academic and popular discourse.”(Freedden,2012,p.20)My argument should not be mistaken as an understanding of identities as the new ideologies but instead that ideologies our now to be seen as our new identities, as Freedden suggests.

In this Bachelor thesis, Turkey’s agrarian ideological stance, politics, and aspects will be taken into analysis and comparisons through the background of identities. I will be arguing that agrarian thought is embedded into Turkish society and people’s life and has become a part of their identity. As for my motive to write and study what I believe to be a very important, under-studied, and under-appreciated ideology can be linked with Freedden’s statements of the place of ideologies in our minds and our societies. I will be focusing specifically on the impact and the influence of agrarianism in Turkey’s history throughout two most predominant periods of Turkish historiography and politics.

“As a philosophical tradition, agrarian thought emphasizes the idea that farming practices have the power to shape the moral character of the individuals who engage in them, and that a society’s farming culture—its means of subsistence—reverberates through all its institutions”(Thompson,2010) Adapting a farming culture is more than advocacy of a practice of economic activities, as stated by Paul B. Thompson in his empirical work on agrarian

philosophy. Agrarian thought is the philosophical background of agrarianism, in which as an ideology has a connection towards it due to its grounding. “Agrarian views are distinguished by their emphasis on the role of material practice in the formation of norms, values and social institutions.” (Thompson,2010) Thompson’s explanation that agrarian thought’s tradition to be grounded in material practices is very much valid because as I have stated in my introduction paragraph that in this Bachelor Thesis I will analyze agrarian ideology as a practice of identity, therefore Thompson’s argument on agrarian thought paints a clear picture that agrarian ideology is indeed embedded as norms, values, and social institutions.

In Turkey, as I have stated peasentism is identified as an extension of populism in the shape of nationalism which has been awakened from the ashes by none other than the founder of the Turkish Republic. Peasants are known to be a key player in both economic and political activities in Turkey because not only do they provide locals with fresh produce such as fish, cheese, fruit, vegetables, grains etc.. in local bazaars every week. In this sense, peasants are seen as the underdog. Over the history of Turkey from the interwar period to nowadays, peasants have been united by “outsiders” in order to fulfill political causes and implications. To explain the concept of peasantry and agrarian thought moreover I will divide them in two historical periods in my thesis.

Peasants are living proof of agrarian thought’s embodiment in societies, in which they have known by their identification of themselves. Definition and the concepts of peasantry is crucial for agrarian thought because as an article from European Journal of Sociology written by Duzgun states and analyzes the peasantry “became closely entangled with, and re-inforced by, the ideologies of populism, socialism and modernization, as well as with the re-discovery of the national self by people suppressed by the Russian, Austrian, German and Turkish

Empires.” (Duzgun) While peasantry can be analyzed and generalized in different ways, in this Bachelor Thesis I will be approaching it from the view of Turkish society.

Even though during recent years, impacts of industrialization, neoliberalism, and authoritarianism may be changing the socio-economic and socio-political conditions of Turkey, agrarian culture is rooted in Turkish culture and democracy due to Turkey’s prosperous geographical location. While location is equally important on the birth of an ideology, at the same time social binds are equally important too as Freedom states. Agrarianism, in this sense is more than an advocacy of an agricultural base of economic activity, but it is seen and practiced as a politics of common people. That is why agrarianism is frequently linked with populist policies and authoritative regimes. In this thesis, I therefore intend to analyze agrarianism’s links with mass politics, populism, and authoritarianism as seen in Turkey’s political history by using quantitative methods through a historiographical approach.

Firstly, I will be examining the stance of agrarianism in Turkey during the interwar period and discuss the impact of modernization on the ideological stance of agrarianism in Turkey. Secondly, I will examine the role of agrarianism during the neo-liberal period and current political climate. By using comparative analysis, I will answer the question whether or not agrarianism in the case of Turkey, can be subjected to change based on the manipulation caused by politics and affiliations. Along with my research, I will also use the descriptive method whilst discussing collected supportive arguments by chosen writers. These two methods will help answer my questions. Additionally, by choosing the comparative analysis method I intend to use the longitudinal methodology in which I will be able to contrast supportive arguments with my research question.

## **2.0 Agrarianism in Turkey**

In this first part of my bachelor Thesis, agrarian policies and politics during the Republican interwar period will be examined and discussed. I intend to analyze agrarian politics and adapted policies by using the descriptive method to contemplate with my chosen methodology. To do so several articles written by scholars will be evaluated, in order for me to answer my question.

### **2.1 Background**

My intention, by writing my Bachelor Thesis on the case of agrarianism in Turkey, is to examine and analyze the ongoing influence this ideology has in both politics and cultural aspects of Turkish society. Therefore, in my Thesis I will analyze the agrarian ideology, thought, and politics through the descriptive method with a focus on historiography and use statistics to support my arguments., I will examine both the interwar and the neoliberal period, peasantry and cult of peasants through selected articles and materials by discussing the background of the Turkish Republic and the Ottoman-era society..

Firstly, due to the content of my Bachelor Thesis, I would not be analyzing the Ottoman Empire period intensively, but I believe to understand the importance of agrarianism for the Turkish Republic is it predominant to discuss the background before the foundation process has been initiated. Therefore, primarily I will be discussing the Turkish Republic's socio-economic stance prior to ignition of the Republic by providing some evidential data by establishing a qualitative analysis.

The Ottoman Empire and Turkey were engaged in a series of wars from 1912 to 1922, first the 1912–13 Balkan Wars, followed by World War I and the War of Independence during 1920–22. (Pamuk, 2018, pp.166) Consequently, all of the wars that happened prior to the establishment of the Turkish Republic between these dates have had severe reparations to the nation. As Sevket Pamuk discusses in his book, that “the dramatic decline in Greek and Armenian populations had long- term economic as well as political, social, and cultural consequences” (pp.166) Consequently, “after 1923, in accordance with the population exchange agreement signed between the Turkish and Greek states, approximately 1.2 million Orthodox Greeks left Anatolia and about a half million Muslim Turks from Greece and the Balkans came to Turkey.” (pp.166) These reparations prior and after the wars have damaged the nations cultural and social practices, which ended in many “commercialized, export-oriented farmers across Anatolia as well as the artisans, leading merchants, and moneylenders who linked the rural areas to the port cities and the European trading houses in the long century before the war were lost.” (pp.167) While the war at the same time also impacted the concentration of the population besides the social and cultural impact, according to Pamuk, the share of population in centers of more than 10,000 had declined from 23 percent to 17 percent from 1914 to 1927. While he argues that, evidently statistics are limited in any case, enough evidence was collected to state that due to the impact of the war, “per capita GDP and income was about 30 percent lower in 1923 than its levels in 1914.” (pp.167)

