

# **Testing the Limits of Geographical Indications: The Curious Case of Baklava**

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## Declaration of Committee

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## **Abstract**

Baklava is a famous, culturally significant and rather contentious dessert. In Turkey, Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava, from Gaziantep, was granted national and international Geographical Indication (GI) designations. GIs, protected by national regulations and international agreements, require considerable involvement from state institutions for establishment and maintenance and are designed to protect farmers and other food producers from inequalities created by the current food regime. The decline of state institutions has been considered as a significant characteristic of the current food regime and scholars of food regime theory primarily focus on social movements when analyzing opportunities to resist the inequalities within the food system. I argue that GIs are valuable tools of resistance and should be included in the analyses that utilize food regime theory. Thanks to its GI designations, baklava has a realistic chance to withstand the challenges present within this food regime and retain its specific qualities for years to come.

**Keywords:** food regime theory; geographical indications; baklava.

## **Dedication**

For my grandmother and my dad, the candles in my heart left burning. You two shine the light to kindness, sincerity, generosity, empathy, and infinite love. Hope that you are watching and proud of me. This work is dedicated to you both.

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# Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Acronyms.....	viii
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Theory and Methodology.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1. Food Regime Theory/Analysis/Project/Method.....	5
2.1.1. The First Food Regime (the 1870s to the 1910s).....	6
2.1.2. The Second Food Regime (the 1950s to the 1970s).....	8
2.1.3. The Third Food Regime (the 1980s to the present).....	11
2.2. Methodology.....	19
<b>Chapter 3. Geographical Indications, Terroir, and Taste.....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1. History of GIs and current regulations.....	22
3.2. Geographical Indications and Terroir.....	26
3.3. Taste and Terroir in Baklava.....	29
3.4. GIs: Opportunities, Criticisms and Divergences.....	33
<b>Chapter 4. Baklava's Story.....</b>	<b>39</b>
4.1. Baklava's Past.....	39
4.2. How to make Baklava.....	44
4.3. What is in Gaziantep Baklava?.....	46
4.3.1. Antep Pistachio.....	46
4.3.2. Clarified Butter ( <i>Sade Yağ</i> ).....	48
4.3.3. Walnuts.....	50
4.3.4. Sugar.....	51
4.4. Baklava's Present.....	52
<b>Chapter 5. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>58</b>
5.1. Looking into the future, directions for future research.....	60
<b>References.....</b>	<b>62</b>

## List of Acronyms

AOA	Agreement on Agriculture
ARIP	Agricultural Reform Implementation Project
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GIs	Geographical Indications
GSO	<i>Gaziantep Sanayi Odası</i> (Gaziantep Chamber of Industry)
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
SPO	State Planning Organization
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
TSE	<i>Türk Standartları Enstitüsü</i> (Turkish Standards Institute)
US	United States of America
WTO	World Trade Organization



# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

Baklava and ice-cream have been at the centre of my life ever since I was born, but it took a while for me to explore these products and the production relations (involving the suppliers of ingredients, producers, farmers, craftspeople) from a critical standpoint. I am the oldest daughter of a man who owned a small baklava and ice-cream store for decades. My father, before he passed away in 2018, was a proud artisanal producer of this centuries old dessert, along with the world-famous Maraş style of ice-cream.

My nuclear family's, as well as some of my extended family's livelihoods have depended on these two products for more than thirty years, and at least half of these years were marked with financial struggles. Regardless of the financial risks involved in being self-employed and running a small-scale family business, keeping the store going and continuing to purchase expensive, high quality ingredients, proved to be a big challenge.

Finding and keeping skilled workers was another difficulty. Not having firsthand knowledge regarding marketing and promotions, which gives one a competitive edge in the current market-place, and being devoid of the advantages that come with the economies of scale did not help, either. As a teenager, I had a hard time wrapping my mind around the fact that these issues were not particularly unique to our family business or to our country, Turkey. These are, more or less, the problems faced by most of the small-scale producers of traditional food products in many different corners of the Global South.

On the other hand, some opportunities for addressing these challenges are becoming available within the current global food system, specifically the emergence of Geographical Indications (GIs) that are legally protected under the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

Baklava is a product that has been produced within the borders of the Ottoman Empire (and the nearby regions) for centuries, and many variations of this special dessert have been perfected by various craftspeople during this time (see Chapter 4). As will be discussed later, baklava ingredients also have specific regional characteristics. In 2013, Antep<sup>1</sup> Baklava obtained a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) that is regulated under the European Commission's Quality Scheme. This designation links the production of Antep Baklava to a particular region in Turkey, brings specific requirements for the production process, and limits the use of the name "Antep Baklava" to the products that meet the criteria listed in the PGI registration.

Shortly after the PGI designation, the Turkish Standards Institute (*Türk Standartları Enstitüsü* -TSE) issued a set of quality standards for Antep Baklava and similar restrictions (such as clear guidelines on preparation and conditions for using specific ingredients) stated in the PGI went into force across the country. Even though it is possible to establish GIs without state involvement (see Chabrol, Mariani and Sautier, 2017), political tools at the disposal of the governments provide opportunities for GIs to benefit from existing market conditions. In the case of baklava, a state institution and a professional trade organization, Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (*Gaziantep Sanayi Odası* - GSO), stepped up to protect Antep Baklava. Due to these specificities, baklava is a prime example of a GI product that is worth further analysis.

Scholarly debates about GIs have been especially concentrated in law journals as they are mostly considered as part of intellectual property rights. Nonetheless, studies focusing on GIs have been increasingly published in social science journals within the last decade or so. Still, there is a limited number of studies that situate GIs in the general framework of *food regime theory*. This theory, as formulated by Philip McMichael and Harriet Friedmann (1989), connects the transformation of food and agriculture with the capitalist world economy. Briefly, the first food regime (1870-1930s) "combined colonial tropical imports to Europe with basic grains and livestock imports from settler colonies, provisioning emerging European industrial classes, and underwriting the British 'workshop of the world'" (McMichael 2009a: p.141). The second food regime (1950s-1970s) is characterized by the United States exporting surplus agricultural production by sending it to its allies within the Cold War trading blocs, the "adoption of Green

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<sup>1</sup> Antep, and its equivalent name Gaziantep will be used interchangeably in this thesis.

Revolution technologies”, and “land reforms and “extend[ing] market relations into the countryside” (McMichael 2009a: p.141). Lastly the third food regime (late 1980s-present) is known for “an emerging global food/fuel agricultural complex” and certain social movements like La Vía Campesina, Slow Food, etc. (McMichael 2009a: p.142). These social movements have, rightfully, attracted a substantial amount of scholarly attention, considering the powerful challenges that they pose to the current food regime by defending the rights of peasants and agricultural workers. In addition to these movements, there are some tools available within the current regime that have great potential with regards to challenging the regime.

Scholars of food regime theory determine that the apparent decline of state involvement and policies, both on national and international levels, is one of the key characteristics of the third food regime. Relying on state involvement to a certain extent by their nature, GIs aim to protect the producers of agri-foods, farmers and other food producers. I argue that GI schemes need to be analyzed within the food regime framework due to two reasons: their potential to safeguard the rights of other food producers that are not typically involved in the international peasant movement or other social movements and the level of state involvement that is necessary in regards to the design and maintenance of GIs. GIs have the potential to preserve traditional knowledge of food products and the producers of these products by making use of the resources that are available to the state institutions and they are also protected by international agreements. Thus, GIs should receive more attention from scholars who employ food regime theory in their analyses.

Therefore, my research question is as follows: Do GIs have the potential to protect traditional products facing challenges existing within the third food regime? In order to answer this question, I will look into the case of baklava in Turkey. Turkey remains a case yet to be explored fully from the lens of food regime theory; thus this thesis will also provide a contribution by centralizing its inquiry on this country, as food regime theory can greatly benefit from a study focused on a relatively understudied region. I argue that the Turkish case presents critical diversions from the conceptualizations made within the food regime theory and clearly demonstrates that some of the main assumptions made in the theory do not entirely work for this country (i.e. Green Revolution, dominance of transnational corporations, etc.). By focusing my

attention on Turkey, it is possible to critically examine how this theory works in the Global South.

To answer my research question, I will first provide an analysis of seminal works on food regime theory, demonstrate the deviations of the Turkish case from the assumptions made in this theory and present the details of my methodology in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, I will focus on GIs by presenting a brief historical overview of GIs, exploring the connections between GIs and terroir (simply defined as the environmental conditions and human factors that makes a food product unique, please see Chapter 3 for a detailed explanation), as well as between taste and terroir, along with analyzing the criticisms directed at this quality scheme. Chapter 4 begins with the story of baklava and I will demonstrate the reasons why the ingredients of baklava bear GI qualities. Chapter 5 will summarize my findings, establish the scholarly contribution of my thesis, and evaluate directions for future research.

## **Chapter 2.**

### **Theory and Methodology**

In this chapter, I intend to lay the theoretical foundation in order to answer my research question. I start with a brief overview of food regime theory by focusing on the main characteristics of first, second, and third food regime(s). At the end of each section, I discuss how and in what ways the Turkish case may or may not fit the theoretical framework of food regimes. Building on this discussion, I hope to demonstrate that including GIs in the analytical framework of food regimes with a focus on a country like Turkey will improve this theory and provide a foundation for my analysis in Chapter 3. The methodology section concludes this chapter.

#### **2.1. Food Regime Theory/Analysis/Project/Method**

Food regime theory, originally developed by Harriet Friedmann, and expanded by Philip McMichael's contributions, has analyzed the industrialization and globalization of food production. "Food regime" as an analytical tool "links international relations of food production and consumption to forms of accumulation broadly distinguishing periods of capitalist transformation since 1870" (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989, p. 95). Bernstein (2016) determines that there are several key elements identified in different food regimes including:

...the international state system; international divisions of labour and patterns of trade; the 'rules' and discursive (ideological) legitimations of different food regimes; relations between agriculture and industry, including technical and environmental change in farming; dominant forms of capital and their modalities of accumulation; social forces (other than capitals and states); the tensions and contradictions of specific food regimes; and transitions between food regimes (p. 614).

According to Bernstein (2016), McMichael now prefers the name food regime project since the first, second, and third food regimes were manifestations of the Colonial Project, the Developmental Project, and the Globalization Project respectively (p. 615). Food regime analysis is not static; it is open to interpretation and its early formulations have evolved over the last few decades.

In this section, I will discuss the first, second, and third food regimes, and question whether the characteristics of these regimes exist in the Turkish example. Turkey is a country that remains largely understudied from a food regime theory perspective.

### **2.1.1. The First Food Regime (the 1870s to the 1910s)**

The first food regime, which was centralized around the British Empire (later named “the settler-colonial food regime” by Friedmann), lasted from 1870 until (roughly) the Great Depression of the 1930s. Wheat was the most significant crop during this time. Mainly, wheat and meat were imported from the settler states to Europe and in return, settler states received European goods, labour, and capital (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989, p. 96). This food regime was of central importance to the creation of an international system comprised of newly built nation-states based on free flow of goods (Friedmann & McMichael 1989, p. 96, as cited in Daviron, 2008, p. 44). Emigration from Europe, elimination of Indigenous use of the lands by producing European staple foods and easy access to cheap wheat and meat were three main features of this regime (Friedmann 2005a, p. 127). The first food regime came to an end when the First World War started. It was only after the end of the Second World War and the Great Depression that the second food regime emerged.

Agriculture, and relationships around land, were structured in a distinct way in the Ottoman Empire, and that makes it relatively problematic to understand its position in the food regime framework. The majority of historians agree on the fact that the Ottoman Empire was not feudal, and that its agrarian relations structured entirely differently from European feudalism (Keyder, 1987, p. 7). For centuries, the Ottoman Empire did not allow individual ownership of land: all land belonged to the sultan and his family. Agricultural production and rural society were built on state-owned lands, and utilized a family labour farm system (İnalçık, 1994, p. 145, see İnalçık, 1994 for a detailed overview of agriculture in the Ottoman Empire). Food production was mostly for subsistence, and beyond this, exports of certain food items were either forbidden or closely controlled for a long time (see Faroqhi, 2004, p. 53 and İnalçık, 1994). Teoman and Kaymak (2008) argue that the agrarian structure of the Ottoman Empire did not evolve into “large-scale capitalist production” despite the high demand for commercial crops (p. 329-330). In the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, “over four-fifths of the

cultivated lands were held in small plots of less than 8 hectares” (Quataert, 1994, p. 864). Right before the First World War, in 1910, “holdings under 5 hectares numbered over one million, constituting 75 percent of all landholders” (Quataert, 1994, p. 864). As can be seen from these numbers, even towards the demise of Ottoman Empire, small-scale farms were dominant in agricultural production.

Therefore, agriculture and food relations in the Ottoman Empire would hardly fit the framework of the first food regime. The Empire was only loosely connected with the capitalist world economy. This is partly because it had never been colonized by European powers (excluding debt relations). Even though the organization of land and people’s lives around agriculture transformed rapidly in the nineteenth century, it is not accurate to claim that the first food regime fully materialized in the Ottoman Empire. The most notable changes of this era were the large flows of foreign direct investment from Europe directed towards infrastructure projects (Pamuk, 2012, p. 46) and the foundation of the Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*) in 1888. The aim was to “provide cultivator loans and help finance development programs” (İnalçık & Quataert, 1994, p. 872).

Even though there were modernization efforts in the form of new cash crops, seeds, techniques and ways to train the agricultural technicians, they were limited to certain regions of the Empire (Pamuk, 2012, p. 49). Therefore, modernization in agriculture, even keeping the establishment of the Agricultural Bank in mind, transpired to only a very small extent, and rather slowly. Financial difficulties, ever growing debt that made day-to-day government functions unfeasible, as well as immense political problems in (and around) the Empire, prevented officials from paying attention to advances in agriculture. The nineteenth century was an era of transformation for the Ottoman Empire, characterized by a rapid integration into the world economy. However, it was not a part of the British-centered first food regime.

This remained true for the newly established Turkish Republic as well. Established in 1923, the economy and economic policies of the new republic were dissimilar to those of its predecessor, and the bureaucrats of Turkey learned many lessons from the years of war. Nationalism, specifically economic nationalism, is the legacy from the wars that lasted for years in this region of the young Turkish Republic (Pamuk, 2012, p. 50). An ideal way for Kemalists to integrate Turkey into the world economy, according to Atasoy (2005), was as an agrarian state (p. 52). The Agricultural

Bank proved to be significant in this process, and to meet with credit demands, the Agricultural Credit Cooperative (*Zirai Kredi Kooperatifleri*) system was also established in 1929, and Agricultural Sales Cooperatives and Unions (*Tarım Satış Kooperatifleri Birliği*) were established in 1935. The intention, with the latter, was for the state to buy the agricultural products, and, in this way, to encourage the small-scale producers to be embedded in the market (Atasoy, 2017b, p. 227). Agriculture in Turkey, as anticipated, suffered from the economic conditions of the Great Depression. Market and export-oriented producers, regardless of their scale, as well as self-sufficient producers were negatively affected. Despite the continuous support of the foundation and, the growth of a private sector, economic nationalism and protectionism became dominant during the early years of the Turkish Republic, especially after the Great Depression.