Even though the country was deeply impacted by the consequences and reparations of the recent wars, many of the usable lands were still intact within the borders which were already being used for agriculture. During the year 1914, "that the Ottoman nation's national income was estimated to be around 22.393.000 penny and agriculture gain was estimated to be 13.060.000 penny"(Sarıkoyuncu & Kayıran, p.219)) of it. As the Turkish Republic was built on these grounds, with a predominant economy based on agricultural products and with a large

size of its citizens based in the agricultural field, agrarianism was seen as the only choice for the leaders of the country to adapt to a level of economic development similar to other European countries, and to do this without getting any influence from external resources. “Agriculture accounted for more than 90 per cent of total exports with mining products and carpets making up the rest in the decades before the First World War. Tobacco, wheat, barley, raisins, figs, raw silk, raw wool and opium were the leading export commodities. No single commodity dominated and the share of any single crop in total exports rarely exceeded 10 per cent.” (Pamuk, 2018, p.387) Therefore, agrarianism was crucial for the economy to grow and sustain itself while at the same time removing itself from the axis of colonial powers and forces.

## **2.1. Interwar Period**

As I have stated in the previous chapter, when „the Republic itself emerged from an era of Ottoman history marked by considerable socio- economic transformation a path had to be chosen in order to accomplish a certain level of economic activity as well as a general development in the country. Therefore, as my research has also indicated, the Republican era of Turkey is considered to be important and influential even to this day regarding Turkey’s both social and economical stance with agrarianism. Agrarianism in Turkey, since the Republican era, was always used as a political tool, to influence the citizens and develop the economy in a country with promising fields and crops. For that reason, in this chapter, I will be examining the agrarian ideology’s stance in Turkey during the interwar period and will discuss the significance of these policies.

During the interwar period across the World, the rise of agrarian populism was seen, Turkey has also during “the 1930s and afterward witnessed the rise of such a populism, with



an emphasis on the cult of the peasant as one of the most important intellectual motifs of cultural and political discourse.” (Karaomeroglu, 2002, pp. 59) Karaomeroglu states peasantism to be “one of the most important constituent elements of Kemalist populism from the early 1930s through the end of World War II.” (pp. 59) Between the dates of 1927 and 1940, peasant population was estimated to be around 75% of Turkish population with 10-13 million people living in villages respectively. Therefore, the foundation of the Republic of Turkey had to be based on the cultivation of peasantism, land and agrarianism.

Karaomeroglu explains the rise of agrarianism or peasantism in Turkey as an attempt “to find a mass base for nationalism in a predominantly agrarian country while preempting grassroots movements; feared and vilified socialist revolution; recognized the need to respond to the demands of the agrarian population in the troubled times of the Great Depression; aimed to consolidate the conservatism of the regime by relying on the supposedly conservative fabric of the Turkish peasants; inspired a nationalist myth-making process that sought the "real" Turk in villages; and wanted to attach the peasants to their villages, thus limiting mobility in the countryside and preventing immigration into the cities.” (pp. 60)

While many other scholars agree with Karaomeroglu, it is also argued that the reason behind the agrarian populism to be specifically based on economic causes, and the agrarian policies to be a key to economic and national development. Eren Duzgun, in his article “Agrarian Change, Industrialization and Geopolitics” argues that even the Kemalist government has accepted the significance of peasants in Turkish society, they still had a tendency to deny the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and peasants in fact, testified “either to apprehension that conditions generating class struggle existed in the society, or to the fact that the anticipated future economic development might lead to such a struggle” (Duzgun, 2017, pp. 415) Although as Karaomeroglu also argues that, agrarianism to be adapted due to a need of a “movement” across

the country, there are other scholars torn in between to underline that agricultural bourgeoisie to be the dominant class in Turkey, instead of a peasantist class. In any case, in my Thesis I shall analyze and discuss the possible ramifications of the agrarian policies under the execution of the founder of Turkey, Atatürk, during the Interwar period.

## **2.2 Policies and Politics**

For the purpose of this subchapter, I shall examine the importance of agricultural policies and politics during the Interwar period. As a newly founded country at the time, the Interwar period holds a special significance in Turkish history. Therefore, in this chapter I would like to discuss and analyze the important policies and policies that were adapted between 1929 and 1939.

As I already have stated, Turkey's economic prior condition forced the hands of the founder elites and bureaucrats since an economical policy and political agenda needed to be adapted in order for the country to follow its path to modernization as similar to its neighboring European countries. While at that time, European countries were going through the effects of industrialization Turkey was behind the lines to follow them due to the Ottoman empire's both inadequate habits as well as its corrupt attitude and its wish for wanting to follow a mandated governmental system after the First World War. Consequently, as a result of these tendencies the Turkish government was left weaker than it already was, as the former Ottoman country had dissolved and fallen into pieces.

Between 1913 and 1923, there had been a significant decrease in both population decline and total production. (Pamuk,2018, p.50 ). Now with less resources and with less land than before, a challenge was waiting for the new “elected” elite of the new government, indeed. Therefore, for the country to be developed further Atatürk and other politicians have agreed to choose the agricultural path since there were not enough workers, or elite class that would be suitable for country’s then needs for progress. According to industrial statistics of the year 1915, the population at that time was 15 million calculated within the borders of modern Turkey, approximately 14,000 workers were employed. While it has been argued and discussed in scholarly literature, that Ataturk indeed has chosen a “class” to side on, many also disagree by stating there to be no class indeed. Yes, importance of agriculture and the condition of villages as well as the peasants who live and sustain themselves through these labors were considered in socio-economical situations, but additionally scholars analyze that there to be a “agrarian bourgeoisie” in which Ataturk and the Republican founders had to support in order to gain favors, also to impact both political ground and the economic situation.

### **2.2.1 Foundation of the Turkish Republic**

Primary initiations by Ataturk and fellow partisans were adopted at the Izmir Economic Congress, which had happened on 7th of February 1923, before the Republic had been made official. During the meetings and initiations, 1135 delegate officials of the local industry, merchants, workers and farmers had participated, concentrating around a maximum of eight members from each district, classified as: three farmers, one is a merchant, an artist, a worker, a company representative, and a banker. (Kayıran & Saygın, p.32)) The Congress has been commenced by Ataturk’s opening speech, which I believe to be important regarding his motives and possible politically influential background he has/will establish during and after the Republican years.