### **2.1.2. The Second Food Regime (the 1950s to the 1970s)**

The second food regime, which Friedmann (2005a) calls the “mercantile-industrial food regime”, began to stabilize after the Second World War. This regime, contrary to the previous one, was centralized around the US. Cold War dynamics undoubtedly played an important role in the design of the agricultural policies of the time. Friedmann argues that there were three mercantile principles of the second food regime: “governments set prices and other conditions for domestic farmers, controlled the distribution (and prices) of food to the poor, and managed import and exports” (Friedmann 2005a, p. 129). Starting with Marshall Aid in 1948, food aid became integral to this regime. Governments in Europe accepted Marshall Aid in an effort to reconfigure their agriculture, and cheap food was welcomed in former colonies (Friedmann, 2005a).

This food regime transformed diets around the world, as wheat and meat became cheaper and more accessible through subsidized imports made available by the US. According to Friedmann (2005a), this was one of the new patterns of regional specialization and trade of this period. A second pattern emerged when Japan switched to importing from Asian rice to US wheat and animal feeds and the third pattern materialized when Europe decided to redesign its agricultural policies since it was willing to reduce the amount of food imports, and diverted to “US-style farm support and related trade policies” (Friedmann, 2005a, p. 130). The adoption of US-style policies in Europe, Bernstein (2016) argues, resulted in “some European countries also becoming surplus producers of grain (notably France)” that led to a search for a place to dump this surplus



(p. 620). Along with these patterns, there were two noticeable characteristics of this regime: “the rise of transnational corporations (TNCs) as the organizers of global production and trade” and the transnationalization of three agri-food complexes - wheat, durable foods, and livestock/feed (Talbot 2004, p. 22, see also Friedmann, 1992).

Similar to the first food regime, there are several aspects of Turkish agriculture that do not entirely fit the framework of the second food regime. To begin with, Turkey inherited the land structure of the Ottoman Empire and, despite the existence of large-scale farms, small scale farms dominated agricultural production. The majority of farmers on those small lands were unable to afford all the new technology that the Green Revolution brought; national agro-industrialization did not take place in Turkey for a long time, only large farmland owners were able to afford energy-intensive agriculture and it is only recently that the country has become a part of the global supply chains. This is mainly due to the economic policies of the governments, and heavy reliance on foreign aid when supporting agriculture, as well as the constantly high political tension in Turkey. To put it differently, agricultural modernization occurred in a disorganized way. For instance, hybrid seeds have only recently been used; many agri-chemicals were out of reach for a large group of farmers due to their high price tags, and irrigation continues to be a significant challenge for the majority of farms. Therefore, some of the characteristics of the second food regime only recently emerged in this country.

It is true that Turkey benefitted from the aid (monetary, as well as other forms) made available by the US and, in this sense, Turkish agriculture did become a part of the US-centered second food regime. Turkey’s patchwork integration into the liberal world economy began in the 1950s and its agriculture greatly benefitted from foreign aid in this era. Economic liberalization policies signalled a dissociation from state-led industrialization, and moving towards export-oriented agricultural production in the 1950s (Atasoy, 2005, p. 90). Rewarded by its decision to join the “free world,” Turkey was able to obtain large amounts of credit and loans from the US (mostly due to Marshall Aid and its geo-political significance during the Cold War), along with the institutions that participated in the Bretton-Woods system (the idea that other countries’ currencies could be converted into dollar values that were equivalent to US dollars). Thanks to these Marshall Aid funds, Turkey purchased tractors from the US on credit, but the rapidly increased number of tractors “did not result in the development of large-scale capitalist farms nor in the deterioration of the peasant economy” (Atasoy, 2005, p. 91). Along with

increasing mechanization in agriculture, the government at the time tried to find ways to increase the agricultural output by introducing “high-yield seed varieties and chemical fertilizers” (Atasoy, 2005, p. 92), but economic problems significantly slowed down these efforts after 1953.

Economic problems, along with highly increased social and political tension, resulted in a military coup in 1960. The military immediately started to redesign the politics and economy of Turkey as they saw fit. Aydin (2005) argues that “the coup signified a shift from a relatively free market-oriented approach to a planned economy” and state planning in economy started to become the norm” (p. 34). The State Planning Organization (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* - DPT) was created in 1960, and it immediately started formulating five-year plans, and working towards “the protection of the domestic market through implementing industrialization through import substitution [ISI] policies” while agriculture was not included in these plans and policies (Owen & Pamuk, 1998, p. 111).

While the aim was to shift the importance from agriculture to industry, the former went through considerable changes during this time as well. Support for agriculture continued (in the form of rising purchase prices and/or subsidizing inputs), and sizeable increases in the output for some crops occurred (Owen & Pamuk, 1998, p. 115). The increase in output in the 1950s was, to a large extent, the result of an increase in land used in agricultural production (Atasoy, 2005). However, this time, the output increase was due to “intensification of cultivation and the use of improved plant varieties, along with increased inputs of chemical fertilizers, increased mechanization, and some expansion of irrigated lands” (Owen & Pamuk, 1998, p. 116) Since the beginning of the Turkish Republic, governments were working on the establishment of a national industrial economy that was supported by agriculture. Nevertheless, the oil crisis in the early 1970s created unfavourable conditions for Turkey to realize its ISI goals.

Various crises in the 1970s (food, oil and money) paved the way for the end of the second food regime, since neither the US nor other countries could sustain its defining principles. Friedmann and McMichael (1989) argue that what tied these two regimes together, is the US model of capitalist development. For the period after the 1970s, the state lost ground to capital as the dominant structuring force and Friedmann and McMichael (1989) mention two scenarios for the future: “the formation of truly global

institutions to regulate accumulation” and the “promotion and redirection of regional, local and municipal politics” (p. 113). The end of the second food regime left Third World countries in a precarious position: their dependence on imported food on the one hand, and “the declining revenues from traditional exports of tropical crops” (Bernstein, 2016, p. 621) on the other. This meant that these countries were not in a place to resist the challenges posed by the demise of this specific set of rules of the food system.

### **2.1.3. The Third Food Regime (the 1980s to the present)**

Currently, there is disagreement in academic circles about the third food regime and its characteristics. According to McMichael (2009a), Friedmann does not think that the third food regime is here. Elsewhere, Friedmann (2009) argues that if it is not possible to delineate concrete rules or a “set of stabilized tensions”; this may point to a transitional period (p. 336). For a long time now, especially after the collapse of the second food regime, there is uncertainty, “not only in the relations between states, but also in the relations between forces of capital, citizens, and political power within states” (Atasoy, 2009, p. 1). This complex process can be named “neoliberal restructuring” referring to the “restructuring of capital and classes, the reorganization of states and political alliances, and the reconfiguration of societies and human life” happening at the moment (Atasoy, 2009, p. 7). Within this framework, it is not easy to talk about “stabilized tensions,” but it is indeed possible to talk about several features of an emerging food regime.

This emerging regime, Friedmann (2005b) suggests, can be called the “corporate-environmental food regime” and it is appearing in tandem with “a larger restructuring of capitalism in response to ‘green issues’” (p.228) in a time when the US hegemony is weakening. Therefore, social movements and “emerging green capitalism” are the two main pillars of this regime: the latter responds to the pressures (such as demands of food safety, quality, and organic foods) from the former (Friedmann, 2005b). The regime “consists of two differentiated ways of organizing food supply chains: roughly corresponding to increasingly transnational classes of rich and poor consumers” (Friedmann, 2005b, p. 252).

Private capital is behind these two strands, and it is likely that, for Friedmann, the same firms may be supplying both rich and poor consumers (such as Kraft and

Unilever). In line with this idea, there are also supermarkets that specialize in supplying for the rich (i.e. Whole Foods), and others for the poor (i.e. Walmart). State involvement and policies are in decline, as “governments of North and South are, for different reasons, embracing *minimal inter-governmental standards*” (Friedmann, emphasis in original, 2005b, p. 253), and what we see is a mix of private and inter-governmental regulation (Friedmann, 2005b, pp. 253-255). There is also an ongoing lack of agreement between governments of the Global North in international organizations about how to deal with food safety, standards, and genetically modified food (Friedmann, 2005b, p. 252).

In this environment, private capital has assumed the responsibility of controlling every step of the supply chains, including creating, organizing, enforcing, and auditing the chain (Friedmann, 2005b, p. 253). GlobalGAP, first established as EUREPGAP by retailers in Europe, is a very important example in this vein: led by supermarket chains, this consortium formulated complex rules and procedures to be adhered to in the production, processing, and selling of products in order to meet the demands of consumers. Friedmann is critical of this consortium, because the standards that they set are only within reach of their customers, not the general public. Nevertheless, private capital is not capable of overseeing food and agriculture, and nation states are still playing a key role.

Taking into account the corporate reorganization of agro-food relationships, Philip McMichael argues that a “corporate food regime” has already been established, and has been working in a framework of a neoliberal world order for quite some time (see McMichael, 2009a and 2009b). McMichael places this food regime at the centre of the project of global development, and argues that the politics of neoliberalism differentiate this food regime from the first two regimes. The market economy, not the British Empire or the nation-states, has become the dominant organizing principle around which all actors of the corporate food regime come together (McMichael, 2009b, p. 285). In this regime, McMichael (2009b) acknowledges the role of the state with regard to the legitimization of “the combination of Northern subsidies of food and agrofuel production” and “Southern agricultural liberalization” through the WTO (p. 285). However, he argues that the new global regulatory system subordinates states. For McMichael, the WTO is the key institution of the regulatory systems governing the complex structure of global economic relations across nation-states (McMichael, 2009a,

2010b). This is also accompanied by various free-trade agreements including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). His argument rests on an examination of the Agreement on Agriculture (AOA), Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS), Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and the General Agreement on the Trade and Services (GATS), which constitute four principal protocols of the WTO (McMichael, 2010b, pp.136-47).

The WTO and the complex web of agro-food relationships built around this system are not the only significant characteristics of the third food regime. McMichael's conceptualization of the corporate food regime encompasses his several different scholarly works and Bernstein (2016) presents a wholesome framework by summarizing a few of these works (pp. 626-629). Bernstein (2016) determines that there are five key features of McMichael's corporate food regime. The first one is its positioning within "the general dynamic of liberalization (of markets) and privatization (of formerly public functions and services at the core of neoliberal globalization)" (Bernstein, 2016, p. 626). This feature seems to be in line with Friedmann's theorizing of the interplay between private capital and state institutions. The second feature can be understood through the lens of "accumulation by dispossession": land grabbing, global division of labour and markets, as well as the use of contract farming and corporate agribusinesses dominating the "world agriculture," which are several notable aspects of this regime (Bernstein, 2016, p. 626). The third feature of this regime is the "ever increasing, and ecologically destructive industrialization of agricultural production that is undermining conditions of human survival" (Bernstein, 2016, p. 627). The fourth feature is the conflict between "food from nowhere" and "food from somewhere." With regard to the former, health concerns have been voiced for quite some time, increasing consumer interest in how the food we eat come to our plates. The last feature is the claim that this regime, albeit appearing intangible with unsettled borders, is not free from crises or resistance (Bernstein, 2016, p. 628). When analyzing the resistance aspect, McMichael focuses closely on La Vía Campesina and food sovereignty, and for him, small farmers are the leaders of this resistance, and "the peasant way" coupled with the ultimate goal of food sovereignty will make a significant impact in this corporate food regime.

Bill Pritchard (2009) does not fully believe that it is possible to talk about a "third food regime", and disagrees with McMichael's arguments about the WTO's central role in this regime. Pritchard argues that the WTO has been considered by food regime

scholars as a potential central “anchor” for a new food regime; however, when its development from the late 1990s until now is examined, it becomes apparent that the WTO, Pritchard writes, works neither as a tool that belongs to powerful states to enforce their agendas, nor as an independent supra-national actor that applies free market principles to agriculture (2009, p. 304). Moreover, “a food regime represents a stabilized set of relations between the establishment and evolution of nation-states on the one hand, and the international political economy of food on the other” and it stands on the ground established by the financial stability provided by a hegemonic power (2009, p. 297). None of these conditions, according to Pritchard, are fully met in today’s circumstances.

Different from McMichael and Pritchard, Gabriela Pechlaner and Gerardo Otero suggest that the interrelationship between regulatory change and agricultural biotechnology forms the basis of the new food regime (Pechlaner & Otero, 2008). Elsewhere, Otero (2012) claims that it is possible to talk about the “neoliberal food regime” by underlining the importance of the specific role played by nation-states and domestic-level resistance struggles (p. 284). Even though McMichael argues that the state gave its place as the core organizer of the food regime to private capital when we transitioned from the second to the third food regime, Otero (2012) believes that the story is more complex than this. The state continues to play a central role, despite the changes that it has been through and the fact that the food production and supply chains are controlled by the Agricultural Transnational Corporations (ATNCs) (Otero, 2012). He seems to agree with Pritchard about the still powerful nation-state, but parts ways with him in terms of the necessity of a hegemonic economic power defining the rules of agri-food relationships. Arguing that the state is still of key importance for the promotion of policies and regulations affiliated with neoliberal globalism, he prefers to use the term “neoregulation.” Otero claims that the state continues to be the central actor applying neoregulation to play an effective role on market relations under neoliberalism.

Paul Belesky and Geoffrey Lawrence (2019) turn to China as it is gaining significant ground in the international arena with a crucial role to play in the food system, noting the apparent lack of studies done in East Asia within food regime scholarship. They examine state-led capitalism in China, and focus on the neomercantilist strategies in the agri-food sector. By providing “a critical analysis of China’s state-owned agri-food and chemical companies ‘going global,’” they contend that the third food regime is “in a

profound transitional period between successive regimes that is characterised by fluidity and increasing multipolarity” (2019, p. 1120). Belesky and Lawrence refer to this transitional period as an *interregnum* and also point toward the continuities, contradictions and significant transformations. “There is a profound shift occurring in the global political economy of food towards a polycentric regime that is typified by variegated capitalism(s) – including neoliberal and state-led neomercantilist varieties” (p. 1135), and this is the reason why, for the authors, the food regime literature needs to expand its horizons.

Although the Global North and Latin America have been studied extensively in the food regimes literature, the need for “downscaling the analysis to the meso-level such as regions and nation-states” has been identified by some scholars in the field (Jakobsen, 2019, p. 1219). McMichael also recognizes this by saying that “food regime relations can be particularized at the regional level at the same time as they provide a regional lens on the food regime at large” (2013, p. 96). Elsewhere, he admits that the “Anglo-American temporal and spatial relations” has been at the core of the food regime analysis, since they have been shaping the world as we know it and how one conceptualizes the world as well (2013, p. 7). Considering that Britain and the US drew the boundaries of capitalism on a global scale, and defined the rules of the neoliberal game, it is reasonable for food regime scholars to focus their research on these countries. However, it is still worthwhile and valuable to inquire as to whether this theory is applicable in different under-theorized corners of the world since “the food regime is ultimately a comparative construct” (McMichael, 2013, p.12).