“Izmir Economic Congress, was empirical and crucial to the economical development of the Turkish Republic. Therefore, the Congress was initiated on the purpose of exchanging the economic national development through initiated several principles. Although voices of big landowners and merchants were heard more than others, all groups expressed their views and demands for a national economy led by the private sector. Foreign capital was also welcome under certain conditions. Due to its delicate timing, many of the messages delivered for audiences at home and abroad were undoubtedly symbolic rather than concrete. Nonetheless, the Congress can still be viewed as reflecting the basic directions in economic policy until the Great Depression in 1929. (Kayıran & Saygın pp.53) Regarding the agrarian principles, the most influential policy initiated at the Congress was the discussion of the removal of two most predominant taxes.

As Sevket Pamuk mentions in his book regarding the removal of these two taxes as “the earliest initiatives of the new regime was to abolish in 1924 the tithe and the animal tax, and to introduce in their stead indirect taxes on commodities consumed by the rural population like sugar and kerosene, as well as some land taxes.” (Pamuk, 2018, p. 170) According to him, the 10 percent tithe on agricultural production was collected for the state by local tax farmers and together with the animal tax they had been the Ottoman state’s leading source of revenue for centuries, which at the beginning of the twentieth century, these two items provided almost half of all the revenues of the Ottoman state. (p.170) He continues his statement, by pointing out due to the fact “that of the difficulties encountered in the collection of these taxes during World War I and the War of Independence, their share in the receipts collected by the new state was not as high as in the past.” (pp.170) As regarding the role of the Excise tax it is known that in the year of abolishing it what was constituted of 1/4 of the state budget was removed by a reduction of taxes from from 33% to 10%, contributed in the end an by raising the

income level of the peasant and increasing agricultural production.” (Sarıkoyuncu and Sayıran, p. 229)

Due to the "Oriental Revolt" that started on February 11, 1925, the Government declared a partial mobilization to suppress this revolt, and therefore the most anticipated abolition of the taxes came, Sarıkoyuncu and Kayıran states in their article. They believe it to be considered “as an indicator of the importance it attaches to its villagers and agricultural development.” (p.229) While the Excise Tax did seem to be abolished during the year 1923, it was not initiated until 1925 at a time when the inner conflicts were high and rising in the country.

In any case, Sarıkoyuncu and Kayıran state that, both smallholder farmers and large landowner were now encouraged to increase their production, after with the abolition of the Excise tax some of their products were being sent to bigger markets, and at the same time the economy started to flourish. The abolition of the Excise tax was controversial due to the possibility of a deficit happening by the removal of it although the government has ine deficit arising from the abolition of the Excise tax; had been compromised by the adaptation of indirect taxes which were now put on landholders, and not the farmers nor the peasants. Gurcam and Aydın state that, “with the abolition of the excise tax in 1925, the share of the agricultural sector in the GDP increased from 44.4% to 49.6% by 1926.” (Gurcam & Aydın,) Furthermore, Pamuk in his book asserts that; “the abolition of the tithe has been interpreted as a concession to big landowners who had supported the War of Independence” (Pamuk, ) while at the same time it has “reduce the big landowners’ tax burden”. Kayıran also argues that there would be a 10-12 million loss because of the abolishment of the Excise tax, which had been it was proposed to compromise by an increase through an land tax by an 8 times since it was believed that large landowners would not be impacted that much due to the difference between the estimated land value and real land value at 15-20 times of a rate. (pp.)

Although at the same time, researchers agree on finding Ataturk as a supporter of the peasants, evidently he “in 1922, a year before the foundation of the Turkish Republic on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire has declared that 'the peasant is the master of our nation'”. (Karaomerlioglu, 2000, p.115) His declaration, according to Keyder, is argued to be a political statement instead of a sentimental one in. As he states, “the cult of the peasant indicated a need to conceal the extremely elitist attitudes of the governing class of the single-party regime” (Karaomeroglu, 2000, p.116 ) which he adds to the policies of the regime to have less impact than thought to be. He also adds regarding the abolishment of the Tithe Tax, that “while peasants were relieved from the burden of the tithe, and especially the arbitrary use of power by the former tax collectors, after a few years new taxes based on payment in cash were introduced” (p.116) which led the peasants to be complaining in short amount of years after the abolishment.

While at the same time Pamuk in his book takes a neutral stance, he also states that “taking this step the new state’s main concern was to provide a break for the small and medium sized family producers, who constituted a very large share of the population and who had faced almost constant warfare for a decade.” (Pamuk,2018, p.174) He continued his statement by pointing out that the government indeed ,“hoped that by easing their tax burden, agricultural production would recover sooner and more strongly” Although Karaomeroglu argues that, until the mid 1930’s the Government to not have any real interest toward the peasant group, he states this to be real “partly because of the organic relations of the Kemalist elite with the landowners, and partly because of the relative abundance of land following the dramatic decline in population after the First World War due to huge population and the deaths of millions of people.” (pp.119) Additionally, Professor Akalın argues for this initiative to be considered as the first policy to be implemented towards supporting the “bourgeois” class. He states in his article, that the “removal and abolishment of the taxes to be a declaration of the governments towards the class considering the ongoing conflicts and clashes of that time with both small

sized workers along with the Kurdish movement”.(32) Therefore he believes the Government interest to be superficial at best and only relative to their own interest due to the fact that once they have influenced the large landowners to be on their side, they have also believed that peasants would follow.

While Akalın does indeed argue that the Government’s support indeed laid in the hands of elites, although he also states, this to be due to the fact that the large landowners did hold the economy and hold a key position in national development too. Nonetheless, he believes the abolition of the Excise tax to be lacking at best. This can also be traced back to my prior argument regarding the situation during the foundation of the Turkish Republic. Due to the fact that there was no industrialization or any dominant “class” as it was with the case of Europe, the Government in a way was both influenced and forced to make a gamble and bet on one possible national development strategy. As Pamuk discussed this dynamic in his book as well, he has mentioned the abolishment of the Tithe Tax as an policy which had an “important consequences on power relations in the rural areas” due to it in the nineteenth century being “an important source of profits and economic power for the leading families in rural areas”. (Pamuk,2018,) He has discussed it more extensively regarding the dynamic of taxes in social relations too. The tax collectors, Pamuk continued, often large landowners or merchants, also extended credit when needed to small producers facing difficulties, creating a dependence and a network of influence in rural areas.” With the abolition of the tithe, these groups lost an important pillar of their power over small and medium- sized family producers (Keyder 1981, pp. 11–45; Birtok and Keyder 1975, pp. 407–38). (34)