Based on this overview, arguably, Turkey has been integrating into what Philip McMichael calls “the corporate food regime” and some aspects of this regime materialized, and some are yet to occur. The 1980s put an end to the implementation of ISI policies. Governments in this decade did not pay so much attention to agriculture. According to Owen and Pamuk (1998), “the virtual elimination of subsidies and price support programs after 1980” and the low rates of output increase were the defining factors of this period (pp. 121-122). These developments resulted in farmers having great difficulty in paying back their loans. Withdrawal of subsidies was in line with the agricultural policies laid out by the World Bank and IMF. In the 1990s, an era marked with political tensions and chronic economic problems, small farmers of Turkey were slowly losing ground. For Aydın (2009), 1998 was the time that the transformation of the

agricultural sector had intensified, and it resulted in “de-agrarianization and unprecedented levels of impoverishment in rural areas” (p. 226). The transnational agribusiness companies that are now in the driver’s seat of the current food regime were behind this transformation.

The World Bank-led Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP), launched in 2001, played an important role in this restructuring. The main goal of this project was to transform the agricultural support policy in Turkey so that it was in line with the government’s agricultural reform program. ARIP was harmonious with the policy reforms that were being implemented to align the national rules and regulations with the EU laws (acquis), especially with the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). There were four main elements to this program: (1) eliminating “the system of subsidies for fertilizer, credit and price supports” while introducing a direct income support (DIS) program, (2) encouraging “farmers to stop producing crops which are currently heavily over-produced by offering one-time payments to cover their cost of switching to alternative activities,” (3) “restructuring Agriculture Sales Cooperatives and Cooperative Unions” (for a detailed analysis on this topic, see Atasoy, 2017b, p. 227) and (4) informing the public about the changes and the support mechanisms available (Turkey - Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP): n.d). The project was revised in 2005, and it officially came to an end in 2008. The DIS program eventually ended in 2009.

The neoliberal transformation did not lead to the disappearance of small producers in the Turkish context. A 2016 survey conducted by Turkish Statistical Institute revealed that “80.7% of the total agricultural holdings is in holding size groups smaller than 100 decares<sup>2</sup>. The land operated by these holdings is 29.1% of the total land” (Agricultural Holding Structure Survey, 2016, 19 April 2018). As evidenced by these numbers, small farms are still prevalent in Turkey. There are many diverse reasons behind the survival of small-scale farming under neoliberal capitalism –rural areas lacking any other source of employment, high rates of population growth, inheritance laws, et cetera – and, unfortunately, discussions around these issues are beyond the scope of this thesis. Small-scale farms, integrated in the neoliberal structure in one way or another, face many challenges, yet they continue to be the central pillar of

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<sup>2</sup> 100 decares are approximately 10 hectares.



Turkish agriculture. Small farmers and small-scale production of food is very common in Turkey, and both continue to exist alongside with contract farming and large-scale commercialized farms. I argue that the Turkish case, with the dominance of small farmers and small-scale food production, together with the mostly small-scale baklava production, help to shed light on GI schemes' opportunities in a "developing" country within food regime theory.

Privately regulated food-quality standards used by TNCs to organize agri-food supply chains are some of the major markers of the corporate food regime as Friedmann (2005b) argues. Third-party certification is becoming more widespread in Turkey. As mentioned above, one of the most prominent third-party certification schemes, GLOBALGAP, led by supermarket chains, has developed an elaborate set of rules to be followed in the production, processing and selling of products. Turkey has been a part of GLOBALGAP since early 2000s. According to the statistics provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, there are 25 companies administering and granting this certificate (*Yetkili Kuruluşlar* (KSK), n.d.). From 2007 to 2019, the number of producers who had this certificate rose from 651 to 61894 (*İstatistikler*, n.d.). To make sense of these numbers, it is important to note here that there were 1,127,744 farmers in 2008 and only 60,087 in 2019 (*Türkiye'de son 12 yılda çiftçi sayısı yüzde 48 düştü, tarım alanları da azalıyor*, 14 May 2020). Here, one should recognize the convincing arguments about how some of the third-party certification schemes and quality standard-setting companies and their practices reinforce the very foundations of corporate food regime. That being said, as discussed in the third chapter of this thesis, GIs are collective in nature, and fundamentally different from these schemes and, mostly, free from the requirements and obligations of these companies. The historical journey of baklava (see Chapter 4) proves that some foods possess a central importance to certain regions and cultures that need to be protected from the harms of the corporate food regime and its main actors by using whichever tools are available.

The unfolding of the food regime is not the same in every country or region and it is critical to recognize these particularities. Challenges posed to the current food regime are not uniform either. McMichael talks about the ways in which these challenges are posed against the corporate food regime and mainly focuses on La Vía Campesina. La Vía Campesina is an "international peasants' movement" and within this movement there are 182 local and national organizations from 81 countries, representing approximately

200 million farmers<sup>3</sup> (The International Peasants' Voice: n.d.). The organization “defends peasant agriculture for food sovereignty as a way to promote social justice and dignity and strongly opposes corporate driven agriculture that destroys social relations and nature” (The International Peasants' Voice: n.d.). As defined by La Vía Campesina, food sovereignty connotes to “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (The International Peasants' Voice: n.d.).

Food sovereignty was first launched as a political strategy by La Vía Campesina at the World Food Summit in 1996 and it has been used by many organizations around the world since then. Considered as “the antithesis of the corporate food regime and its (unrealized) claims for ‘food security’” by McMichael (2014, p. 934), food sovereignty is the first pillar of La Vía Campesina’s resistance, in addition to the struggle for land and agrarian reforms. Advocating for agroecology and the preservation and protection of local seeds (the right to seed as well) is the second pillar of resistance. Lastly, fighting against the criminalization of peasants is the third pillar (The International Peasants' Voice: n.d.). Food sovereignty as a political tool, La Vía Campesina as a powerful grass roots movement and other agrarian social movements have played a crucial role in challenging the inequalities created and furthered by the current food system. As Wittman (2009) states, the diversity of these movements and groups, along with food sovereignty and agrarian citizenship as strategies to be employed, may be the most suitable aspects of the fight against the inequalities in the current food system.

Undoubtedly, social movements, and peasant movements in particular, are integral to this fight. As explored in detail in Chapter 4, the producers of baklava’s ingredients (due to the dominance of small-farms and small-scale production of food) are small farmers and organizations and movements like La Vía Campesina strongly defend their rights as well. However, with regards to certain traditional and artisanal food products (like baklava) that are not directly produced by farmers or agricultural workers, there are limited opportunities for the protection of both those products and their producers. This is where the GI schemes offer a great potential. GIs are included in the corporate food regime’s arsenal and yet they can be used to defend the rights of

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<sup>3</sup> There is one organization called *Çiftçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* (Confederation of Farmers' Unions, later named as *Çiftçiler Sendikası*) and it is the only member of La Vía Campesina from Turkey.

peasants, small farmers and small-scale food producers. This way of challenging the regime from within, by using its own tools, appears to be under-studied in the works of scholars that mainly focus on food and relations formed around food and it is one of the main contributions of my thesis. Despite the critiques of the food regime lens and its inherent limitations, food regime analysis helps one to situate “periodic transformations in political and social relations in the capitalist world economy over the last one and a half centuries” (McMichael, 2016, p. 2). The literature on the third food regime still has many unanswered questions and the limits of the existing regime are still being tested.

## 2.2. Methodology

In his analysis of food regimes, Philip McMichael utilizes “incorporated comparison” and it is a suitable method for outlining the changes that have occurred on various levels of the food system spanning the last two centuries. This method’s intellectual predecessor is Charles Tilly. In his book *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, Tilly offers four different types of comparison; namely, individualizing (“contrasting specific instances of a given phenomenon as a means of grasping the peculiarities of each case”), universalizing (“establishing that every instance of a phenomenon follows essentially the same rule”), variation finding (“establishing a principle of variation in the character or intensity of a phenomenon by examining systematic differences among instances”) and encompassing (“placing different instances at various locations within the same system, in order to explain their characteristics as a function of their varying relationships to the system as a whole”) (Tilly, 1984, pp. 82-83). Tilly’s encompassing comparison is the closest to “incorporated comparison”, and as acknowledged by Charles Tilly himself, may result in functional explanations (see Tilly, 1984, p. 125 and Talbot, 2004, p. 28).

McMichael shows a way out of functional explanations with a historical-comparative approach that makes three claims: “comparison is ‘internal’ to historical inquiry where process-instances are comparable because they are historically connected and mutually conditioning”; “the whole is not given, it is self-forming”; and “comparison can be conducted across space and time, separately or together” (McMichael, 2000, p. 671). With “incorporated comparison,” McMichael intends to “give substance to a historical process (a whole) through comparison of its parts,” knowing that “the whole does not exist independent of its parts” (McMichael, 1990, p. 386). When

trying to see the whole picture with regards to a historical process, McMichael argues, “the unit of analysis need not be simultaneously the empirical whole” (McMichael, 1990, p. 391). Incorporated comparison is often used by the scholars of food regime.

For this thesis, I employ the qualitative case study approach, determining Turkey as my site of inquiry. “A case study is defined as an intensive study of an individual unit of interest (Stake, 1995), with a focus on the developmental factors of that unit (Flyvbjerg, 2011)” (Stewart, 2014, p. 145). Turkey is one of the under-studied regions of the food regime theory and the research that focus on the positionality of GI schemes within said theory is of limited supply. Within this framework, the inquiry centralizes on Turkey as an actor in the global agri-food system and questions whether being a part of an internationally recognized GI scheme would make a positive effect on preserving Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava. Protected by national and international GI schemes, Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava is prepared by using ingredients that were produced by farmers but those farmers do not produce this dessert – this is one of the reasons that makes baklava unique and worthwhile to analyze. Also, Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava and its ingredients have terroir qualities that justify the GI protection and this protection has been obtained by the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce on behalf of baklava producers. GI schemes, including Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava designations, require state involvement to some degree when both establishing and maintaining them but some scholars argue that state involvement is in decline during the third food regime. This complex web of relationships can be explained in detail with the help of the case study approach.

Data was generated from publicly available reports, agreements and other documents from several governmental bodies that take part in formulating and implementing agricultural policies. Baklava’s PGI document published in the Official Journal of the EU, national GI registry documents for Antep Baklava/Gaziantep Baklava, Antep Pistachio, and clarified butter were of central importance. This data is complemented with an analysis of the scholarly works available on GIs and the concept of terroir considering the void in the food regime literature exploring this scheme and its relation to terroir within this theoretical framework. Doing this has allowed me to reveal the importance of GIs as well as the challenges that accompany the establishment of this kind of a quality scheme in “developing countries” and pinpoint why obtaining this designation has the potential to benefit baklava as a product. I analyzed the data by

using content analysis. Considering the gaps identified in the literature, content analysis has allowed me to describe the material at hand in great detail.

## Chapter 3.

### Geographical Indications, Terroir, and Taste

I would like to begin with this chapter by presenting a genealogy of GIs by going back to their roots in Europe, and exploring the connections between GIs and terroir, and terroir and taste. It is imperative for this thesis to demonstrate these connections because GIs are established and preserved based on a product's links to a specific geography, and terroir is, first and foremost, is the geography that gives the product its unique identity worth preserving under this scheme. The connection between terroir and taste is significant as well, because taste makes terroir, an (arguably) abstract concept, tangible and applicable to academic case studies. I will also include criticisms of GI schemes, and explore certain examples of GIs where these schemes do not benefit the producers or the product itself. This discussion is important because GIs have the potential to provide a useful tool to the producers of traditional foods, almost as powerful as the social movements that food regime scholars focus on in their scholarly work. This discussion also helps one to understand what makes baklava unique, and to understand its terroir qualities (see Chapter 4).

#### 3.1. History of GIs and current regulations

Scholars who write extensively on GI always point to France to trace its origins: the French Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC) system, predating all others, constitutes the basis upon which many agreements are built, and it is the oldest form of GI protection (Bowen, 2010a, pp. 245-246). The first law within this framework entered in force in 1905 and its main objective was to protect the consumers from wine producers who wrongfully made attributions to the Champagne region even though their products did not originate there (Bowen, 2010a, pp. 245-246). This law was not written with any consideration regarding wine quality, it did not list any requirements around how wine was produced, or set a limit to the amount of wine that could be produced and sold (Trubek, 2008, p. 27). A second law was passed in 1919, and categorized the appellation of origin as a collective right, preventing it from being considered "generic or registered as a trademark" (Marie-Vivien, 2010, p. 123). In 1935, the law established *Comité National des Appellations d'Origine*—later renamed as *Institut National de*

*l'origine et de la Qualité (INAO)* and operated under the Ministry of Agriculture—for regulating the wines that had AOC designation (Trubek, 2008, p. 28). In 1990, a new law allowed the registration of other agricultural products under the AOC system (Trubek, 2008, p. 28).

On the international level, there are two initiatives that date back to the nineteenth century: the Paris Convention, signed in 1883, and the 1891 Madrid Agreement for the Repression of False or Deceptive Indications of Source on Goods. The Paris convention regulated industrial property, including geographical indications, and established regulations based on the following three pillars: (1) national treatment (each signatory is under the obligation of providing the same protection to nationals of other signatories that it grants to its own nationals), (2) right of priority (an application is filed in one signatory state will have priority over applications filed in others within a certain time frame) and (3) common rules (to be followed in all contracting states) (Summary of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, n.d.). The Madrid Agreement for the Repression of False or Deceptive Indications of Source on Goods, which mandated that all goods that have a false or deceptive indication of source should be banned from being imported or seized if/when imported (Summary of the Madrid Agreement for the Repression of False or Deceptive Indications of Source on Goods (1891), n.d.). This agreement regulated indications of source that are different than GIs. Indications of source simply state where a specific product comes from (i.e. made in Canada), and have nothing to do with the product's quality, or any other specific features stemming from the place where it is produced or made.

The most significant development on the international level after the Paris Convention and the Madrid Agreement is the 1958 Lisbon Agreement<sup>4</sup>. This agreement established the foundation for the protection of appellations of origin by creating a registry, and it also set some rules for refusal of protection, and protection against imitation. Also, this agreement provided a definition of appellation of origin as “the geographical denomination of a country, region, or locality, which serves to designate a product originating therein, the quality or characteristics of which are due exclusively or essentially to the geographical environment, including natural and human factors”

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<sup>4</sup> The Lisbon Agreement was revised by the Geneva Act in 2015. The Geneva Act, entered into force in 2020, widened the scope of protection of GIs in order to include national and or regional schemes (Summary of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, n.d.).

(Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration: n.d). Addor and Grazioli (2002) highlight that the Lisbon Agreement takes a step forward compared to the Paris Convention and the Madrid Agreement because appellations of origin provide a wider-scale legal protection. Appellations of origin require that the product to possess “the quality and characteristics which are due exclusively or essentially to the geographical environment, including natural and human factors, from where the product originates” (Addor & Grazioli, 2002, p. 868). The appellations of origin regime is also different from GIs, which are defined in the TRIPS.

TRIPS, as explained on the WTO website, “introduced intellectual property rules into the multilateral trading system for the first time” (Intellectual Property: Protection and Enforcement: n.d.) and was negotiated in 1994 at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Uruguay Round. TRIPS, according to the WTO website, lays down the rules of protection of intellectual property to be provided in member states (Intellectual property: Protection and Enforcement: n.d.). TRIPS is a contentious agreement on both academic and political levels. According to Philip McMichael (2008), advocates of this document claim that TRIPS makes intellectual property protection easier amongst the member states, and it encourages innovation, as it protects the profits made thanks to technological advancements (p. 174). On the other hand, the opponents find the way in which this agreement categorizes traditional knowledge rather problematic and criticize the “corporate definition of intellectual rights” (McMichael, 2008, p. 174). In what follows, I will focus on the specific articles in this agreement that regulate GIs.

TRIPS defines GIs as follows: “indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin” (WTO, Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights: n.d). As Addor and Grazioli (2002) observe, according to this agreement, “quality, reputation and other characteristics are each in their own right a sufficient but indispensable condition for the existence of a GI” (p. 869). Section 3 of TRIPS sets the rules for GIs. Article 22 forbids the misleading use of indications, and Article 23, which has been at the center of heated scholarly and political debates for a while, brings extra protection for wines and spirits. Lastly, Article 24 indicates several exceptions to this protection.



The question that deserves mention is why there is any conflict about seemingly technical details about GIs. The latest round of trade negotiations of the WTO (Doha Round, 2001-2008) aims “to achieve major reform of the international trading system through the introduction of lower trade barriers and revised trade rules” (The Doha Round: n.d.). Two GI-related issues arose: extending the higher level of protection for geographical indications beyond wines and spirits to agricultural products (Article 23), and creating the multilateral registry for wines and spirits. The dissensus between the EU and the US about how GIs should be further regulated became crystal clear in this round. A Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, released in 2003, put the gist of the disagreement in plain language: “some European and developing countries want to establish tougher restrictions and limits on the use of geographical names for products, while the United States and associated countries argue that the existing level of protection of such terms is adequate” (Hanrahan, 2003, p. 1).

In the US, GIs are protected under the same rules and regulations as trademarks despite the fundamental differences between the natures of trademarks and GIs. The former US commissioner for Trademarks, Lynne Beresford (2007), claims that trademarks and GIs are similar when it comes to their functions, since they are both “source indicators (...), quality guarantees (quality controlled by the owner/producers, standardized production methods, soil characteristics, etc.), and they are business interests (value created by commercialization by the owner/producers)” (p. 981). Thus, according to Beresford, there is no reason why they should be regulated under different regimes. For this author, the main cause for disagreement is as follows: Europeans perceive GIs as an “agricultural trade interest that should be negotiated amongst governments”, while North Americans consider GIs as “private property interests,” which governments should only be negotiating in terms of rights protections, but nothing more (2007, p. 986). According to Josling (2006) and others, the discord between trademarks and GIs will continue in the near future. The EU, possessing the most sophisticated set of rules that govern GIs, keeps highlighting the importance of a strong system of GI.

Tim Josling’s (2006) explanation about the EU’s position helps one better understand the issue: for the EU members, in order to maintain their competitive agriculture sector, GI schemes are imperative; yet, in the US, they are not imminent thus far (p. 359). EU member countries assume that there is a direct correlation between providing legal protection to regional characteristics of products and improving the

quality of those products and customer service (Josling, 2006). Josling observes that a change has been occurring in EU agriculture “towards quality and marketable goods, promoted not only by public policy but also resulting from a change in awareness on the part of farmers as to how to react to shrinking markets for undifferentiated temperate-zone commodities” (2006, p. 358). Therefore, EU members may have been using the GIs as powerful tools to protect and preserve the member states’ agricultural products, improve and maintain high standards of customer service for these products, as well as to realize their political goals. Within this framework, GIs can be perceived as another platform on which the power struggle between the countries of the Global North and South takes place. Ultimately, this divide on GIs symbolizes opposing views about food, taste, place, and terroir.

### **3.2. Geographical Indications and Terroir**

The leadership of the EU, the pioneer institution of GI protection schemes, and the prime supporter of extending international protection for GI products, strongly believes that the GI protection is suitable only when a product belongs to a specific terroir. Even though GIs are built upon the existence of terroir(s), the relationship between the two cannot always be substantiated easily. It is imperative to make a distinction here: terroir itself can be defined as “the particular geography produces particular product characteristics that cannot be imitated by other regions,” (Hughes, 2006, p. 304), but the terroir of a product is a construct based on culture and place at the same time.

In his attempt to reach a better understanding of terroir, Hughes restates terroir in plain language: “the particular input is *necessary* for the particular output: no other input produces that output” (emphasis in original, 2006, p. 357). Clearly unimpressed with what he calls the “incomprehensible nature of terroir,” Hughes (2006) takes a closer look at wine, and argues that it is hard to maintain uniqueness of inputs in both single and larger appellations, and also points to the changes that occur within time, either naturally-caused or human-caused. In relation to that, Hughes (2006) challenges the unique input claim by arguing that there cannot be any unique natural aspect of a region that is not repeatable. Also, by perceiving terroir from an “objective” standpoint, Hughes comes up with three challenges that are posed by science: “the lack of evidence about the classical terroir inputs actually do” (2006, p. 362), the possibility of reproducing the

terroir, and finding similar types and geographies throughout the world. Hughes is well aware of the fact that the points he raises can be defeated by including “savoir-faire” behind agricultural products, tradition, custom, and skill in the definition of terroir. Nonetheless, the author claims that the “learning process takes considerably less time with advances in geology and biology” (2006, p. 363). Noticeably, Hughes somewhat devalues the skills of the producers of terroir products.

Focusing on the output side of the “essential land/qualities connection” claim, Hughes maintains that there are not enough “unifying characteristics that products of a particular GI distinctly and uniquely share” (2006, p. 365). On top of that, Hughes asserts that the taste differences between a terroir and a non-terroir product are negligible and hardly noticeable. Considering that terroir itself is not a blueprint that can be applied to all of the GI products out there, (even if that was the case, technological advancements are not remedies to products that came into being decades, or even centuries ago), it is not plausible to decide that it is useless, and/or does not provide adequate amounts of information to back up GI claims – sometimes it may, and sometimes it may not. Just like culture, terroir is constantly being negotiated and constructed; therefore, a close scrutiny of cases from all around the world provides a better understanding of the connection between terroir and GI schemes.

Sarah Besky’s (2014) approach to the relationship between GI and terroir and the GI itself, is from a critical standpoint. Darjeeling tea’s production methods are rooted in British colonialism, and, according to Besky (2014), not much has changed from that time to today when it comes to “the organization of landscape and labor in the region” (p. 84). Essentially, as evidenced by the promotional material of this tea, Besky (2014) argues that the GI designation acted as an effective eraser of the colonial history, and used it to rebuild the image of Darjeeling tea: “the language of terroir embedded in GI marketing and promotional materials produced a sanitized image of Indian plantation life and labor” (p. 85).

For this author, “the colonial agricultural past of Darjeeling tea had to be repackaged” in the process of this tea obtaining GI designation (Besky, 2014, p. 91). In this example, GI is administered by the Tea Board of India and everything associated with the Darjeeling tea production process (considered “intellectual property”) is under the protection of this board. What Besky considers as the essence of this terroir – the

plantation labor – seems to have very little, if any, influence on the board that is comprised of bureaucrats and experts. What we can deduct from this example, then, is as follows: producers that have no say in the day-to-day administration of GI do not benefit from what it brings.

There are other examples in the literature that support this argument. Sarah Bowen and Marie Sarita Gaytan study the tequila industry in Mexico from a global commodity chain perspective. According to these authors, public and private actors have been using a culture infused with nationalism constantly throughout the tequila chain. They argue that the “Mexican state and tequila companies promote notions of nationalness at the expense of agave farmers, small-scale distillers, and communities involved in the production of tequila” (Bowen & Gaytan, 2012, p. 70). Bowen and Gaytan (2012) point to a compelling recent function of nationalism in the current capitalist system: “powerful public and private actors rely on a language of shared collective experience to enact (and hide) corporate agendas in the global marketplace” (p. 71). Tequila, known as Mexico’s national drink, was put under legal protection (denomination of origin) in 1974. As the authors mention, all of the denomination of origin (DO) that regulates tequila is owned by the Mexican state. However, they note that, “although the DO is publicly owned, since 1994, the CRT (*Consejo Regulador del Tequila* - Tequila Regulatory Council), a *private, non-profit organization* has been responsible to certifying compliance with the norms” (Bowen & Gaytan, 2012, p. 83, emphasis added). The establishment of this council, they argue, enabled TNCs to be even more involved in the tequila production chain.

As a result of this, Bowen and Gaytan note that agave farmers and everyone that is involved in agave production, do not benefit from the ever-growing industry. It is unfortunate that the agave farmers’ and small distilleries’ interests were not protected by CRT since the TNCs have strongly lobbied with the federal government and “the tequila norms have been shaped to benefit the large distilleries and the TNCs, with virtually no accountability” (Bowen & Gaytan, 2012, p. 85). Accordingly, bearing the structure of the tequila market in mind, the DO did not help and/or improve the lives of small agave farmers. Due to the budgetary limitations of the small producers of tequila, DO certifications are not within their reach; therefore, TNCs, not these small producers, reap the benefits of DO designations. The acquisition of DO for tequila, therefore “the institutionalization of quality,” unfortunately “eliminated most of the truly artisanal, small-

scale, informal producers altogether” (Bowen & Gaytan, 2012, p. 88). Consequently, the GI or DO designation does not necessarily work for the benefit of the population that it is claimed to be supporting and/or protecting if the small producers are not involved in the establishment and maintenance processes of these designations.

As seen from these examples, terroir is not always constructed in a way that is beneficial to producers of traditional and/or artisanal products; instead, sometimes GIs serve to benefit the administering bodies (or private corporations) only. Likewise, GI schemes may not be beneficial (and/or useful) for the producers of traditional food products in certain countries. However; Baklava’s GI designations, on the national and international level, have been prepared based on the information and consultation provided by the baklava producers in Antep. In 2013, “Antep Baklavası”/ “Gaziantep Baklavası” was granted “Protected Geographical Indication” (PGI) designation under European Union (EU) law. In this case, there is no council or board to claim ownership of these designations (or potentially take unfair advantage of these designations in any way), and therefore it is very likely for baklava producers, especially the ones operating on a smaller scale, to benefit from the protection provided by the national institution and the EU. It is also worth mentioning that the expenses related to these two applications were paid for by the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (*Gaziantep Sanayi Odası* - GSO), which is an organization of industrial producers (employing at least 10 workers) established in 1989. Baklava’s own cultural journey has continued thanks to these producers and GSO, but there are certain problems identified in the literature regarding GI protection in global South.

### 3.3. Taste and Terroir in Baklava

Baklava’s ingredients provide the terroir properties, which make Gaziantep Baklava special and distinct under the EU rules that have granted the PGI designation of baklava. But what does terroir mean, and how is it connected to this designation? Terroir has been attempted to be defined by academics, wine experts, journalists, and many others; arguably there may be as many definitions as there are written sources on it. Definitions of terroir can be roughly divided into two groups: scholars who attribute more importance to **physical features** of terroir, such as climate, soil and topography, and those who consider **human activities** as an inseparable aspect of terroir. I present

examples from both groups and critically discuss what terroir means while exploring where baklava can be situated in the framework of the discussion around terroir.

To begin with, terroir is French, of Latin origin (*territoire*). Despite its broad and frequent use, “how it [terroir] is understood in practice – even at the physical, viticultural level – may vary” (Charters, 2010, p. 5). Terroir is closely linked to the soil, but is not a direct translation of soil. Unwin (2012) claims it has been often used by French winemakers, “to refer to the complex interaction between all of the physical aspects of geology, soils, climate, geomorphology and vegetation that combine to create a particular ‘place’ where grapes are grown” (p. 37).

Roger Bohmrich, in his article published in the *Journal of Wine Research*, considers Dawid Saayman’s definition as objective, and demonstrates the present state of knowledge: “a terroir is an existing (often still unknown) relationship /interaction between the natural environmental factors viz., climate, topography and soil which have the potential (also often unknown) to induce a specific character into an agricultural product (not necessarily wine)” (Saayman, 1995 as cited in Bohmrich, 1996, p. 45). This “objective” definition, naturally, belongs to the first group of terroir definitions.

When perceived from this objective standpoint, meaning, if we merely pay attention to the environmental factors of terroir, baklava itself as an end product does not appear to be a terroir product, but the most important ingredient of Gaziantep baklava, namely Antep pistachio, possesses all of the qualities mentioned above. The aroma of the *Kırmızı* (Red) type Antep pistachio, favoured by baklava producers in the form of “Boz fıstık,” comes from the fertile arable lands of Gaziantep, dryland farming techniques and, lastly, arguably, the semi-traditional ways of processing of the nuts after harvest. It is possible to pinpoint terroir qualities of clarified butter as well: milk from pasture-raised Awassi sheep, combined with the prompt production of the clarified butter once the farmers milk the sheep, because it spoils quickly. Even though natural and/or environmental factors are immensely important for both Antep pistachio and clarified butter, farmers contribute to the product to a great extent, and these contributions cannot be disregarded since their practices give, to an extent, the qualities of terroir to these products. The need for an alternative conceptualization is apparent.

Sarah Besky (2014) provides an alternative conceptualization that allows one to explore baklava's terroir in its entirety. For Besky, "terroir derives not only from biophysical conditions, but also from distinct production practices" (2014, p. 84). Terroir products are marketed by both highlighting the exclusive geographies and their expert producers (Besky, 2014, p. 84). There is a detailed account of what is precisely expected from the skilled artisans of baklava in the official PGI document of the product:

Preparing the baklava dough, rolling it out and thinning it, sprinkling starch between the layers, placing the layers on the tray, spreading on the cream and Antep pistachio, cutting the baklava into equal slices, oiling it with plain butter [sade yağ], baking and adding syrup — all this requires great skill. 'Antep Baklavası'/'Gaziantep Baklavası' should be prepared and baked by craftsmen who have acquired these skills in the Gaziantep area. (Other Acts, European Commission, 2013: 45).

From this list of skills, adding the syrup is slightly more critical than the others; adding the right amount of syrup, at the right time, takes some time to master. Also, the amount of sugar in the syrup that the craftspeople add to baklava is completely dependent on weather conditions (temperature, humidity, etc.), and requires utmost attention and daily preparation. Thus, the skill of the artisanal producer is a part of the terroir, and specifically it is part of baklava's terroir.

James E. Wilson, in his celebrated work, *Terroir: The Role of Geology, Climate and Culture in the making of French Wines*, opens up more space to make sense of the tradespeople's attitudes towards their products by considering pride as a part of terroir. Talking about the terroir of wine, he argues that, it encompasses all the physical elements (Wilson, 1998, p. 55). The other dimension he adds to this definition is "the spiritual aspect that recognizes the joys, the heartbreaks, the pride, the sweat, and the frustrations of its history" (Wilson, 1998, p. 55). It seems like this dimension of terroir is precisely what has opened the door to many different interpretations of this term. Additionally, even though there are many studies from a variety of disciplines that are centralized around terroir, the majority of them do not provide a clear definition of the term.