During the years before 1930, while the most influential policy did seem to be the abolishment of the Excise Tax, there were additional couple initiatives that had taken place which have been analyzed in the literature. Sarıkoyuncu and Kayıran, discuss these initiatives in their article,

which they address as a commitment to bring farmers together under one roof and create a network through. “Firstly, the 498th Amendment, adopted on April 21, 1924 called "Agricultural Associations' 'has been established by law No. On June 1, 1929, the establishment of agricultural cooperatives was established by law No. 1470, which bears the name of "Particular Agricultural Union it was accepted. Two years after the start of the establishment of "Agricultural Credit Cooperatives" then, 572 Credit Cooperatives were established and developed in a short time.” (pp.230) These initiatives indicate, according to them, the support the Government had towards farmers. At the same time during these initiatives, landless peasants were gaining land through a new policy that was adopted too.

Additionally, Akalın and Gurcam & Aydın discuss the adopted Civil Code during the year 1926 by each article focusing on a different aspect which again brings me to my comparative examination.

According to Akalın, after the Civil Code was adopted the system had been turning into a capitalist one which has impacted the question of land and property. He argues that, the Civil Code to be also a scheme that worked in favor of the agricultural bourgeoisie, because of the initiation of the Civil Code public properties had been transferred to the agricultural bourgeois class and due to the fact that capitalist laws were enacted, the concept of private property was secured. (Akalın & He does not mention, in any case, the situation regarding the peasant population in his article. On the contrary, Gurcam and Aydın’s research on the Civil Code, indicates something else. They argue that when the Civil Code was adopted, that “with the adoption of the Civil Code, the right of farmers to own land was legally realized.” (Gurcam & Aydın, 2019, p.58) With these decisions taken, the agricultural sector has started to grow rapidly, they state in their article, that due to the both the abolishment of the Excise Tax and the implementation of the Civil Code, among other things have contributed to the situation that



“in 1926 the agricultural sector had the highest share of GDP between the years of 1923 and 1929”. (p.59)

While in this chapter so far I have analyzed the policies that had started with the foundation of the Turkish Republic, I also have provided comparative arguments regarding these implementations. My comparative arguments in this chapter do shine a light to the situation of the “class” indeed, but based on my research there does not seem to be one opinion on the fact behind the Government's support towards the peasant class. Even so, if both Keyder and Akalın are indeed correct, still the case could be in fact a positive one. To enhance the situation of the peasants and develop the country, firstly monetary policies had to be resolved and to do so Atatürk and other politicians have chosen to support the large landowners first. .In any case, Pamuk also argues that “agricultural production did in fact recover strongly” due to the initiatives and policies adopted by Atatürk and the Republican party “until 1939 despite the sharp decline in agricultural prices due to the Great Depression”. (Pamuk, 2018, p.190)

## **2.3 Neoliberal Period**

In this chapter of my bachelor Thesis, I will be examining and analyzing the most influential and predominant policies taken in Turkey during the 21st century. Both the interwar and neoliberal period are known to be the two crucial stages in Turkish history regarding the role of development, politics, and economics. Therefore, this chapter will be focused on the predominant policies taken under the head of the AKP government which I will be examining through the descriptive method by discussing the influence of the AKP government regarding peasantry, agrarianism and politics.

As I have discussed and shown in the previous chapter, Turkey’s relationship with agrarianism had been undoubtable since the prior Ottoman era and foundation. While I have

examined the first chapter, regarding the policies during the Republican era it was evident that agrarianism was both important for economic development as well as partisan influences. This subchapter will take the same form of historiographical approach, by using the descriptive method.

The introduction of neoliberalism into the agrarian sector in Turkey, which began in the 1980s and accelerated in the 2000s, has brought unprecedented changes to rural life. (Ozturk & Jongerden, 2014 p. 338) As they state in their article that during the 80's, along with much of the rest of the world, initiated a fundamental shift away from state-led models of economic development to that of neoliberal globalisation, along the lines of the Washington Consensus. (p.391) While Turkey's economic policies at that time was focused and based on state-led policies this did not stop the neoliberal process to be initiated by the politicians due to several influences both internally and externally. Since, "Turkey's encounter with neoliberal policies and globalization began with the new policy package launched in January 1980 in response to the severe economic crisis at the end of the 1970s" (40) many political and institutional changes were being initiated as well. While it is indicated by a census data which shows the absolute numbers engaged in agriculture to be fairly stable (around 9.7 million during 1960–65, 10 million during 1975–80, and 11–11.5 million over the period 1985–90). government's initiative towards neoliberal policies were unhazed by the country's relation with small and medium sized based agrarianism.

As the old, state-led development strategy has been phased out in Turkey, as required and guided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU) in the globalization of capital, the ongoing neoliberal restructuring has resulted in a squeeze on traditional peasant farming and associated living structures. (Ozturk et al. 2014, p.338) It is understood as a tip point in Turkey's history regarding its deeply rooted agrarian structures and

structural farming that has existed since the Ottoman era. The direct implementation of neoliberal policies in agriculture by the government of Turkey in the early 2000s, however, facilitated and enforced by international organizations like the World Bank, IMF and EU, resulted in a historically unparalleled squeeze on farming. Initiated with a 1980 Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and eventually, after a financial crash in 1999, leading to the Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP) of 2001, this effected a major state withdrawal from its previous support of agriculture. (Ozturk et al. 2017, p.2)

The adapted policies and initiatives changed the entire structural stance of the Turkey's, as the previous policies and government used to favour etatism and state enterprises instead of private ones. As Pamuk states in his book that, regarding the role of political instutions and elections at the start of the 21st century that “the secular parties struggled with rising political and macroeconomic instability as well as the many demands of a rapidly urbanizing society during the 1990s, the Islamist political parties focused on local organization and local government delivering urban services” (Pamuk,2018, p.261) which has ignited the rise of the JDP government. The government's initial response was to focus on agrarianism, since at that time during the 1980's still a high number of citizens was estimated to participate in the labor force by 50 percent. There had been several criticized and controversial policies adopted by the JDP government during their time in the Office. In this subchapter, I will be discussing and examining the most influential ones, stated by several scholars.