According to Heather Paxson (2013), terroir dates to the thirteenth century and the term was used to portray the physical conditions of the region that wine was produced and the effects of these conditions on the wine (p. 187). Having a taste of terroir for a wine was unfavorable until the early nineteenth century (Charters, 2010,

p. 2). Towards the end of that century, however, “the meaning of the word evolved to describe a ‘rural provincial region considered to exercise an influence on its inhabitants’” (DeLoire, Prévost & Kelly, 2008, p. 2). What altered the meaning of terroir, to a great extent, as many scholars seemed to agree, was the process of nation-state building in Europe. One of the most significant characteristics of this process was the “invention of traditions,” as was famously argued by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983).

As Kolleen M. Guy points out, it is not a coincidence that the AOC system appeared when nations were busily inventing other traditions (2011, p. 464). Bearing in mind that terroir is at the heart of the AOC system, it has “emerged as a response to both the dislocations caused by rapid urbanization and industrialization and to the shock of the first industrialized total war” (Guy, 2011, p. 460). Marion Demossier (2012), on the other hand, approaches this issue from a Europe-centric point of view. For Demossier, even though terroir became important during the nation building processes of the nineteenth century, “it has since become a European legal, economic and cultural phenomenon demonstrating the centrality of territorial sites of power and authority in the shaping of the European story (...)” (2012, p.122).

Food has always been an essential item in the political agendas of nation-states. Gastronationalism, as coined by Michaela DeSoucey (2010), connotes to “the use of food production, distribution, and consumption to demarcate and sustain the emotive power of national attachment, as well as the use of nationalist sentiments to produce and market food” (p. 433). Specific to the EU’s labels of origin (PDO, PGI and TSG – see Chapter 3), DeSoucey (2010) claims that they provide the opportunity and “the legal right to draw national boundaries in an otherwise open marketplace” (p. 442) based on “cultural tradition” and “patrimony”. The efforts and motivation to obtain PGI designation for Antep Baklavası can be considered a clear demonstration of gastronationalism. Baklava’s origins and ownership have always been contentious international issues, especially between Turkey and Greece<sup>5</sup> since the product is one of the sources of national pride for both countries, and this is the reason why the PGI designation of Antep Baklavası created excitement in both policy and business circles in Turkey.

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<sup>5</sup> For an example of the ongoing disagreement, see <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/04/the-white-house-dessert-that-sparked-a-minor-turkish-greek-conflict/255439/>



Baklava's preparation process and ingredients show that baklava is a terroir product with a distinctive taste (or as EU documents describe, aroma). Amy Trubek, in her seminal work entitled *The Taste of Place: A Cultural Journey into Terroir*, establishes the link between taste and terroir by simply restating terroir as "the taste of place". In this book, Trubek narrates the historical story of terroir by situating this term in the wider framework of an ongoing discussion about the current food system. "Taste is the difference between food as a mere form of sustenance and food as part of life's rich pageant, a part of sociality, spirituality, aesthetics, and more" (Trubek, 2008, p. 6). Noting that taste is heavily influenced by psychological and cultural factors, Trubek highlights that it is a subjective experience. Terroir as a "cultural vision of taste of place", she argues, "is increasingly becoming part of contemporary notions of discernment for food and drink around the globe" (Trubek, 2008, p. 11). Antep Baklava certainly fits in this description, and its unique qualities set it apart from the baklava produced in other countries in the region.

Arriving at a single definition of this concept appears to be challenging and this may be because terroir "does not fit the objectivity (i.e., the way of being an object) expected from an object by objective or positivist sciences but another regime of existence (...)" (Teil, 2012, p. 480). In line with this, Teil also asserts that "terroir is not a pre-existing data; it is the result of an inquiry" (2012, p. 489). To put it differently, terroir does not exist unless we start talking about it: rather, terroir is produced by the producers and consumers as a group. Therefore, it is possible to say that with this thesis, I am making an attempt to outline the terroir of an incredibly complex food product, and contributing to baklava's own cultural journey in twenty first century. Terroir has both physical and non-physical qualities, and the latter is what lends terroir its relevance throughout time. It does not pre-exist, rather terroir is negotiated and renegotiated in different contexts for certain products. Also, I argue that since terroir's roots lie in vineyards, and therefore has wine-specific connotations, it is rather challenging to apply this concept to some of the discussions about agricultural products or products like baklava.

### **3.4. GIs: Opportunities, Criticisms and Divergences**

In the context of both "developing" and the "least developed countries," GI schemes present various opportunities for producers of terroir products. Vittori claims

that “GIs are generally based on minimum levels of innovation,” and are built around traditional knowledge (2010, p. 305) (for a critique about GIs maintaining the status quo, see Frankel, 2011, p. 14). Considering that both “developing” and the least “developed” countries are rich in traditional knowledge, he argues, they may make use of the GI scheme to make their products more “marketable” (Vittori, 2010, p. 305). On the other hand, Vittori (2010) also acknowledges the shortcomings of these countries (unsuitable legal regulations for GI protection, inadequate marketing expertise, incomplete understanding of how GI schemes work by politicians and producers) and these shortcomings prevent them from benefiting fully from their own products (p. 309). In the case of baklava, there is a legal framework for legal GI protection, and the PGI application of baklava was deemed important, and was supported by the policy-makers and baklava producers themselves.

Besides, “developing countries” often must compete against heavily subsidized products of “developed countries,” so it is hard to claim that conditions for the competition on the international arena are fair for both parties (Agdomar, 2007, p. 547). When talking about the case of Basmati rice, Agdomar notes that “developing countries” cannot afford to “subsidize their farmers to protect them from cheaper imports or the costs of more expensive exports” (2007, p. 548). It is well known that both the EU and the US provide financial support for their farmers, even though they have been continually discouraging other countries from doing the same. Recognizing the fact that it is not possible for the “developing countries” to convince the US to cut the subsidies to farmers (or the EU to open their doors to the products coming from them), Agdomar argues that “with adequate protection of their [emerging countries’] cultural products these economies can start to reap some of the economic benefits from multilateralism” (2007, p. 602).

The benefits and drawbacks of GI regimes in “developing countries” are topics for scholars focusing on this issue from various disciplines. It is widely recognized in the literature that the establishment of a GI regime itself does not necessarily translate into rural development, or the welfare of the producers of the GI products immediately. More importantly, in order for GI regimes to make a positive change in the producers’ livelihoods, the benefit from the GI should be distributed equally along the supply chain (Bramley, 2011, p. 11). Considering the Besky’s (2014) article, Bramley’s argument is very much on point. Moreover, Deselnicu, Costanigro, Souza-Monteiro and McFadden

(2013) determine that GIs provide the best returns when a product's supply chain is short, and it has relatively low added value; therefore, it is reasonable to evaluate each GI on its own within the context of countries that do not have a lot of resources dedicated to GI schemes.

There are clear differences between “developing” and “developed” countries in their approach to, and their application of, GI schemes. Understanding the reasons behind these divergences will allow us to clarify how exactly GI fits within the current food regime. The first one may be conceptualized as different approaches to culture; the controversy centering on GIs is mainly about whether it is at all possible to “own” culture and/or cultural products, and to what extent a country (or a group of producers) is able to protect their culture and/or cultural products elsewhere. At the end of the day, “deciding who owns culture is a Herculean and, at times, uncomfortable task” (Agdomar, 2007, p. 562), and the GI debate “is as much about free and transparent trade as it is about cultural preservation” (Agdomar, 2007, p. 557).

Many countries in the Old World that have legitimate claims of some of the foodstuffs that they have been producing for years, or (in some cases) even centuries. On the other hand, it is also possible to find some products that have been produced in the New World by using similar methods. This is especially problematic when we consider who settled in North America: Barham (2003) observes that there are products sold by their “pre-existing European place names” (p. 128). Here, one should not think about small traditional groups of European-style producers located in North America or elsewhere; these producers are usually parts of transnational corporations and the advertising of their products usually emphasize regional characteristics. However, the New World side of this debate typically claims that the names and/or brands they use are “generic” and therefore no-one can claim ownership of them.

The second reason is the contrasting views on intellectual property systems. Describing the US intellectual property system as utilitarian, Agdomar claims that intellectual property law encourages innovation and production of new products by protecting the “marketable right for creators” (2007, p. 571). Accordingly, it is to be expected to establish monopolies around these products for the inventor to enjoy the fruits of their labor while the consumers have access to them on the market. However, the European tradition is based on the theory of “droit d'auteur, where the right holder is

considered to have a personal and inalienable connection to the product” and it “encompasses the right to prevent distortion, destruction and misattribution of a product” (Agdomar, 2007, p. 571). Even though it is guaranteed by TRIPS that GIs are protected in a similar vein as trademarks, designs, or patents, it is evident that the US intellectual property system is far from providing the rights that come along with a GI designation. Located right in the middle of these two understandings and theories of law, Barham (also referred to by Agdomar in her article) asserts that GIs “as a form of intellectual property challenge the law, culture and economic logic of American business, oriented as it is towards liberal economic theory based on individual ownership” (2003, p. 129). Collective protection provided by GI schemes cannot be protected fully by the US intellectual property system (see Kirreva and O’Connor, 2010, also see Rangnekar, 2004 for a comparison between certification marks vs. GIs).

In addition to that, GI schemes require a fair amount of involvement from the state and state institutions in establishment and execution, which is not necessarily favoured by the US government. In the US, GIs are governed by trademark laws, whereas other countries may prefer to establish legal frameworks for GIs and run the schemes themselves. Properly designed (in terms of appropriateness of the GI rules and regulations within the national context, meeting with producers’ needs and providing proper protection for the product itself) public policy presents great opportunities for both “developed” and “developing” countries (see Belletti, Marescotti and Touzard, 2017 and Gangjee, 2017), but in a country that aims for the least amount of intervention in the market like the US, GI schemes may appear as a great danger to the free market. Hughes points out that the debate around GI protection is a manifestation of a macro-level debate about “government versus markets and about how much decision-making is given to government officials and what is left to market signals” (2006, p. 331). Additionally, the collective nature of GIs transforms products into public goods, which is not something desirable in the American context (for the business side of this discussion, see also Bingen, 2012).

The main point of contention is as follows: GIs do not fully comply with the neoliberal political economic framework that has been established by the collaboration between some members of the Old World and definitely under the leadership of the New World. This framework does not allow for any barriers against the free circulation of goods, labor and capital and “as a form of collective property anchored to specific

places, GIs challenge this picture in significant ways” (Barham 2003, p. 129). Seemingly, it is not that the members of the Old World are not supporters of free trade or beneficiaries of the advantages presented by the neoliberal system but how can one explain the contention between the New and Old Worlds within this framework? More importantly: why is the EU in favour of GI schemes when the New World countries are so passionately against them?

For Hughes, the EU’s stance on this matter goes beyond its concerns about customer protection: in reality, the EU would like to use monopoly rents from GIs to subsidize the agricultural production since it is hard to justify direct subsidies under the current political economic conditions (2006, pp. 302-303). Perceived from this standpoint, a GI is simply a tool, albeit with a great potential to be beneficial for large groups of producers and products themselves, to further EU’s trade interests in the current neoliberal system. While it is getting harder to provide direct support for farmers, this is the time to get creative according to Hughes; the solution here is,

To migrate your production to high-end products, to cultivate and maintain consumer demand for these high-end products, and to control the names of these high-end products as widely as possible in an effort to prevent product substitution and/or consumer defection (2006, p. 345).

Hughes is not impressed with what he calls “myth maintenance” and the EU’s efforts to extract the monopolies from this phenomenon. From his standpoint, implementing extra protection for GIs when protection for trademarks and patents already exists, and giving any more chances to European farmers than they deserve is unfair.

Consequently, one of the central themes of the discussions around GIs is the level of state involvement in the market, whether this can or cannot be tolerated in some countries. GI schemes may be one of the strategies to address the inequalities created by the neoliberal political economic framework and the harms caused to agriculture on the global scale by the Green Revolution during the second and third food regimes. This is precisely why scholarly sources should include GIs in their analyses that are situated in food regime theory, especially their discussions around the third food regime. Nevertheless, it is vital to recognize that GIs are not perfect. Monocultures created all around the world make it harder for consumers (and even for the academics studying this issue from different disciplines) to think about valuable traditional food products that

require careful protection from becoming extinct, and GI schemes, albeit imperfect, present an opportunity for exactly that. There are many aspects to consider when deciding whether a GI protection would be appropriate for a given product; the country in question has to go through a thorough internal evaluation process regarding the national legal framework and costs and GIs require a great amount of ongoing input from the people who are involved in the value chain. GI schemes are in transition even in the places that they originated from (see Delphine Marie-Vivien, Laurence Bérard, Jean-Pierre Boutonnet & François Casabianca, 2017). It is also true that the establishment of GI schemes does not automatically produce the desired results. However, if the priority is to preserve culturally significant products, and the knowledge that comes along with them, and the concern is about protecting the livelihoods of small producers, GI schemes are good and viable alternatives.

## Chapter 4.

### Baklava's Story

Baklava, a dessert with contested origins, is very popular in Turkish cuisine. It is culturally significant since it is common to eat baklava when celebrating festive events such as weddings and bayrams (religious holidays), in addition to its centrality at family gatherings, neighbourly visits, and even amateur soccer leagues as a prize for the champions. It is possible to argue that Turkish people, regardless of their favourite type of baklava and/or shop, make a conscious attempt to purchase baklava when and if they can afford to do so. In this chapter, I will try to bring together the scholarly resources about the origins of baklava.

Baklava has a cultural and historical life of its own, spanning many centuries in a large geographical area. It is a product of much love and elbow grease, and is a complex dessert. In this chapter, I will provide an overview of baklava's past to describe how baklava is prepared to demonstrate the complicated and labour-intensive process. I will also focus on baklava's present, and talk about the ingredients of baklava. The accounts of these ingredients are given to demonstrate the terroir properties of the baklava since they are of central importance for baklava's taste. The combination of Antep pistachio and clarified butter (*sade yağ*) provide the unique flavor profile of Antep Baklava and give the baklava its terroir properties, while these ingredients themselves have terroir properties of their own as well. Also, I will briefly elaborate on walnut and sugar procurement, considering that these two are also important ingredients of baklava. Doing so, I believe, will reveal what is hidden between the delicious and crispy layers of baklava.

#### 4.1. Baklava's Past

In *Sherbet and Spice*, Priscilla Mary Işın takes readers on a journey through the history of Turkish sweets and desserts, and provides scholarly information as well as recipes. "The earliest reference to baklava is in a poem by the mystic Kaygusuz Abdal, who lived in the first half of the fifteenth century: 'two hundred trays of baklava, some with almonds some with lentils'" (Işın, 2013, p. 180). Işın also refers to the palace

records reporting that a great amount of *yufka* that is used to make baklava during Ramadan, noting that the type of filling used was excluded from the records, in the accounts of the Ottoman palace kitchen in 1473 (Işın, 2013, p. 180).

*Yufka*, or the ancient Turkish word *yubqa*, “meant ‘thin, frail’ and specifically referred to a thin, flat bread” (Perry, 1994, p. 90). Perry (1994) underlines that the practice of layering this special type of bread has an ancient history by referring to Mahmud of Kashghar’s Turkish-Arabic dictionary that dates back to the eleventh century. Mahmud’s dictionary includes two versions of the word (*yuvgha* and *yupqa*) and both means “thin bread” (Perry, 1994, p. 90). However, “Mahmud also recorded the expression *qatma yuvgha*, and translated it into Arabic as *khubs mughaddan*, which means ‘folded’ (or perhaps ‘wrinkled’ or ‘pleated’) bread” (Perry, 1994, p. 90).

Recognizing the major difference between thin and/or folded bread and baklava, Perry (1994) tries to find the connection between the two and presents convincing evidence for the Turkish origin of baklava. For Perry, the “missing link” is an Azarbayjani dessert *Baki pakhlavası* or Baku-style baklava made “with eight sheets of dough rolled no thinner than for noodle paste, alternating with seven layers of nuts” (1994, p. 90). Since Azerbaijan is on the route of nomads coming from Central Asia and going to Anatolia, Perry argues, *Baki pakhlavası* may point to a relationship amongst nomadic Turks and the settled Iranians in the area; “it seems to combine the Iranian tradition of pastries with nut fillings baked in ovens with the layered bread of the Turks” (Perry, 1994, p. 90).

In line with Perry, Işın argues, “baklava has the closest ties to the pre-Anatolian Turkic cuisine of Central Asia of any of Turkey’s sweet dishes” (2013, p. 181). Moreover, an Arabic cook book from the thirteenth-century lists a recipe for a dessert similar to baklava, named both in Turkish (*karnı yarık* (‘split belly’)) and in Arabic (*kul-wa shkur* (‘eat and give thanks’)), and the Turkish term *tutmaç* for the thinly rolled pastry was also used in the recipe (Işın, 2013, p. 180). Işın (2013) considers this recipe as an evidence of baklava’s Turkish origin (p. 180), and claims that it is possible to assume that the simplest layered varieties emerged long ago, if complex baklava types existed in the thirteenth century (p. 181). Also, Perry (1994) suggests that baklava has been refined, and has gained the shape of today’s baklava in the many kitchens of the Ottoman Empire’s Topkapı Palace.



Historical evidence presented by Işın and Perry makes one point clear: baklava, in its sophisticated state, existed, and was consumed, from quite early on. “Ottoman cookery books record baklava filled with pureed beans, melon or unsalted cheese, which have been forgotten today” (Işın, 2013, p. 184). Bearing these special (and often expensive) ingredients, and the delicate and time-consuming preparation process in mind, baklava was mostly eaten during celebrations; however, “baklava was [also] a feature of grand dinners given by the upper classes” (Işın, 2013, p. 186). Krondl (2011) also observes that towards the end of the Ottoman rule, baklava was regularly consumed in upper class families for various occasions (p. 112).

According to palace records, however, baklava was prepared and consumed by the Sultan and his family customarily. Arif Bilgin (2008) notes that there is not enough information about how the kitchen was organized in the two previous Ottoman capitals, namely, Bursa and Edirne (p. 72). Mehmed II, also known as Mehmed the Conqueror, founded *Matbah-i Amire Emanati* (The Office of Imperial Kitchen Superintendent) and due to the meticulously kept written records, this era’s Palace Kitchen is the one we can find more details about (Haydaroğlu, 2003, p. 3). Bilgin describes how the palace kitchen was organized during what he terms as the “classical period” (between the fifteenth and eighteenth century) and explains the roles of different sections, but due to space limitations, I will only restate his description of *helvahane* (meaning confectionery kitchen) where the baklava was prepared. “While the palace household food was prepared in the kitchens, an assortment of sweets, jams and juices like compotes and syrups, pastes and pickles, were prepared in the confectionary kitchen” (Bilgin, 2008, p. 75).

Just like other sections of the kitchen, there was a hierarchical order of the cooks in *helvahane*, and, “overseeing the confectioners ... was a *serhalvacıyan-i hassa* (head of the confectioners) (Bilgin, 2008, p. 75). For the classical period, Bilgin (2008) argues that “the favorite sweets of the palace were at times *baklava* and other times a sweet pastry called *rikak baklava*” (p. 87). Bilgin also refers to the Janissaries’ (infantry unit of Ottoman army) tradition of having baklava at Ramadan time: “the pastry cooks fried pastries of rikak baklava in clarified butter and in those that were served to Janissaries they used abundant honey and a little sugar as a sweetener. They also added almonds” (2008, p. 87). Rikak is the plural of rakik, which means very thin and fragile in Arabic – then we may deduce that cooks were making baklava with either thin or thick yufka.

Perry (1994) provides more details about the Janissaries' tradition that happens in the middle of Ramadan every year: at the palace, "each Janissary regiment was given two big trays of baklava, which they slung from poles in sheets of cloth and carried through the streets of the city in a celebration called the Baklava Alayı, or Baklava Procession" (1994, pp. 90-91). According to Krondl, baklava's association with Ramadan goes back at least to the Baklava Procession (2011, p. 112). For Ramadan, baklava was a must for soup kitchens as well: "at the imaret founded by Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512) in the city of Amasya, baklava made with saffron was served" (Işın, 2013, p. 179). During Bayezid II's reign, "the chief bakers at the palace, Sinan and Osman, were responsible for making baklava for Ramadan and religious festivals"; however, in seventeenth century, specialized baklava makers were listed separately as pastry cooks (Işın, 2013, p. 184). According to the aforementioned Ottoman palace kitchen accounts, walnuts were purchased in order to make royal baklava.

Baklava was an important part of circumcision celebrations, too. Işın and Faroqhi document such occasions in their studies: "at the celebrations for the circumcision of Murad III's sons in 1582, 'trays of many-layered baklava' were prepared" (Işın, 2013, p. 183). Faroqhi talks about the circumcision ceremony of sons of Ahmed II that took place in 1720 and examines the records for the goods that purchased for the celebrations. Faroqhi reports that 12,088 kilograms of honey was needed to prepare the baklava served in trays at the event (2007, p. 167).

By mid-seventeenth century, it was possible to find baklava not only in Istanbul but also in the farthest corners of Anatolia but probably mainly consumed in the kitchens of upper-class families (Faroqhi, 2007). Also, Evliya Çelebi, a famous seventeenth century Ottoman traveler who toured the Empire, revealed that "baklava made for wedding feasts in Belgrade were the size of cartwheels and consisted of a thousand layers each" (Işın, 2013, p. 183). A century later, right after Mahmud II era, a cookbook printed in Istanbul in 1844, *Melceü't-tabbâhîn*, contains recipes for or sweets, compotes and syrup as well as pastries like baklava (Samancı & Bilgin, 2010, pp. 344-345).

These brief historical accounts of this dessert demonstrate that baklava was one of the most significant desserts during Ottoman times, especially in Istanbul. *Sweet Treats Around the World*, an encyclopaedia of food and culture, brings many different desserts that are made all over the world together and paints a wholesome picture of

who makes what and when. It is not surprising to find baklava as a specialty for at least ten countries and/or regions. In the Balkans, for instance, the authors mention different occasions for consuming baklava, including the Sweet Festival (marking the end of Ramadan), Easter, Christmas, and New Year's celebrations (Roufs & Roufs, 2014, p. 26). One of the Serbian versions of baklava lists cinnamon as an ingredient and "Croatian baklava is puffier and contains fewer nuts" (Roufs & Roufs, 2014, p. 26). For Roufs and Roufs, when baklava is considered as a dessert, it is prepared with honey, it is moist and cut in large pieces thereby connoting to a Turkish influence (2014, p. 26). On the other hand, if baklava is prepared drier (similar to a cookie), and it is consumed in smaller sizes, then there is more of a Syrian influence (Roufs & Roufs, 2014, p. 26).

Greece is the place that most people associate with baklava according to Roufs and Roufs. In Greece, baklava is "traditionally cut into diamonds and served with a whole clove in each piece" (2014, p. 148). In line with that, when talking about baklava in Lebanon, they underline that "in its most popular present version [baklava is] most likely a product of the Ottoman Turks" (Roufs & Roufs, 2014, p. 215). The authors reiterate this argument when talking about baklava in Romania, adding that according to food historians, the earliest historical records of baklava can be traced back to eighth century BC in ancient Syria (Roufs & Roufs, 2014, p. 282). Later on, they also note that "it was at the Topkapı Palace that baklava was nursed and nurtured into the sweet honey treat made with the paper-thin phyllo we know today" (2014, p. 341). The authors conclude that every nation that was once a part of Ottoman Empire, and other neighbouring regions, have and love their own version of baklava, and all of them suggest that their version is the best and the most original.

Therefore, all these countries that were once considered as part of the Ottoman Empire have a right to be proud of their own version of baklava. In Turkey, one of the largest cities of modern Turkey, located in the Southeastern Anatolia, has been associated with baklava for a long time now. In order for baklava to be considered as authentic and traditional for the majority of Turkish consumers, it needs to be Gaziantep baklava. Even though baklava was not invented in Gaziantep, the city still made a crucial contribution to this dessert. The city and its surrounding areas possess two distinct advantages: first the availability of a one-of-a-kind pistachio, which is a Neolithic crop domesticated in the region, which imparts a very specific flavour to the baklava. Second local butter, usually named as clarified butter or 'plain butter/oil' (*sade yağ*), is made

using the region's sheep's milk, and it adds greatly to the taste of baklava. Therefore, it is possible to claim that a couple of pioneers in Gaziantep started using the pistachio and the butter, refined the baklava, and this practice became widespread in the region. Soon it became "the" way to make baklava in Turkey. Considering the historical evidence, it is unlikely that baklava made its way to Istanbul from Gaziantep; thus we can conclude only that Gaziantep baklava became famous in Istanbul from the 1960s onwards.

## 4.2. How to make Baklava

There are many recipes of many different types of baklava online and in print. In this section, I rely on the description of Gaziantep baklava production from the official website specifically set up for this product by the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry, along with Michael Krondl's description, based on his observation of a baklava producer, Fatih Güllü, in his book *Sweet Invention: A History of Dessert* (2011), where he narrates the baklava production process in great detail.

Krondl, watching Fatih Güllü at his production place, states that baklava making begins with "taking two-pound lumps of prepared dough out of mechanical kneaders and feeding them through the rollers of what looks like an oversized pasta machine" (2011, p. 76). This machine produces "a thin sheet of dough," almost "as thin as onion skin" (Krondl, 2011, p. 76). On the other hand, on the official website of the Gaziantep baklava, this part of the production process was described as follows: baklava dough is prepared by using buckwheat flour, 2 to 4 eggs; some salt (10 grams of rock salt) and some water are added and mixed to make a consistent dough (Üretim Metodu: n.d.). Then this dough is split into pieces that typically weigh 35 to 50 grams, and these pieces are called *bazı* in Turkish (Üretim Metodu: n.d.). The cooks process these *bazı* pieces, and they cut the corners to give them a little bit more shape. The cooks, the official description notes, bring 9-11-13-15 *bazı* together by wrapping all of them around a rolling pin, put wheat starch in between those layers, and make them 1-1.5 metres wide and 2 metres long (Üretim Metodu: n.d.). *Bazı* becomes phyllo, *yufka*, and it is important for the phyllo to be very thin; in fact, "roughly 35-40 of them [the phyllo] should fit in 2.5 to 3 centimetres" (Üretim Metodu: n.d.).

Kronl's (2011) account of *bazı* becoming the phyllo is slightly different from the official description. Kronl observes that the sheets of dough, after they have gone through the rollers, are cut into ten pieces while the cooks carefully add cornstarch between these pieces, "then begin to roll all ten together, adding more starch as needed and where needed" (2011, p. 77). Adding starch is a crucial moment in the baklava preparation process, and cannot be done by using a machine as the human eye is more precise: "after a certain point, the dough is measured by microns, not millimeters, and a machine just wouldn't be able to tell where the dusting of starch needs to go" (2011, p. 77). The author purports that this is a skill that takes a long time to master and for some it is impossible to learn (p. 77). Kronl continues with a striking point: Fatih Güllü reassured the author that "his father has no sentimental attachment to the hand process; he just hasn't been able to find a machine that can do the work" (2011, p. 77). *Yufka*, the author explains, needs to be prepared with harder flour in order to be rolled by the machine properly without falling apart, and the baklava ends up being too crispy (Kronl, 2011). According to Güllü, "when you make it with the hard flour, it is like a needle in the mouth" (Kronl, 2011, p. 77).

The next step of the production process is laying the phyllo sheets, *yufka*, on the tray: "the pastry is finished by brushing some seventeen sheets of *yufka* with clarified butter" (Kronl, 2011, p. 77). The official website's description indicates that at least 15-20 layers should be laid with clarified butter in between (Üretim Metodu: n.d.). This is followed with whatever filling is being used (typically pistachio or walnut) and then the cooks layer more sheets of *yufka* on top of the filling. Once all the sheets of *yufka* are on the tray, the baklava is scored, and it is ready to go into the oven. Pouring in sugar syrup is the last step (Kronl, 2011). The official website's description is slightly different: a chilled layer of cream is put on these layers first and then the cooks are supposed to add the filling (this layer of cream is not used when making dry baklava and the official description recognizes this) (Üretim Metodu: n.d.). Then the filling is covered with layers of *yufka* – at least 15-20 of them –, again using clarified butter in between these layers. After the sides of the tray are straightened, the baklava is scored, and clarified butter is added. Baklava is cooked for about 30-40 minutes in the oven and upon removal, sherbet (sugar syrup) is poured on it. The official description noted that the sherbet, made from local sugar, should be 102-110 degrees Celsius (Üretim Metodu: n.d.)

As can be seen from these two descriptions, baklava making is extremely labour-intensive, and requires both accuracy and mastery. It is especially challenging to turn the dough pieces into *yufka* and to make sure that all of them have the correct thickness. Layering *yufka* while making sure that the filling, be it crushed walnuts or Antep pistachios, is equally distributed throughout the tray requires a lot practice and hard work. Adding the correct amount of *sade yağ* is a telling sign of a craftsperson's skills. Still, the most difficult part of the job appears to be the addition of the sherbet, since the amount of sugar in it needs to be adjusted daily by keeping the humidity, temperature and the season in mind. All in all, baklava production calls for a great amount of precision and attention to detail.

### **4.3. What is in Gaziantep Baklava?**

In this section, I introduce the two most important ingredients of Antep Baklavası/Gaziantep Baklavası: namely the Gaziantep pistachio, and clarified butter (plain butter). Experts consider both of these ingredients necessary to give the baklava its local character. Antep pistachio is produced by small farmers, and is sold through tradespeople located in the Southeastern region of Turkey. Baklava producers procure a specific type of Antep Pistachio through these tradespeople. Clarified butter is also produced by small farms, and is sold through the local tradespeople in the region. The terroir of the region, Southeastern Anatolia, is imprinted in both the pistachio and the clarified butter, thus providing the aroma to the baklava produced by using these two ingredients. I will also elaborate on sugar and walnuts as the latter is also used extensively in baklava production in Turkey, even though walnut baklava is not under GI protection.