Firstly, I will be examining the infamous ARIP reform, adapted under the JDP government and which had impacted agrarianism in Turkey severely. The 2001–06 Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP), sponsored by the World Bank, saw huge cuts in and/or the ending of a range of state production facilities, price control mechanisms (including fixed price purchases and high import duties) and input subsidies (such as subsidized fertilizers and cheap

credit through the state Agriculture Bank), combined with the facilitation of land transfer and international capital entry (Aydın 2010; Öztürk 2012a). Thus, during this period, while the total population of Turkey rose by 4 per cent, its rural population dropped by 12 per cent, from around 24 to 21 million, approximately half a million people per year. That is, in less than a decade, one in eight of all rural dwellers departed, and the village population returned to a level last seen 40 years ago. (Ozturk et al. 2014, pp. 344)

ARIP reform is arguably one of the most influential policies that has been adapted under the initial periods of neoliberal politics and influences. AKP had been following a political strategy in which they have promised during the elections, that they will get agricultural support from outside forces. The ARIP reform therefore was initiated after the damaging 2001 crisis, which had paved the way to the rise of JDP due to economic instability along with other political issues ongoing at that time. The official objective of the ARIP was to implement policy tools to remove government subsidies which worked as artificial incentives on the “natural market order” and instead introduce market-oriented incentives to agricultural producers in order to enable them to be competitive in world market by letting them increase productivity and efficiency under a state-intervention free medium. (Kocak, 2012 p.25) To accomplish the official objective and to achieve economic growth while reducing government budgetary spending, three main initiatives had to be adapted. Therefore, the reform had been initiated to remove the old state-led policies and to push the country into the big market which the government had promised to its followers and to the conservatives in power during the election in order to get Turkey out from its economic rot at the time.

Keyder and Yenal explain in their article that the ARIP reform to initiated due to desired two main objectives: to make the co-operatives autonomous in management and financially independent. (2011,p.65) Regarding the co-operatives relation with the government before the

ARIP reform, they state that in the 1980s, sixteen unions with 400 sales co-operatives and around 725,000 registered members still enjoyed moderate amounts of governmental support at the end of the 1990s (Kazgan 2003, 379–80, 398) which has led to the reform to be initiated due to governments lack of interest with the co-operatives and etatist policies. (p.65) Accordingly, a new law introduced in 2000 mandated governments to stop the financial support given to the agricultural cooperatives, thus obliging these organizations to surrender to the logic of the market. Furthermore, the co-operatives were banned from engaging in manufacturing food items for the consumer market; they would confine their production activity to primary processing of agricultural goods but were also encouraged to privatize their processing plants. Meanwhile, the same law provided for the extension of the government's political oversight by establishing a re-structuring board, the majority of whose members were appointed by the state (Oyan 2001, 35–6). (p.65) As stated, it is evident that while the government economically supported neoliberal policies, still politically they were favoring kinship policies and the so-called clientelism the AKP party is known for.

While it seemed at first, as AKP's policies were supported and initiated by economists and citizens, the ARIP reform in the end, had not sadly met the expectations and it was criticized harshly.

Even though there seemed to be an increase in agricultural production by 11 percent, it is argued not to reflect the truth. This is probably partly because they derive from the Farmer Record System (Çiftçi Kayıt Sistemi), in which farmers register to gain Direct Income Support (a farming subsidy introduced to ease the neoliberal transition) – and thus desist from registering if their gain from the support is less than the cost of the process, which is not insignificant for smallholders; thus, the initial jump would seem to reflect the uptake of the scheme by farmers

and the gradual decline its phasing down (hence the lack of a significant decline in land farmed, because larger enterprises do not fail to register for the payment. (Ozturk et al. 2017, pp.245)

Therefore, there needed to be additional support from external forces in order for the country to undergo these newly adapted neoliberal policies and politics as a unification process. That is why, precisely the second policy I will be examining is also seen as one of the most influential policies that have been adapted under the head of the JDP government, and one of the most controversial one indeed.

The Common Agricultural Policy, which is a partnership between the EU and Turkey can be regarded additionally as one of the most crucial policies to be adapted and initiated in Turkish economic history. As Pamuk also discusses in his book regarding the Customs Union and EU Candidacy, that Turkey's relations with the European Union go back to the Ankara Agreement of 1963, which had anticipated eventual membership in what was then called the Common Market. The Common Market and later the European Community was Turkey's most important trading partner, accounting for approximately 50 percent of its exports and more than 60 percent of its imports during those decades. (Pamuk, 2018, p.285) Therefore, the adaptation of the CAP was supported by the local citizens, farmers and neoliberalist. The AKP government, as well as the citizens of Turkey had approached the process more positively because of the EU's rooted stance in agriculture and because of the relationship between Turkey and EU. While the reforms and policies were highly anticipated, transition was not hoped to be easy due to differences in agricultural practices between Turkey and the EU.

The CAP has two pillars. Regarding the adaptation of the Common Agricultural Policy in Turkey, the second pillar has been taken into consideration and has been initiated due to the rural population's importance and the embedded agrarian traditions and values in the country. According to the World Bank Data's analysis regarding the adjustment towards the CAP would

“under all scenarios, average wages for skilled and unskilled labor increase ... combined with falling consumer prices, means that the further elimination of trade barriers will benefit lower income groups for whom wages comprise a larger share of their income”. Therefore, initiatives were hoped to be successful and to have a long lasting impact on Turkey’s income distribution aswell as labor share, and consumer prices. Although, Kose does state in his article the possible challenges regarding the adaptation of the CAP policy in a New Member State- which at that time Turkey had started the accession process with the European Union to become one, that the CAP reformation to be based on “a medium sized family farm model of Western Europe.” (Kose,2012, p.86) As she continues her argument that regarding by quoting another scholar that the current CAP as a uniform system ‘does not fully fit the conditions of the new member countries, especially in their poorest sections’.... even though the current system allows for certain areas to be treated specially, it is not suitable for providing real assistance to the millions of small farms in the NMS, let alone for tackling rural poverty. (p.86) While at the same time, reforms initiated with the support of the CAP and the EU, such as adopting the DIS policy were initiated with a hopeful promise and as I have mentioned in the last paragraphs it did not turn out to have much more impact either.