#### **4.3.1. Antep Pistachio**

Antep Pistachio is one of the earliest products that was added to the national GI registry in Turkey, in 1997, following a Gaziantep Chamber of Industry request, and it is indigenous to the region. Clearly, not only the baklava itself has terroir qualities, but also its ingredients demonstrate regional characteristics that cannot be reproduced elsewhere. Although it is possible to use pistachios coming from different regions when

producing baklava, the PGI document of Antep Baklavası prevents the producer from naming the baklava as such if Antep pistachio wasn't used in the production.

The official PGI document of baklava, published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, listed characteristics of “Antep Baklavası/Gaziantep Baklavası” as follows: “aroma: this comes from Antep pistachio (Antep fıstığı) and plain butter; colour: the surface of ‘Antep Baklavası’/‘Gaziantep Baklavası’ is golden yellow and the lower part is dark green because of the Antep pistachio (Antep fıstığı)” (Other Acts, European Commission, 2013, p. 44). This description shows how important the Antep pistachio is to the baklava itself. By defining a part of the unique taste of this baklava as “aroma,” the document manages to substantiate what possibly comes across as abstract at first glance.

I begin my analysis with the first ingredient that gives this “aroma” to Antep Baklavası/Gaziantep Baklavası. “Antep pistachio (technically known as *Pistacia Vera L.*) is native to Western Asia and Asia Minor from Turkey to Afghanistan’ (Aksoy, Işık & Külekçi, 2008, p. 137). The Antep pistachio is significant for both processed food production and consumption by the general public, and it has its own dedicated research institute under the Turkish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. Based on the information provided on their website, the institute educates the farmers on various topics, tries to come up with solutions to problems that they may face during the Antep pistachio production, and produces and sells young pistachio plants (in addition to developing new kinds) to meet the needs of the farmers (Tarihçe, n.d.). Turkey is one of the biggest Antep pistachio producers in the world, along with Iran and the United States (Oruç: 2003). “Due to high fluctuation in pistachio production in the world, mainly because pistachios tend toward biennial bearing – i.e., producing heavy crop one year followed by little or none the next – the ranking of countries [in pistachio production] changes often” (Aksoy, Işık, Külekçi, 2008, p. 138). Biennial yielding is a problem that can easily be solved with irrigation techniques that Turkey has started to adopt slowly (Ak, Kaşka & Acar, 1999, p. 24).

Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman, Kahramanmaraş and Siirt possess up to ninety percent of pistachio plants in Turkey, and the production is predominantly done by using dry-land farming methods (Oruç, 2003, p. 2). The pistachio plant is unique in the sense that it grows well in places that experience harsh winter conditions and thrives in hot

summers (Oruç, 2003, p. 5). The harvesting of the Antep pistachio happens twice a year. *Boz fıstık*, used by baklava producers, is harvested between August 15th and September 1st (the fruit is not fully grown, and thus has more flavor and is bright green), and farmers harvest *Ben fıstık*, produced for domestic consumption, as a snack, between September 1st and October 1st (Bilim, 2014, p. 84-85). Farmers sell these pistachios to the tradespeople, and baklava makers purchase this ingredient from them.

Whenever Turkey grapples with inadequate pistachio production levels, Iranian pistachios emerge in the market. Both Oruç (2003, p. 15) and Aksoy, Işık and Külekçi, (2008, p. 141) acknowledge that unregistered and/or illegal pistachios come to Turkey from the Iranian border. Pistachios coming from that region are different from the Antep pistachio; the former has a higher split rate, a rounder shape, and a yellow colour inside (Oruç, 2003, p. 3). There is usually a high domestic demand for Antep pistachio that causes “pistachio crises,” which are widely covered by the Turkish press<sup>6</sup>.

#### **4.3.2. Clarified Butter (*Sade Yağ*)**

The second ingredient that gives Antep Baklavası its special aroma is *Revgan-ı Sade* in Ottoman Turkish, *sade yağ* or *Urfa Yağı*, which translates to “clarified butter” or “butter fat” in English. There are several Ottoman History resources that focused on the cuisine in the palaces, which mentioned how *Revgan-ı Sade* was extensively used in the royal meals (see Yerasimos, 2010, p. 13, Reindl-Kiel in Faroqhi & Neumann, 2003, pp. 62, 78 and Faroqhi, 2007, pp. 168, 204, 214). Burhan Oğuz’s (2002) work goes way back in history to 700 CE, and described all sorts of different oils and fats, including *sade yağ*, and how they were made in detail (pp. 599-624). Atasoy and Türkoğlu (2010) note that *sade yağ* is quite similar to ghee, and comparable to types of butter produced in Asia and Africa (p. 9), but not every similar type of product uses sheep’s milk.

There are several scholarly studies that provided technical and nutritional information about *sade yağ* in the Turkish context. *Sade yağ*, added to the national GI registry in 2018, is frequently used by baklava and/or other traditional dessert producers. Özer, Koçak and Güven (2006) note that the use of this product is common in the kitchens of Southeastern Anatolia (p. 7). Low acidity levels make this product special to,

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<sup>6</sup> As an example, see the following article: “*Fıstık fiyatlarında inanılmaz artış*”: February 21, 2014.



and desired by, the dessert producers. An article by Atasoy and Türkoğlu (2010) describe this product as “anhydrous milk fat” (p. 9). *Sade yağ* is different from butter because it does not contain any water, and it is 99.5% fat, whereas butter’s fat content is around 80% (Kaya, 2006, p. 565). *Sade yağ* is produced mainly from sheep’s milk raised in the Şanlıurfa region’s meadows (especially in the Tek Tek Mountains and Karacadağ) (Kaya, 2006, p. 565). Awassi sheep (*İvesi* or *Üveysi Koyunu* in Turkish) are the specific type of sheep that *sade yağ* producers prefer.

*Sade yağ* is typically prepared from the milk of Awassi sheep after mid-May, but unfortunately there is no reliable statistical data available about the quantities of *sade yağ* produced in the Southeastern Anatolia region (Özer, Koçak & Güven, 2006). However, Özer, Koçak and Güven claim that the demand from producers of traditional desserts is around 50 tons per year (2006, p. 7), but they do not provide references for this number, so it can only be considered as a rough estimate.

Özer, Koçak and Güven (2006) and Kaya (2006) provide brief information about how *sade yağ* is produced by farmers in the Şanlıurfa region. Farmers begin with sheep’s milk; first they make yoghurt by processing this milk (Kaya, 2006, p. 565), and *sade yağ* is extracted from this yoghurt even though butter and “industrial” *sade yağ* is made by churning milk fat (Özer, Koçak & Güven, 2006, p. 7). *Sade yağ*, Özer, Koçak and Güven write, “is obtained by boiling the butter obtained from yoghurt and the fat level of butterfat is around 98-99%” (2006, p. 7).

*Sade yağ* or clarified butter (named as “plain butter” in the PGI document of baklava) should be “99.9% pure butter made from milk and free of salt and any other additives” according to baklava’s PGI document (Other Acts, European Commission: 2013: 44). This document also mentions the smell that predominates the senses before eating the baklava. This special butter, made from the milk that is produced from Awassi sheep pasturing in Southeastern Anatolia Region, where more than 30 indigenous plants grow, is also a part of the national GI registry. The specific taste and aroma of *sade yağ* is due to all of these factors. This butter is also used in day-to-day cooking in some households, but the main consumers are baklava producers and pastry makers.

### 4.3.3. Walnuts

Walnut, otherwise known as *Juglans regia* (L.), has been produced in the geographical area in which Turkey is located for centuries. “Anatolia is (...) [a] germ plasm centre of walnut and walnut trees are exceptionally abundant [in] almost all regions in Turkey” (Keleş, Akça & Ercişli, 2014, p. 168). Wild walnut trees can be found almost everywhere in Anatolia. Walnut production statistics kept by the FAO are as follows: “China leads production with 350,000 tons, followed by the United States of America (California) with 210,000 tons, Turkey (114,000 tons) and Iran (82,000 tons)”, thus making Turkey one of the most important producers of walnuts in the world (“Introduction”, 2004). The majority of this production is for domestic consumption, and the remainder is exported (Altuntaş & Özkan, 2008, p. 1). However, walnut production in Turkey, as reported by Karadağ and Akça (2011), “fluctuates quantitatively and qualitatively. The main problem is almost always early leafing. The environmental adaptations of Turkish national walnut cultivars are often poor due to early bud break and sensitivity to walnut blight and anthracnose” (p. 16763). Another problem that farmers face is low winter temperatures and frosts (Akça & Özongun, 2004: pp. 337-338).

Karadağ and Akça (2011) underline that gene pool and selection studies have been going on for the last 30 years on native Turkish walnut types (p. 16763). The most important walnut varieties in Turkey are Şebin, Yalova-1, Yalova-2, Yalova-3, Yalova-4, and Bilecik (Altuntaş & Erkol, 2011, p. 1289). It is also possible to find some foreign cultivars coming from France and the US, and often they are planted to compete with Turkish walnut types (Karadağ & Akça, 2011, p. 16763). The harvesting and processing of walnuts, Altuntas and Erkol report, is still mostly done by hand, or using old techniques (2011, p. 1289). What Altuntaş and Erkol (2011) call “mechanical properties” –size, shape, shell thickness, and texture– of types of walnuts that are produced in Turkey are mostly understudied (hence unknown) (p.1289), so it is hard for experts to design machines for separating the kernel from the shell and this is probably why farmers still use traditional techniques.

Several cities in Turkey, namely Tokat, Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Kırşehir, Burdur, and Çorum, have geographical indications for their region-specific walnuts from the Turkish Patent Institute as of the time of this writing (*Coğrafi İşaretler Portalı*

*Veritabanı*: n.d.). Even the oldest and most traditional producers in Gaziantep typically have at least one style of baklava that has walnut filling. Baklava filled with walnut cannot be considered Gaziantep Baklavası as the main characteristic of this baklava is the Antep Pistachio filling. Therefore, even though walnuts may not be one of the key ingredients of baklava-making in Turkey, it is still frequently used in this profession.

#### **4.3.4. Sugar**

The section concludes with a short overview on sugar and high fructose corn syrup usage in baklava. As mentioned in the chapter outlining baklava's history, Ottoman palace kitchens sometimes used honey to make baklava. Refined sugar was very hard to come by, as Priscilla Mary Işın highlights in her book *Sherbet and Spice*, and recipes of Ottoman desserts specifically indicated the need to use the best sugar at hand (Işın, 2013, p. 22). "A manuscript of baklava recipe dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth century specifies the use of granulated sugar candy (...)" writes Işın (2013, p. 22). Consequently, it is possible to determine that Ottoman cooks have been using sugar to make syrup to add to baklava from quite early on, but sometimes honey was also used instead of sugar for this dessert. Işın (2013) argues that the Ottoman palace records indicated that palace inhabitants began to consume tremendous amounts of sugar starting from 1471 (with the purchase of 'Cyprus sugar' along with 'Egyptian sugar' and followed by 'Frankish sugar'). Cyprus is well known for its sugar production during medieval times (Solomidou-Ieronymidou, 2015, p. 147). According to Solomidou-Ieronymidou, "sugar cane makes its first appearance on the island in the tenth century AD after it was brought from Egypt" and "from the early fourteenth and until approximately the late sixteenth century, sugar cane was one of the most important cultivations of Cypriot agriculture" (2015, p. 147). Cyprus produced the highest quality crystal sugar in the fourteenth century and the arrival of cheap sugar from the Americas in the sixteenth century slowly spelled the end to sugar production on this island (Solomidou-Ieronymidou, 2015).

There was also Egyptian sugar: Özmucur and Pamuk confirm that sugar used to come from Egypt to Istanbul before the eighteenth century (2002, p. 303) and in the nineteenth century the main suppliers of sugar for the Empire were the US, Belgium, Russia and Denmark (Işın, 2013, pp. 24-26). Although there is no data to support this conjecture, there is only a brief period when imported colonial sugar might have been

used in baklava-making. There have been attempts, as Işın mentions, to establish a local sugar industry but either due to trade agreements or bureaucracy, none of them were successful (2013, pp. 26-27). The author notes that Turkey's first sugar refinery was built in 1926 and Turkey became self-sufficient in sugar by 1955 (Işın, 2013, p. 27). As of 2021, *Türkiye Şeker Fabrikaları* (Türkşeker - Turkish Sugar Factories) are still undergoing a privatization process, which is responsible for the production and processing of sugar beets in numerous facilities all over Turkey. Refined sugar, just like in any other corner of the world right now, has to compete with high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in the Turkish market. Considering the ever-rising costs of production, it would not be surprising if baklava producers preferred using HFCS over refined sugar. According to the PGI document of baklava, sugar is used to make syrup for the baklava but it did not provide any more details in this regard. Baklava producers adhering to the traditional way of making baklava tend not to prefer to use HFCS.

#### 4.4. Baklava's Present

The summary of how baklava is made, and the analysis of baklava's ingredients, prove just how complicated the process of producing this dessert is, and how much attention to detail and expertise this process requires. In an effort to preserve this complex traditional dessert that started its journey in the Ottoman Empire palace kitchens and is still surviving today, baklava was added to the national registry of Geographical Indications by the Turkish Patent Institute (*Türk Patent Enstitüsü* - TPE) in 2007 (*Coğrafi İşaret Tescil Belgesi*: n.d.). The application was prepared and submitted by the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (*Gaziantep Sanayi Odası* - GSO); the Chamber also initiated and finalized the application of Gaziantep Baklavası to the EU GI register.

The GSO was established by industrialists in Gaziantep in 1989. Chambers of Industry and Trade have been regulated by laws and directives ever since the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 in an effort to create (and control) a local bourgeoisie, and these chambers have functioned like state institutions ever since. In 1925, the first law (No. 655) regulating these Chambers came into effect, making them legal entities under the control of Ministry of Trade. All businesses **had to** register with their respective local chambers, and multiple chambers were established in different regions of Turkey. In 1943, a new law of Chambers of Industry and Trade was prepared (No. 4355). Designing the internal structure of these entities in a detailed way, this law gave

the Ministry of Trade the power to appoint the president in the board of directors and mandated a compulsory representative from the Ministry in each Chamber.

In 1952, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey was formed, bringing together numerous Chambers of Trade and Industry within the scope of the new law regulating this Union (No. 5590). Both the previous (1960) and current (1982) Turkish Constitutions regulate professional organizations having the characteristics of public institutions [sic] (Article 122 and Article 135<sup>7</sup> respectively). The current legal framework regarding both the Chambers of Industry and Trade and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey entered into force in 2004 (No. 5174) and according to this law, Chambers and the Union professional organizations having the characteristics of public institutions with legal entity. Chambers of Trade and Industry are closely connected with the state and considered as public institutions.