As Kose continues the argument that by stating Turkey to be also in a similar way to the new member states and there to be a dual structure in Turkish agriculture: large farmers producing for markets and even for export and small farmers based on semi-subsistence farming produce for household consumption. These small farms are, nonetheless, of crucial importance providing income security, and represent a source of livelihood for the majority of Turkey’s rural population. (Kose, 2012 p.87) ,An OECD report adds, they are sufficiently productive to have made Turkey a significant agricultural exporter and a world leader in certain agricultural products. (p.87) That is why, accordingly to her, due to subsistence farming the EU is prone to that, for Turkey the CAP adjustment would not have been easy similarly like Eastern and

Mediterranean European countries who have struggled with being a New Member State and adopting the CAP development reform. “Turkey and Romania stand out with a very large share of the labour force in agriculture, mainly subsistence agricultural activities, characterized by very low productivity. Given the very low productivity levels of agriculture and the fact that a substantial part of this employment is in fact related to subsistence agriculture rather than production for the market, the process of labour shifting between sectors is likely to take place in these countries over the coming years and decades both creating problems and opening up opportunities’ (pp.88) states, Kose by quoting ENEPRI report. Although according to the European Union’s official website, under the reforms done for The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (IPARD), between the dates of the adaptation of the CAP policy during the years 2002-2013 there had been more than 11,000 projects and nearly €2 billion in total investment, IPARD has so far created 50,000 jobs. For example, in January 2006, Turkey adopted a National Rural Development Strategy (NRDS) providing the first rural development strategy plan for the country.

So far, in this chapter I have examined the influential and prominent neoliberal policies that the government has initiated during the 21st century. My research has shown me that, while initial policies were assumed to be successful and had been promising enough they did not turn out to be the same that influential for long-term effect. Although, regarding the rural development of the villages or of farmers and peasants may not be noteworthy, scholars indicate that the structural institutional change to be reformed but with the sake of losing cultural and traditional practices of farming and governing.

I will be discussing and analyzing the impacts of the policies that have been adopted under the AKP government in the next chapter of my Thesis, in which I will be comparing both of the periods that I have examined so far throughout my work.



### **3.0 Comparative Analysis**

In this chapter, based on my findings and research I will be comparing the two prominent periods regarding their agrarian policies and impact considering the history of Turkey. These two periods, as I have already stated, have been embedded as an important aspect of Turkish history. Therefore, to examine and discuss these two periods together I will be using the comparative analysis method in order to contrast them. I will be discussing the economical, social and political impacts of adopted and initiated policies under both of these periods and how they entail at the moment.

In order for me to analyze these two influential periods that I have discussed so far in my Thesis, I have chosen to focus on two aspects: peasants and bourgeoisie. Consequent to my research findings, I believe that the condition of agrarianism in Turkey within each of these periods I have examined, what mattered the most were the societal and cultural concentration of these groups. Such as during the Republican foundation era, with a high concentration of peasant population policies had to be adjusted and adapted accordingly but conversely to do Neoliberal era, rising values and globalization impacts had changed the concentration of the population drastically. Therefore, in this chapter I will be comparing these aspects within each period, their impact and influences regarding the role of both politics and economics.

As so far I have explained from the standpoint of the Turkish Republic, agrarianism was never a question to even begin with. Due to the nation's development prior to the foundation, agrarianism was seen as a source of income, cultivation and labor. Therefore, policies were adjusted and implemented accordingly. Considering my arguments and inclination so far, I believe it is possible for me to argue that economic policies are correlated with political

ideologies as I have also stated during my introduction. Showing that with this case specifically, that economic development is dependent on different levels and outcomes, and not just on institutions.

While, as Ilkkaracan and Tunalı argues that” data collected some 30 years later (for the 2001 General Census of Agriculture) indicate that the total number of farms was about the same as in 1970. The ranks of small farms thinned from 73 to 64.8 percent (of around 3 million farms), while their land share decreased from 27 to 20.6 percent. Middle-sized farms increased in number (from 23.5 to 29.4 percent of all farms) while their share of land area grew by a small amount (from 42 to 44.5 percent). The number of large farms also increased (their share went up from 3.7 to 5.8 percent) and they commanded a larger share of the land area (35 percent).” (Ilkkaracan and Kose, pp.112) As Pamuk also indicated, that small farmers to be an inherited Ottoman development in Turkey’s long history which has been evident continuously over the years until adaptation of Neoliberal policies. Consequently, as I have stated, Turkey’s agricultural heritage was also supported by the state-led development throughout the years, which later on shaped Turkish politics as well.

Therefore, contrastly with the Republican era adjusted policies and reforms, Neoliberal era’s roots have also seem to be grounded in rural populations such as peasants and farmers similarly to prior dates. It is argued as seen in the scholarly literature, that while Ataturk during the foundation era has implemented policies to support peasantry and agrarian bourgeoisie, under the AKP era many scholars argue the opposite to have happened. Which Keyder and Ozturk & Jorgenden & Hilton evidently state in their article, with the rise of neoliberal policies after the 1990’s Turkey’s depeasantization have had started. According to Ozturk’s article, “the rural population of Turkey began to decrease from its historical benchmark of three-quarters of the national total from the 1950s and 60s, while it began to fall from its high point in absolute

terms around 1980, when it peaked at around 25 million; after recovering a fraction with the late 1990s economic crisis, it then fell again, quite sharply after 2000” (67) which he argues to be same time as the neoliberal policies to be implemented.

Contrastly, the implications regarding the implementations and policies during the Republican era have concentrated differently after the removal of the Tithe tax. In the nineteenth century, collecting the tithe and other taxes in the name of the state was an important source of profits and economic power for the leading families in rural areas. The tax collectors, often large landowners or merchants, also extended credit when needed to small producers facing difficulties, creating a dependence and a network of influence in rural areas. With the abolition of the tithe, these groups lost an important pillar of their power over small and medium- sized family producers. (68) Undoubtedly, these policies have changed the structural institutional pressure on farmers and producers, by giving them their own economic power and freedom. Which can also be seen from evidence as Pamuk also explains in his book that, the 1920s was a period of rapid recovery for Turkey’s economy” as he continued “after the wars ended, land under cultivation expanded and agricultural production started to increase.” (68) Due to the increase in agricultural incomes argues Pamuk, the urban economy began to recover as well which has led to new investments, and aggregated demand leading to expansion of exports. As Keyder also states, with the exception of the drought year of 1927–28, this modernisation process had the effect of raising agricultural output from 245 million liras in 1923 to 521 million liras in 1929, thereby commercialising production on the largest and most profitable rural estates. (69) While according to him, policies adjusted and implemented during the Republican era has favored agrarian bourgeoisie and large landowners as I have stated in my first chapter, Jacoby also agrees with Keyder in his article. “In helping to cohere and enrich the agricultural elite, this increase in the level of the productive forces also generated class differentiation, widening inequality in the countryside” he states.

Pamuk argues, due to the Great Depression during 1929, developing countries and Turkey, who had been a producer of agricultural commodities, were impacted devastatingly and prices were declining. “Prices of wheat and other cereals declined by more than 60 percent from 1928–29 to 1932–33 and remained at those lower levels until the end of the decade. Prices of the leading export crops—tobacco, raisins, hazelnuts, and cotton—also declined, by an average of around 50 percent, although they recovered somewhat later in the decade.” (Pamuk,2018,p.175).The economic crisis was a turning point for the newly founded and established Turkish Republic, as farmers, peasants and landholders concentrated a high proportion of the population they were ought to be kept contented but unfortunately as Pamuk continues, “the difficulties of the agricultural and export- oriented sectors produced a sharp sense of collapse and quickly led to popular discontent with the singleparty regime, especially in the more commercialized regions of Western Anatolia, along the eastern Black Sea coast and the cotton- growing Adana region in the south”(p.176) aswell as the Central Anatolian wheat producers who were impacted due to their connection to urban markets via infrastructure. Eventually, this crisis led to the share of “exports in GDP declined from 9.0 percent in 1929–29 to 7.0 percent in 1938–39. The imports to GDP and exports to GDP ratios, which had risen above 10 percent for the first time in the decade before World War I, both remained below 10 percent after World War II and until the end of the 1970s, a half century later. Therefore, I believe it can be argued that Turkey’s recent agrarian problems and policies are correlated with the first establishment of these policies. As Jacoby also states, “the war years, and not so much the Great Depression and etatism, thus appear as the critical period in the political demise of the single- party regime” as “after the transition to a multiparty electoral system, the Republican People’s Party was defeated in the first openly contested elections of 1950.” Which can be argued to have paved the way for neoliberal policies and the rise of AKP. As, “the new political

establishment took this opportunity and initially conceded to all the politically unpopular terms and conditions of the stand-by agreement with the IMF and the World Bank.”

Secondly, I would like to mention and analyze recent data given by AKP’s implemented policies and politics that I have already mentioned such as ARIP and CAP, as well as to argue how these policies impacted agrarianism by mentioning recent given data and how it has impacted politics.

Between the 20th and 21st century, in Turkey “share of agriculture in total employment declined from 75–80 percent in 1950 to 50 percent in 1980 to less than 20 percent in 2015, while the share of the urban economy in employment increased.” (Tezcur, 2022, p.145) Considering the adapted CAP and ARIP policy, the agrarian sector should have been thriving while the conditions should have been improved as at the same time efficiency and productivity should have been aggravating. Data collected by Karapınar indicates that, while agricultural lands did increase, he argues that “the share of land deemed “arable” has been fairly stable, at around 31 percent” since the start of the 21st century. Karapınar continues his argument in his article by stating that “according to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data, total agricultural support as a fraction of GDP rose in the 1990s and reached a peak of 6.7 percent during the 1997–99 period before declining to 5.3 percent in 2000 and further to 2.9 percent in 2001.” He argues that the sharp reduction in 2001 reflects the combined effect of ARIP and the economic crisis even though ARIP stipulated removal of all subsidies and use of direct income support (DIS) instead, the record indicates that subsidies crept back in within a couple of years. As Keyder also states regarding the role of ARIP, that “the implementation of this project (albeit with a few setbacks in the 2000s) had the impact of shifting power and responsibility in marketing and quality management of agricultural products from public bodies to private institution.”

According to Kocak, who has written a Thesis focused on examining and discussing the implemented neoliberal agrarian policies in Turkey during the 21st century, which I have chosen to only examine two of the most influential ones. She states that regarding the ARIP reform, given the result it almost might appear that an improvement in farmers' economic conditions and the lessening of rural poverty were not the aims of the reforms, since rural poverty levels have not changed a great deal since the beginning of the post-2000 reforms and suggests that the vote of farmers in any case were too significant to ignore constituting around 30 per cent of the general population that the reforms in the end were "diluted". (Kocak, 2012, p.2) OECD data shows there to be little improvement over this period as well.

Lastly, regarding the influence and impact of the AKP I would like to mention a bit more about the CAP implementation and what it entails.

As I have mentioned the execution of the CAP and its first pillar at that time during the start of 2000's, in recent years the second pillar has been implemented. As stated in the official European Union website, the "second pillar" of the Common Agricultural Policy, the EU's Rural Development Policy has changed over time in order to adjust to the evolving key EU priorities, and for the period 2014-2020 has been revised in line with the wider CAP reform which they state its emphasis on investing for success has enabled many farmers to learn new techniques, upgrade facilities, and carry out essential restructuring, thus sharpening their competitive edge. Similar to the reactions towards the ARIP reformation, it is argued that the CAP implementation has not been quite effective. As I have stated, during my second chapter regarding neoliberal policies that CAP was deemed to be unsuitable for Turkey due to its agrarian structure compared to the European Union. Kocak adds as well by arguing that "although the agriculture and farm structure in Turkey show similarities to some of the new member states in terms of employment and support patterns, it is easy to speculate that a

possible membership of Turkey would bring dramatic changes to the Union agriculture.” Additionally, as the European Union stated in their website that subsistence and semi-subsistence farming to be an important attribute of Turkish agriculture, they identified these attributes with low productivity of production, which only a small fraction of the goods to be marketed.

I believe that, based on my research, these two periods that I have examined and discussed seem to be completely contrasting one and another. While some scholars indeed argue that, Republican era policy implementations to be favoring bourgeois class, and implementing policies that in the end hurted farmers and peasants still evidence show that the implemented policies had led to an economic growth, while at the same time adjusted Turkish agrarian system to be more supportive of agrarian practices. Duzgun explains these adjustments to be implemented “via a series of “populist” measures, such as fiscal incentives and limited land redistribution, the state elite preempted peasant dispossession and labor mobility, which they perceived as the ultimate danger to the existing sociopolitical order.” Although the government is argued to be supported by the bourgeoisie and the state elite, I believe that depeasantization of the country (if certain) did not have the same aggravated impact nor the influence as the adapted neoliberal policies during the 21st century. While I can indeed argue based on my findings and research that, same as with the case of the rise of AKP during the Republican era government officials and state elites indeed wanted to gain support of peasants and agrarian class due to the lack of class formation in Turkey at that time because of the Ottoman institutional structure to be based on separation of classes, and mostly concentrating on farmers. It can also be argued that, even 100 years later, the structural system in Turkey still does seem to be similar as compared to neoliberal period under the head of the AKP government.