Chambers of Trade and Industry are one of the groups that can apply for a national GI designation according to the Turkish Law of Industrial Property (No. 6769). According to Article 36, the right for a GI application belongs to a) producer groups, b) public institutions and professional organizations having the characteristics of public institutions [sic] that are pertinent to the product or the geographical area that the product is originated from, c) associations, foundations and co-ops that work in the name of public interest with regards to the product or those who have the authority to protect the economic interests of their members, d) producer, on the condition that they prove they are the only producer of the product. Therefore, according to Article 36, only groups of producers or organization have the right to make an application for GI protection in Turkey. In relation with that, Article 44 of the same law underlines that the entity that applies for the GI designation does not hold the exclusive rights to the product. Evidently, the law provides the protection to a group of producers, not to individuals or

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<sup>7</sup> "Professional organizations having the characteristics of public institutions and their higher bodies are public corporate bodies established by law, with the objectives of meeting the common needs of the members of a given profession, to facilitate their professional activities, to ensure the development of the profession in keeping with common interests, to safeguard professional discipline and ethics in order to ensure integrity and trust in relations among its members and with the public; their organs shall be elected by secret ballot by their members in accordance with the procedure set forth in the law, and under judicial supervision."

private firms, and even the professional organizations that oversee the application process do not have unlimited rights.

The laws and regulations regarding GI designation application and registration appear to be in harmony with the legal framework of the EU's quality schemes. In order to register a product, producers or producer groups in the EU have to send an application to their national authorities to be assessed and then the application is sent to the European Commission, as the Commission is the decision maker in this case (How to register, n.d.). Regarding non-EU products, applications can be made directly to the Commission or through the national authorities (How to register, n.d.). In the case of baklava, GSO first went through the national authorities and obtained the GI designations in Turkey in 2007 and then applied for the EU designation in 2009. The efforts around obtaining national and international GI designations are not limited to baklava or GSO. Out of 627 GI designations that were granted in Turkey in 2020, 236 of them were submitted by the Chambers or Commodity Exchanges that are members of the Union of Chamber and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (*Türkiye Odalar ve Borsalar Birliği – TOBB*) (*Coğrafi işaretlerin yüzde 40'ında oda ve borsaların adı var*, 22 January 2021). TOBB prepared a guide for its members to steer them through the GI application process. In this guide, it is highlighted that local and speciality products are increasingly preferred by customers; therefore, GIs are the most valuable and lucrative tools in both local and global markets and every step that the Chambers and Commodity Exchanges take in this regard is extremely valuable (*Coğrafi işaretlerin yüzde 40'ında oda ve borsaların adı var*, 22 January 2021).

Chambers of Trade and Industry are obligated to safeguard the rights of their members and improve the protected professions based on the groups' interests. The GSO, as an organization driven by its members' interests, took on the responsibility of obtaining GI designations in Turkey and in the EU. For all of these steps, both national and within the EU, the Chamber was in close contact with the baklava producers. A quick search on the website reveals a total number of sixteen members that produce baklava out of over two thousand members (*Üye Firmalar*, n.d.). In 2013 "Antep Baklavası"/ "Gaziantep Baklavası" was granted Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) under European Union (EU) law. After the registration of Antep Baklava in the EU database, the Turkish Standards Institute (*Türk Standartları Enstitüsü-TSE*) introduced

the standards of Turkish baklava in February 2015. This was also initiated and executed with the heavy involvement of the GSO and baklava producers in Gaziantep.

This is evidenced in a news article published on the GSO's website. A few years after obtaining the PGI designation, the GSO organized an event for its members to present certificates indicating the ability to use the Antep Baklavası logo and branding (*GSO'da Baklava İmalatçılarına, "Antep Baklavası" Markası ve Logosu Sertifikasi Verildi: 21 March 2018*). These members, seven of them, have applied to the GSO, and went through a review process to obtain these certificates. During the ceremony, one of the Board members said the following to the producers: "we fought a long fight to obtain the geographical indication for Antep baklava both in Turkey and in the EU. We accomplished this thanks to your support" (*GSO'da Baklava İmalatçılarına, "Antep Baklavası" Markası ve Logosu Sertifikasi Verildi: 21 March 2018*). The reason why the GSO obtained these designations was also clarified at the same event: "to protect Antep baklava without it losing its characteristics and pass it on to future generations [...]" (*GSO'da Baklava İmalatçılarına, "Antep Baklavası" Markası ve Logosu Sertifikasi Verildi: 21 March 2018*). The close relationship between the Antep baklava producers and the GSO appears to be continuing even after obtaining the GIs in the country and in the EU.

In the case of baklava, the GSO shouldered the financial costs of applications to both the TPE and eAmbrosia (the EU GI Register). A quick search on the TPE's website shows that the fees for getting into the national registry of geographical indications are not high for a chamber or a professional organization—no more than 45 Lira (around 7 CAD) as of the time of this writing (*Coğrafi İşaret ve Geleneksel Ürün Adı İşlem Ücretleri: n.d.*). The same goes for the eAmbrosia: there is no registration fee of a GI in the EU; however, in order to apply, the product in question should be subject to an approval process through national organizations and then it will be forwarded to European Commission (EU Member States). For non-EU member states, the application can be directly sent to the European Commission or via the national organizations (Registration of the name of a quality product, n.d.). The GSO also set up an application and review process (an initial review and yearly follow-up reviews) for baklava producers who want to obtain the domestic GI designation (*Coğrafi İşaret Tescil Belgesi, n.d.*).

Baklava's PGI designation is part of the EU's food quality policy. There are three different types of GIs for food and agricultural products: PDO (protected designation of

origin), PGI (protected geographical indication) and TSG (traditional specialty guaranteed). Agricultural products can obtain PDO designation if they are “produced, processed and prepared in a given geographical area using recognized know-how” (Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialties: n.d). Several scholars, like Giraud, argue that “the PDO scheme is very strict with a clear and certified location of both production, processing and packaging in the area of origin” (2008, p. 69). According to Bérard and Marchenay (2006), “the philosophy of PDOs is to protect, with a name, a unique product that is not reproducible in another terroir” (p. 110). PGI, on the other hand, indicates an immediate connection between the agricultural products and foodstuff and the region in which they were produced: “at least one of the stages of production, processing or preparation takes place in the area” (Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialties: n.d.). Therefore, PGI is less restrictive than PDO. Also, the presumption in PDO is, “that human contributions and local know-how can qualify a good is absent from the description of a PGI” (Josling, 2006, pp. 344-345). Lastly, TSG highlights the traditional character in either the composition or means of production (Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialties: n.d.).

The official PGI document of ‘Antep Baklavası’/‘Gaziantep Baklavası’, was published in the Official Journal of the European Union, and contains a description of the product: “‘Antep Baklavası’/‘Gaziantep Baklavası’ is a sweet pastry made of layers of filo [phyllo] pastry filled with semolina cream and Antep pistachio and sweetened with syrup” (Other Acts, European Commission, 2013, p. 43). Syrup is prepared by using cane sugar, and baklava contains high amounts of sugar. Differentiating between normal and dry baklava, this document provides the raw material ratios of ingredients (with ± 3 % tolerance):

**Table 1 - Baklava's Ingredients by Percentage**

	Normal (Fresh)	Dry
<b>Dough</b>	25%	30%
<b>Antep Pistachio (Antep Fıstığı)</b>	10-11%	10-11%
<b>Semolina Cream</b>	12-13%	-
<b>Plain Butter</b>	15-20%	20-25%
<b>Syrup</b>	35-36%	35-36%

Source: Official Journal of the European Union, C229, p. 43, 8.8.2013



At the time of this writing, the EU geographical indications register returned no results when searching for baklava other than “Antep Baklavası”/ “Gaziantep Baklavası”; therefore it is possible to deduce that any type of “Greek Baklava” is not covered under the protection of EU law. There are other applications from Turkey for hazelnuts, olives, olive oils, apricots, and dumplings, along with Antep pistachio which is used for Antep Baklavası (eAmbrosia – the EU geographical indications register, n.d).

This chapter, through analyzing baklava’s history, its preparation process and ingredients; establishes that Antep baklava is a product that has particular terroir. Baklava’s ingredients give the terroir properties to this dessert, and these properties are what make Gaziantep Baklava special and distinct in the eyes of the EU, the granting institution of the PGI designation of baklava. The analysis in this chapter demonstrates that both Antep pistachio and clarified butter from Urfa, which have their own national GI designations, give the Antep Baklava its terroir qualities. Ultimately, thanks to these terroir properties, Antep Baklava has a distinct and unique taste.

With the protection provided by this designation, producers of Antep Baklava have the opportunity to protect their product for years to come. As discussed in Chapter 2, GI schemes that involve the producers in the early stages of establishing the scheme, as well as maintaining it, have the most potential to be successful in terms of protecting the product and the producers. Obtaining these designations requires rigorous and costly preparations; therefore, it may be challenging for some producers to successfully undertake this responsibility from start to finish. There is no GI registration fee in the EU; however, costs associated with the creation of an organization of producers, registration procedures, and controls that must be performed are expected to be assumed by the applicant. In the case of Antep Baklava, the GSO shouldered the financial costs for the national and the EU GIs. The Chamber consulted with a group of baklava producers in Gaziantep so the producers were involved in this process. Antep Baklava, thanks to these efforts, will retain its traditional qualities for years to come. The historical journey of baklava proves that some foods possess a central importance to certain regions and cultures. These need to be protected, despite the limitations of the corporate food regime, by the tools that are readily available within the regime.

## Chapter 5.

### Conclusion

In this thesis, I argue that state involvement in the protection and preservation of baklava has the potential to open up some breathing space for small producers of this dessert. I analyze how baklava has a realistic chance to withstand the challenges present within this food regime and retain its specific qualities for years to come as a result of the GI designation that is protected under the EU law, as well as the national standards that went into force as a consequence. These specific qualities that make up the unique taste profile of Antep Baklava were explored in the fourth chapter. What give the Antep Baklava its unique taste are the Antep pistachios and the *sade yağ* (clarified butter), as shown in the PGI document about baklava. I argue that these ingredients provide a portion of the terroir properties of the baklava.

Along with this, I explore the meaning of terroir and claim that the difficulties around conceptualizing terroir are mainly due to its origins in wine: terroir does not pre-exist; it is negotiated and renegotiated in different contexts for different products. Therefore, it is not a blueprint that can be applied to every product. I also address terroir and its relation to GI, and underline that GIs are established based on an existing terroir and taste is what makes terroir tangible. I provide an analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of GI schemes and make a comparison of GI schemes around the world to demonstrate that GIs certain conditions are required for these schemes to benefit the producers themselves and when these conditions are not met, GIs may only benefit the overseeing authorities and not the producers.

Obtained with the support of the producers and overseen by a professional organization that is considered as a public institution, baklava's GI designation has a great potential to benefit both the product and its producers. Moreover, I argue that the disagreements around GIs point to a power struggle on an international level, and conclude that it boils down to dissimilar approaches to intellectual property, to what extent the state involvement in the market is desired, and who has a right to claim ownership of cultural products. Ultimately, the structure of GIs does not align well with the current political economic framework, and their viability largely depends on Old

World members of international organizations or countries that employ these schemes within their borders.

GI schemes, due to the amount of state involvement they require, appear to be in contradiction with the current food regime. Nevertheless, GIs, by offering collective protection, rely on the state and state institutions to help farmers and other food producers in their resistance against the current inequalities within the third food regime. Including the GIs in food regime analysis will be helpful to outline the ever-evolving role of the state. Expanding the horizons of the food regime also requires putting less analyzed regions into the spotlight. Turkey, as an understudied region, does not entirely fit the theoretical framework of food regimes. Firstly, considering that the Ottoman Empire was not formally colonized by European powers, Ottoman agriculture has been organized in a dissimilar way compared to the European and/or North American agriculture. Since the analytical structure of the first food regime has been formulated based mostly on the latter, it may not have adequate explanatory power to explain Ottoman agriculture, and it does not allow us to situate the Empire in this framework correctly. Additionally, when the modern state of Turkey was proclaimed in 1923, a modernization process in agriculture began, but small-scale farming continued to be the defining character of Turkish agriculture and it continues to this day.

After 1945, Turkey speedily introduced modern technology on farms, but the number of farmers that were able to afford/adopt this change was extremely low, and small farmlands of the early 1900s are the dominant structure of today's Turkish agriculture. The foreign aid that was made available, as well as the credits given to the farmers between the 1950s and 1960s did not result in the development of large-scale farmlands nor did it result in a complete removal of peasantry. Agricultural modernization occurred in a haphazard way in Turkey and therefore some aspects of the second food regime are appearing during – what we consider now as – the third food regime. Neoliberal globalization has brought more of the third food regime's dynamics to present-day Turkey.

Privately regulated food-quality standards used by TNCs to organize agri-food supply chains, corporate subsidies and transnational food circuits, supermarketization, larger restructuring of capitalism in response to 'green issues', and private capital controlling the supply chains, etc. are some of the characteristics of the third food regime

and I argue that even though it is possible to observe some of them in the Turkish context, some are yet to materialize.

Global North-centric perspectives do not allow us to paint an accurate picture of the third food regime as a whole. In line with this, based on their somewhat unique experiences and cultural backgrounds, producers, consumers and organizations everywhere come up with unique ways to find solutions to problems that are caused by the central actors of the food regime. GI schemes present a lot of opportunities for small producers all around the world. It is a protectionist regime for a group of producers, thus saving them from the unbalanced use of retail power.

By using GIs, producers and consumers can be connected in unique ways that will enable one another to see a concrete link between the global and the local. Also, GIs can be utilized as a strategic tool to challenge mass and industrial food production, and can serve as a way of embedding local products into the third food regime. Also, GIs preserve the taste of the product and create an unbreakable connection between the product and the place of production. Therefore, GIs indeed have the potential to protect traditional products that are facing challenges within the third food regime.

## **5.1. Looking into the future, directions for future research**

It is not easy to keep up with the dietary advice given by numerous resources since the lists for what we should eat and should avoid at all costs continue to change almost daily. Superfoods like quinoa, hemp hearts or wheatgrass, which are mainly fabricated, and are marketed for consumers in the global North spark the immediate interest of people in the countries in the global South. If global North “food authorities” say that everyone should decrease their processed sugar intake, it does, indeed, have an influence on consumers in Turkey and elsewhere. Taste buds, food preferences and how people eat is changing rapidly, and health concerns around sugar may affect baklava’s future in this country. However, at the end of the day, as Bobrow-Strain says, “what really mattered was not *what* we ate as much as the distribution of power that brought us that food” (emphasis in original, 2012: 11).

Antep Baklava itself, protected by the GI document, has the potential to survive even under these circumstances. GI schemes safeguard both this type of traditional,

authentic, artisanal and ethnic food product, and the producers that create it when they are designed by a collective of the producers with their needs in mind. GI schemes will continue to be a field in which power struggles among the states materialize, and their future will be determined by the international balance of power. To the extent that neoliberal economic policies allow, GIs will open up some spaces for the small producers all around the world to breathe freely.

For future research, the effects of climate change in Turkish agriculture can be explored in relation to baklava production. There are serious problems that the farmers of pistachio and walnut are currently dealing with, and it is quite likely that we will see the drastic effects of the changing climate in Turkish agriculture. Also, within the framework of this thesis, I was not able to fully explore how gender plays a role in this context, but I presume this would be an interesting aspect for further analysis.

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