As I have argued and stated in the previous chapter, the supporters of the neoliberal policies to be implemented were analyzed to be the market elites and farmers indeed. Elites, merchants were anticipating the entry to international markets through the funds of external forces as well as the possibility of getting into the Custom Union and exporting to the European Union. At the same time, after the recent 2001 economic crisis, as well as political instability of the country the AKP party was offering hope and possible solutions to local citizens as estimated according to General Population Census that 12 million people in the country out of 22 million were employed in agriculture, concentrating the 48 percent of the population. While it is argued that neoliberalism and globalization was inevitable as followed by Western ideologies around the country and similarly to other developing countries, as Pamuk also stated with the case of Turkey the results were not impressive or deemed as successful contrasting with other developing countries's economic growth. "Neoliberal globalization has swept away the accustomed networks of information, production and marketing in the Turkish countryside, which were largely established and maintained by comprehensive governmental support policies put in place during the national–developmentalist era of the postwar period", states Keyder as the possible implication why these policies has not had the desired success nor the economical outcome. "Despite transformation in the countryside with increasing mechanization, higher productivity and massive migration to the cities, the rural society centred on the village community remained relatively stable when land transactions were rare and employment opportunity in the countryside was scant". In the end, consequently "depeasantization" was achieved either intentionally or unintentionally which was examined by increased migration towards urban areas and a drop in agricultural labor force aswell as the examined drop of the role of agriculture in overall GDP compared to prior levels.



## 4.0 Conclusion

In this Bachelor Thesis, I have examined, analyzed and discussed the two influential and predominant periods regarding Turkish historiography and these periods inclination towards agrarianism along with agrarian policies and politics.

Firstly, I have researched and analyzed the Republican era by focusing on the role of peasants, agrarian structure which was inherited from the Ottoman Empire as well as focusing on the role of the single-party regimes concentration on agrarian bourgeoisie, elites and peasants. I have stated my findings based on my research regarding different scholar's analysis and examination on the Republican Era's implementation of agrarian reforms and policies. I have included several articles by proven scholars, according to my chosen methodology historiographical approach. I have examined the relationship between agrarianism, politics and influence through my argumentations. In the first chapter, I have discussed the two predominant reforms and policies that were noteworthy between the years of 1920 and 1939. I have analyzed the importance of the abolishment of the Tithe Tax, and the implementation of the Civil Code as well as other adopted policies and reforms on a small scale. My research has shown me that abolishment of the Tithe Tax to play a gradual role regarding the structural dynamics of agrarianism in Turkey and how the rural relations have changed. While there seemed to be several inclinations on behalf of the state's policies during the Republican era regarding peasants and farmers, I have shown that the situation to be more complex than presented.

Although, it could be argued that after the abolishment of the Tithe Tax, peasants have had gained their economic freedom and independence away from the controlling large landowners aswell as away from the systematic oppression of the state it has been argued and as I have

stated that many scholars have argued that the fact to be mostly economical reasons and political one at best. Due to Turkey's unique condition, having a "classless" country concentrated with agricultural goods and markets, it is arguable that the reason can be economical and political in a sense that the peasants were seen as a development method. Equally important, as the Civil Code was established after the abolishment of the Tithe Tax, the concept of private property was initialized and set in motion as now citizens would be able to own land and a property. Combined with the abolishment of the Tithe Tax and the newly implemented Civil Code, agricultural growth was rising fastly as the economy too was growing at the time. Again, it was argued that by scholars state elites nor the state officials, did care or sympathized with the peasants but instead they were looking out for the interest of merchants and large landowners. Keyder especially, as I have quoted in my Thesis argues this to be true. He states, regarding both of these influential implementations and policies that the Kemalist regime at the time looked out for the interest of the agrarian bourgeoisie commercialized products and real estates, while Turkey's institutionalized small-sized farms were left behind to take care of themselves on their own. As the Civil Code was implemented, statistics indicate that until the Great Depression Turkey was indeed enjoying an import and export ratio above 10 percent.

Secondly, in this Bachelor Thesis I have also examined and analyzed the implementation of agrarian policies during the Neoliberal period in the beginning of the 21st century and its aftermaths. To do so and to discuss the Neoliberal period, I have continued by using the historiographical method throughout the chapter. Followingly, in the second chapter I have analyzed the influential policies that had been initiated and adjusted under the AKP government during the 21st century. My research has shown me there to be two important reforms and policies that have impacted the agrarian structure and agricultural economy of Turkey in the 21st century. Consequently, I have analyzed the ARIP reform and the implementation of CAP.

Throughout the chapter, I have discussed the ramifications of the ARIP reform and the CAP initiative. The ARIP reform was implemented after the rough path the country had gone through and was still going at the time, was heavily anticipated by both the local citizens and by the market elites. Even though it was heavily anticipated, as scholars do argue it had not turned out to be successful as hoped or as it was promised. The anticipated numbers and growth were never reached, and the reform in the end had changed the structure of Turkish economy and labour force. Its impact is felt now more than ever due to the country's reliance on imports on basic necessities such as wheat, oil etc.... and the ongoing inflation as well as the current war.

Regarding the European accession and the implementation of the CAP, I have also shown both empirical and theoretical evidence regarding the influence of and impact of the undertaken policies over the course of years since the start of the 21st century. As I have stated, Turkey had gone through the implementations of two “pillars” since 1991. While at first according to the reports and estimates, the implementation of these pillars were supposed to improve the conditions of the rural population, agricultural workers, productivity and efficiency of the market it did not turn out that way in the end. Promised estimates were not achieved, as I have stated Kose’s argument that due to Turkey’s dual structure of subsistence and semi-subsistence farming, which had needed to be adjusted before the implementations of the CAP to work. Both the ARIP and the CAP, had adjusted the Turkish agrarian sector into a neoliberal market economy, in which as the Turkish agrarian economy consisted of small landholder farmers the conditions did not meet expectations or centuries old practices well. As Pamuk also stated, Turkey was never able to achieve the high rates of economic growth as it had in the 20th century. Many scholars agree that this happened due to the fact that there was an instant change in the economic policies and decentralization after the initiation of the neoliberal policies under the AKP government’s influence.

To sum up, in this Bachelor Thesis I have examined the agrarian change over the predominant periods of Turkish history. I have presented my arguments according to the historiographical approach, which I later on have contrasted these two periods by using the comparative analysis method. My research has shown me there to be a disagreement regarding the political influence and stance of the Republican party during the foundation years and whether or not indeed they did support agrarianism. Additionally, regarding the Neoliberal period it was evident that based on my findings and literature that during this period depeasantization was achieved.

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